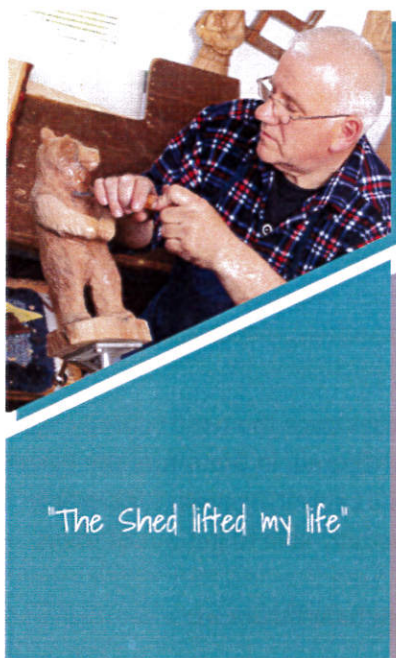




What is a Men's Shed?



Men's Sheds (or Sheds) are similar to garden sheds – a place to pursue practical interests at leisure, to practice skills and enjoy making and mending. The difference is that garden sheds and their activities are often solitary in nature while Men's Sheds are the opposite. They're about social connections and friendship building, sharing skills and knowledge, and of course a lot of laughter.

Sheds are whatever the members (or Shedders as we call them) want them to be. Although labelled sheds, they often aren't sheds at all. They can be empty offices, portable cabin's, warehouses, garages, and in at least one case, a disused mortuary. Some Sheds are purpose-built workshops, but they rarely start out that way. Many don't have premises at all in the beginning and instead form a group that meets regularly for the social connection, company and camaraderie until they can find somewhere to kit out with tools. Many Sheds get involved in community projects too – restoring village features, helping

maintain parks and green spaces, and building things for schools, libraries and individuals in need.

Activities in Sheds vary greatly, but you can usually find woodworking, metalworking, repairing and restoring, electronics, model buildings or even car building in a typical Shed. Sheds typically attract older men, but many have younger members and women too. Whatever the activity, the essence of a Shed is not a building, but the connections and relationships between its members.

Why does Branton Need One?

For a long time, research has shown the negative impact of loneliness and isolation on a person's health and wellbeing. Recently we have seen more evidence come to light that shows loneliness and isolation can be as hazardous to our health as obesity and excessive smoking. Surveys from mental health charities are finding that millions of people report feeling lonely on a daily basis.

Men typically find it more difficult to build social connections than women, and unlike women of a similar age, less older men have networks of friends and rarely share personal concerns about health and personal worries. It is not the case for all men, but for some, when retirement comes, it can feel like personal identity and purpose is lost. Men's Sheds can change all of that.

Sheds are about meeting like-minded people and having someone to share your worries with. They are about having fun, sharing skills and knowledge with like-minded people and gaining a renewed sense of purpose and belonging. As a by-product of all of that they reduce isolation and feelings of loneliness, they allow men to deal with mental health challenges more easily and remain independent, they rebuild communities and, in many cases, they save men's lives.

Men's Sheds are vital.

Our Next Steps

On 25th January @ 10am in the Parish Hall we are holding an open meeting at the Parish Hall. We have invited anyone in the community who is interested in finding out more, being involved in running it, or interested in becoming a 'shedder'. The aim of the meeting is to formalise community interest and form a committee to deliver it. We will also use the meeting to gather community feedback on what activities potential 'shedders' want to be involved in.

End.