



March 2020

Council Support for Men's Shed in Braunton



"The Shed lifted my life"

Braunton Parish Council has agreed to support Men's Shed Braunton and offer free use of their outside space at the time of hiring room facilities.

Live Well in Braunton, aided by a number of other local organisations, held a public meeting in January to gauge local interest in introducing a Men's Shed. There was a fantastic turnout of around 100 people.

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 building 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.



Live Well in Braunton
Connecting the Community

Why does Braunton 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.

Sophie Heaton, Community Connector from Live Well in Braunton: *"Thank you to the Parish Council for agreeing our proposal to use the land at the side of the parish hall as our first home, this really is brilliant news for the Braunton Shed. We were amazed and excited by the number of people who came to our interest meeting on 25th January and the huge number of people who want to be 'shedders', the comments and feedback we received will help us shape the shed that users want. We are busy working on the next steps, we want to get the shed right so there's lots of work to be done in the following months before we can open for business. If you would like to be kept updated with progress or have any questions please email mensshed@livewellinbraunton.co.uk"*

Braunton Parish Council



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Tracey Lovell, Clerk to the Council
Angela Corner, Senior Council Officer
Jane Fewings, Admin Assistant

Meetings Calendar 2020

Full Council Meetings are held in the Council Chamber at the Parish Hall on the second Monday of each month and additional meetings, to primarily consider planning applications, are held on the fourth Monday of each month.

7pm 9 March 2020

7pm 23 March 2020

7pm 14 April 2020

Agendas and minutes can be viewed on our website.

