

Community Shed Toolkit

Information and advice to set up and run a Men's Shed project.



ESSEX
SHED
NETWORK

Foreword by Sir Bob Russell



The “Men in Sheds” concept, which originated in Australia, has come to various parts of the UK.....and is expanding into and across Essex!

It is a most welcome addition to the voluntary sector. Small in size at the moment, but big in endeavour and enthusiasm. It is an acorn which has taken root. It is growing.

Nor is it just for men. Despite the name, women are also members as I witnessed when I visited Colchester’s “Men in Sheds”. Not a shed, actually, but part of the town’s former Bus Station waiting room and toilet block!

The “Men in Sheds” movement was started to enable men, generally of retirement age but this is not a requirement, to meet weekly to take on practical tasks for their own benefit or for the wider community, pooling their life-time craft skills or encouraging others in new opportunities to do something different. The format appeals to people of all ages, whether living alone or with a partner.

I therefore have much pleasure in writing this Foreword to promote “Men in Sheds” across Essex, and to urge the formation of further such groups throughout the county.

Sir Bob Russell, High Steward of Colchester – August 2017



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Introducing the Essex Shed Network

In August 2014 Maldon and District CVS launched the Maldon Shed, following a year's work researching Shed projects, looking for a venue, finding funding and looking at policies and procedures around conduct and safety.

The Maldon Shed was the first in Essex however it was the start of much more. In the same year Maldon and District CVS was approached to support the development of Sheds in West Essex and was also awarded funding to replicate the Maldon Shed in other mid Essex locations. It soon became clear that Men in Shed projects were meeting a need in communities in Essex and were continuing to grow. In response the Essex Shed Network was born.

The Essex Shed Network is funded by the Community Resilience Fund managed by the Essex Community Foundation for three years from April 2016. The Network aims to support people within communities wanting to set up shed projects by providing a central point for help and support and will help sheds to share skills and gain peer support.

The aims of the Essex Shed Network are threefold:

- 1) Increase the number of Men in Shed projects in Essex.
- 2) Improve the sustainability of Men in Shed projects through increased networking, skills sharing and pooled resources.
- 3) Achieve outcomes for individual Sheddors around improved health and mental health, increased peer support, increased social and community contact and decreased isolation.

For more information about the Network visit www.essexshednetwork.wordpress.com

Learning, sharing and making good

Section 1: About Sheds

The Story of Sheds

The Men's Shed movement started in Australia in 1997. The first shed was Lane Cove Community Shed in New South Wales set up for "shedless blokes". This small community project marked the start of an international movement providing a social community space for men of all ages and abilities.

The Australian Men's shed movement was officially set up as an organisation nine years later to help provide support to communities wanting to set up sheds. The purpose was to help sheds to share skills and experiences and provide information on the governance and running of a Shed. There are now over 1,200 sheds in Australia supporting over 200,000 individuals.

In the UK over 50% of homes have sheds and they are generally the domain of the men of the house, 26% of shed owners say they spend time in their Sheds avoiding their partners¹. Generally sheds are a place of solitude and reflection but there may come a time when the joy of solitude evolves into the pain of loneliness.

Compared with women, men are at greater risk of isolation, Older men are more likely to be socially isolated than women of a similar age due to less contact with family, greater reluctance to join clubs for older people and less likely to ask for support².

Loneliness and isolation is increasingly being recognised as an important health issue amongst men. It isn't just about people having someone to talk to; loneliness has a serious knock on effect on an individual's mental and physical health. A report produced by the Campaign to End Loneliness has found that isolation has a comparable effect on mortality with well-known health factors such as obesity and smoking. It can increase blood pressure; increase the risk of the onset of disability, cognitive decline and depression³.

People find their way to Sheds for many different reasons and once there they benefit from the social connections that are invariably made and through that they stay.

With all of this taken into account there can be little doubt projects like men's Sheds can add value to a community but what makes the Sheds so special is that they are not health projects or social care projects or for people with a particular label. You do not need to be lonely Peter or depressed Jim to go along to a Shed. You can simply be Peter the retired builder or Jim who has always wanted to learn woodwork or Frank who doesn't mind making the tea.

1: Research from Cuprinol

2: The Emerging Crisis for Older Men. International Longevity Centre and Independent Age. 2014

3: Campaign to End loneliness www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/threat-to-health/

Section 2: Getting Started

Do you need a Shed?

Before setting up a shed it is important to consider whether one is needed in your local area. Setting up a shed can be hard work and so before setting foot on the road towards considering funding, governance and set up have a look at whether a shed is needed and would be successful in your area.

The chances are that isolation amongst older people is an issue in your local area. It is a nationally recognised issue occurring just as often in urban environments as in rural areas more commonly associated with isolation. However are there already community projects for men in the local area that you could get involved with and support or add value to?

Your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) will hold information on local groups and the services they offer and is a good place to start when thinking about whether your ideas for a shed will duplicate current community activity. You can also contact your local authority who may be able to give you information about local population demographics, loneliness maps and areas of need that have been identified in local strategies. Often services and support for older people feature and there may also be local issues around mental health support, high unemployment levels or isolation.

Once you have decided that yes a shed project could be a welcome addition in your community then there are other things that you should try to find out. Information collected at this early stage will inform how, where and what you set up, will help you to develop a project plan and work out budgets and funding requirements.

Involve the Community

A community consultation is a good way to raise awareness of your idea for a shed and can help you to drum up interest, find people to help and maybe answer some of the burning questions you are bound to have. This is also a good opportunity to gather information that you could use should you need to apply for funding.

Before holding the event think about what you would like to achieve and plan your session accordingly. You may be imparting information about your plans so far or asking for help - probably it's a mixture of the two.

Consider

Do you need people to volunteer to be part of a committee or to take a lead role at Shed sessions?

- If yes what skills and prior experience should they have?

Do you know where your Shed will run from?

- If no are you looking for ideas or does anyone know of a potential site?
- If yes what do you need to do to the venue to get it ready to open?

Remember

The Essex Shed Network may be able to help and save time from the outset by providing advice and putting you in touch with other Essex Sheddors and resources.

Do you know what your Shed will do?

You may have some ideas about the kind of tools and activities that should be in the Shed but is this what your community wants? This is a good time to check what kind of activities people are interested in, what skills people already have and whether there is an interest in learning any particular new skills.

If you are looking to get funding for your Shed project then this is also a great opportunity to gather some information to support your funding bids. Many grant making bodies will ask how you know there is a need for your project and whether you have consulted with the community. Local demographic data and national studies can provide evidence of need for the concept of a Shed but a consultation shows real people have shown a real interest.

Once you have a virtual Shed (a group of men who meet who wish to start a shed) visiting two or three local projects will help galvanise your commitment and ideas.

This adds weight to your funding application and increases your chances of success. You may want to also capture some information about your event attendees such as age, employment status, levels of community involvement, feelings of wellbeing etc. this will help you when setting up your Shed and when demonstrating to funders that their grant money if awarded will have a real impact on people's lives. Remember you can ask people to supply this information anonymously to encourage them to be honest in their responses.

As well as information gathering you also want to inspire people to get involved and support your Shed idea. A good first step is to see if a nearby Shed project can come and talk to your local community about their project. The UK Men's Shed Association will be able to put you in contact with Sheds in your local area and of course in Essex there is the Essex Shed Network that can come along and share information on the journey of different Sheds across the County. This is a good way for you to show the community what can be achieved and inspire local people.

Running the consultation

- Prepare a simple agenda and stick to it, this will give focus for the meeting.
- Ensure your data capture forms are easily available to all attendees and explain why you are asking for the information. Respect peoples right not to complete them.
- Set a time for the meeting, one hour is usually plenty for the formal information provision and gathering although you may wish to have longer event with time to socialise.
- Choose a good facilitator - someone who will let everyone be heard and keep discussion flowing.
- Take notes - ensure there is a record of actions and next steps and who will be doing what.
- Ask people what their skills are and what and how much time they can contribute.
- Ensure you record who attends and get contact details to keep people informed. Remember not everyone has an email address so phone numbers will be useful as well.
- End the meeting with a recap, highlighting next steps and actions to be taken/
- Agree where and when to meet again.

Getting the word out

You will need to let people know about your meeting in advance. It is a good idea to give yourself a least a few weeks to promote the event. Consider a range of approaches to reach as many people as possible.

- Direct invites to people you already know who may be interested in getting involved,
- Notices and posters in local venues, shops and council notice boards,
- Press releases to local newspapers and parish magazines,
- Local radio coverage,
- Social media.

Focusing on a group of interested men in the form of a 'Virtual Shed' might attract the skill set within a group to help develop your potential Shed administratively and practically

Finding a Venue

One of the first things that you will need to consider will be finding a venue. Finding suitable premises will depend heavily on your local area. Suggestions of places to look include:

- Local authorities,
- National Rail providers,
- Health providers,
- Housing associations,
- Local community centres,
- Local industrial estates,
- Local heritage sites,
- Related businesses.

An ideal venue will be large enough to have a good size workspace as well as space for socialising and storage. The aim is to find suitable cheap premises as this reduces the burden of on-going running costs once the initial set up costs are over. If you can't find this ideal don't be disheartened the most important thing about setting up a Shed is bringing people together, if the space you have only allows for cups of teas and hand tools then it's a good place to start.

You will probably not be lucky enough to find a disused workspace with fantastic flooring, fixed surfaces and up to date wiring so you might need to look at some building work. Depending on how much there is to do you may be able to get a team of future Sheddors together to undertake some work but if it is structural or electrical it is important to ensure this is professionally done.

Things to consider:

- How are you going to kit out the premises e.g. need for work benches,
- Change of use planning permissions,
- Multiple quotes for work – usually three,
- Finding funding for the work,
- Dust extraction,
- Placement of power points,
- Security arrangements.

Setting up your Shed

There is no right way or wrong way to set up a shed. There are sheds that run as projects of larger charities such as the Royal Voluntary Service, Age UK, Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) or Rural Community Councils. However the majority of Shed projects are set and run by volunteers.

There are pros and cons to each approach, for example as a project of a larger charity you will have access to their expertise which *may* include bid writing, volunteer management, training, supporting people etc. Conversely as a volunteer led group you won't have overheads such as staff costs and contributions to the larger organisations costs. Setting up your own you may have lower overheads but you will also need to find insurance which may be more costly as a stand alone organisation rather than an extension of existing insurance.

If you choose to set up independently then the next question may be considering a structure for your group and you will need a governing document. Depending on your organisations set up this will be called something different but fundamentally it is a written document that establishes a structure to hold the organisation together and sets clear boundaries on its activities.

Not for profit organisations and charities will have a Constitution whereas companies will have a Memorandum and Articles of Association. Whatever the governing document is called it has the same function which is to outline the rules for the operation of your group, these may be legal responsibilities or locally agreed practices.

Choosing a structure

To set up a new organisation, you must decide what sort of legal structure it will have. The type of structure you choose affects how your charity will operate, such as:

- Who will run it and whether it will have a wider membership;
- Whether it can enter into contracts or employ staff in its own name;
- Whether the trustees will be personally liable for what the charity does.

When choosing a legal structure for your organisation there a few things you will need to consider. As a potential committee member/trustee for a new group you should be aware of your responsibilities and liabilities under different structures and equally your fellow Sheddors should also be aware.

For example as a registered charity your organisation will not be a legal entity in it's own right, This means that individual trustees have personal responsibility for the charity - in the unlikely case of legal action being taken this will be taken against the individuals not the collective organisation.

If you are intending to take out an expensive or long term lease on a venue this should be in the name of the organisation as a entity rather than individual trustees so registered charity status on it's own will not be suitable. Equally as you are intending to carry out some high risk activities involving power tools it is advisable to have insurance that is pointing towards an organisation rather than individuals. If you feel that a formal structure such as company status is not the way forward then another option to consider is purchasing trustee indemnity insurance as part of your insurance package.

As well as responsibility considerations you can also consider the benefits that come with particular structures. For instance some structures will enable you to rate relief on premises, Registered charities are entitled to 80% rate relief, with an additional discretionary 20% rate relief offered by some local authorities. This can have a significant impact on your outgoings. Charities also enjoy other tax benefits including the opportunity to Gift Aid financial contributions.

The Essex Shed Network or your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) can provide support in putting together a governing document, in some cases these are legal documents so you may appreciate some guidance.

Types of Structure

There are 5 main types of structure:

- Not for profit group (small charities, unregistered),
- Registered charity,
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO),
- Community Interest Company (CICs),
- Registered company (limited by guarantee).

Read more about the structures on the table overleaf. There is also a decision tree that you can use to help make your decision on structure. You can also contact the Essex Shed Network or your local CVS for guidance.

What about Social Enterprises?

Many people are aware of the idea of Social Enterprise and you may be surprised that it isn't listed as a governance option in the above list. Social Enterprises take many forms and the term is a catch all for any community focussed organisation that makes some of its income through trade. These can be registered charities, CIOs, CICs or even private businesses.

In order to be sustainable most Sheds will carry out some income generation activities so will come into the heading of a social enterprise regardless of the detail of their legal structure.

Governing Documents

Once you have decided on a structure for your Shed you then need to look at the governing document. These will look different depending on the structure you choose.

An unincorporated group, including registered charities, will have a constitution, this is a set of rules for the operation of the group and sets out your agreed aims, the roles of the committee, rules for voting and holding meetings and your membership. Organisations with company status including charitable incorporated organisations will have Articles of Association.

A good starting place is to work from a template. The Charity Commission has templates available for small charities, Registered charities and Charitable Incorporated Organisations on their website and you can find templates for Companies limited by guarantee and Community Interests Companies (CICs) on the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website.

Charity templates

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-up-a-charity-model-governing-documents>

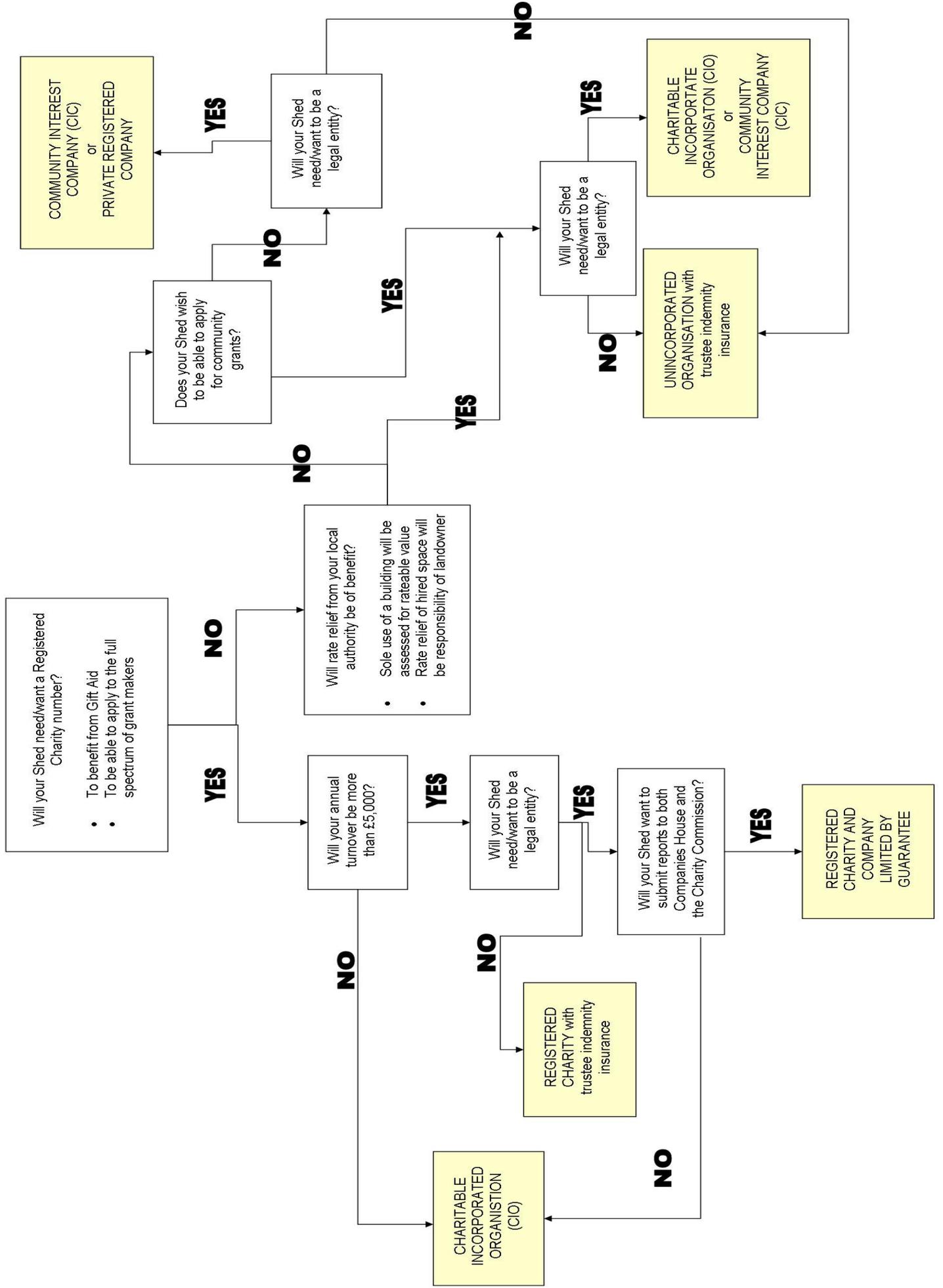
Limited company template

<https://www.gov.uk/model-articles-of-association-for-limited-companies>

CIC template

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-interest-companies-constitutions>

Rate Relief	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Eligible for Gift Aid	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Reports to Companies House	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Reports to Charity Commission	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Turnover restrictions	<£5,000	>£5,000	None	None	None	>£5,000
Charitable Status	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Legal entity	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<p>Not for Profit group</p> <p>A small community group with no registration or reporting requirements, also known as an unincorporated organisation. The constitution can be a simple set of guidelines for the governance of the group.</p>	<p>Registered Charity</p> <p>A Registered charity is also an unincorporated organisation but with more structure and more legal reporting responsibilities. The constitution is much more detailed and the simplest option is to use the template constitution provided by the Charity Commission and adapt</p>	<p>Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)</p> <p>A charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) is a new form of legal entity designed for non-profit organisations in the United Kingdom. The main intended benefits of the new entity are that it has legal personality, the ability to conduct business in its own name, and limited liability so that its members and trustees will not have to contribute in the event of financial loss. These are already available to limited companies; charities can be formed as companies, but then they must be registered with both Companies House and the Charity Commission. In contrast, the CIO only needs to register with the Charity Commission.</p>	<p>Community Interest Company (CIC)</p> <p>A community interest company (CIC) is a type of company designed for social enterprises that want to use their profits and assets for the public good. CICs are intended to be easy to set up, with all the flexibility and certainty of the company form, but with some special features to ensure they are working for the benefit of the community.</p>	<p>Registered company (limited by guarantee)</p> <p>A private company limited by guarantee is an alternative type of corporation used primarily for non-profit organisations that require legal personality. A company limited by guarantee does not usually have a share capital or shareholders, but instead has members who act as guarantors. The guarantors give an undertaking to contribute a nominal amount (typically very small) in the event of the winding up of the company.</p>	<p>Registered Charity with Company Status</p> <p>A combination of a Registered Charity and Company limited by guarantee. Until the introduction of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation this was the common structure adopted by charities needing a legal identity.</p>



Your Committee

The process of setting up your Shed will also include forming a committee. The committee is the governing body of a project or voluntary organisation and is responsible for making decisions on their behalf. It can also be called a trustee board or a board of directors depending on your legal structure but fundamentally it incorporates the same responsibilities.

Duties of the committee or steering group include:

- Managing the organisations finances and ensuring they are properly used,
- Managing staff or volunteers,
- Guiding the shed in safeguarding practices,
- Overseeing day to day activities to ensure the Shed remains open,
- Ensuring relevant policies and procedures are in place and adhered to.

How a committee is structured will be set out in the organisation's constitution, this will include information on the minimum and maximum number of committee members and how long they can serve.

If you are part of a larger organisation like a host charity this might take the form of a Steering group which would not have the legal responsibilities but would oversee the project management.

It is common for the number of committee members to be between 3 and 12 and there are usually 3 designated "officer" roles with specific duties within the committee:

- The Chair,
- The Secretary,
- The Treasurer.

Sheds should also have a Health and Safety officer within their board to ensure their commitments and obligations under the heading of Health and Safety are adhered to.

The Chair

The Chair has the responsibility of ensuring that committee meetings are run effectively, that all parties are heard, decisions are made and carried through and that every agenda item is discussed as appropriate.

In addition this role is often the public 'figurehead' of the organisations and may be responsible for attending external meetings or public events.

The Chair is often also a signatory for the organisation's finances and may also be involved with overseeing the budget, signing cheques, writing letter and recruiting staff/ volunteers.

The Secretary

The key role of the secretary is to provide administrative support to the management committee. This will include:

- Preparing agendas for meetings,
- Circulating papers,
- Booking rooms for meetings,
- Circulating information about the AGM,
- Keeping a list of the committee members and their contact details,
- Maintaining records of correspondence,
- Taking minutes,
- Following up on previous meeting's actions.

The minutes are the legal record of the meeting and it is important that they accurately reflect the meeting's content, any decisions taken and who actions are attributed to. They are checked by the committee members and once approved are signed by the chair at the next meeting as a true record.

You may also include maintaining an up to date membership list of Sheddors to the role of the secretary or could consider a separate membership secretary role whose role will be to ensure data on individuals is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

The Treasurer

Committee members all have shared responsibility for ensuring that the organisation remains solvent, funds are used appropriately and the organisation reduces the risk of fraud. The treasurer facilitates these responsibilities by maintaining clear records of income and expenditure and reports back to the full board regularly.

Duties of the treasurer will include:

- Managing the finances: including recording all income and expenditure; providing regular financial reports as required to the Committee; and annual accounts at the AGM,
- Making sure the Shed has the money to do the activities they plan and agree to do,
- Making sure that the Committee has the necessary information to understand the financial position of the Shed, to plan for future financial needs,
- Dealing with the bank on behalf of the Committee,
- Handling the petty cash system.

Health and Safety Officer

It is recommended that a Shed committee includes a dedicated Health and Safety person to ensure policies, procedures and standards are set & maintained. Their role will include:

- Making sure the Shed has a 'Health & Safety Statement' approved by the Shed Committee and that it is in line with legislation,
- Overseeing and co-ordinating the Health and Safety training, activities and associated administrative tasks,
- Conducting regular work space inspections, risk assessments and makes recommendations to the Shed Committee, while communicating with the Sheddors and implementing any decisions arising,
- Making sure all members and visitors to the shed follow the codes of conduct and adhere to Health & Safety policies,
- Keeping up to date on all laws and regulations on Health & Safety and updates relevant Shed safety instructions and procedures, notices, forms and manuals,
- Monitoring and, where necessary, investigating and reporting any accidents or incidents that arise to the Shed Management Committee and external authorities, as appropriate.

Other Roles

Committees can also choose to have other named roles for example some have Vice Chairs, Fundraising or Social Media or positions.

Decision making

It is very important right from the start you put in place motions that encourage decisions made by consensus. Your constitution should include information on how many people make a quorum. A quorum is the minimal number of officers and members of a committee or organisation, usually a majority, who must be present for a valid transaction of business. It is important that people respect quorum decisions even if they do not agree with them, this is key to building a strong team.

Section 3: Finding Funding

Getting Funding

Most start up Sheds will need some funding to get going, Sheds can often generate income once established with sales of items made but this takes a while to get going so there should be some money in the pot to cover costs from the start.

Budgets

The first place to start is to look at setting a budget for the Shed. This can be used to inform funding bids and talk to potential sponsors. Be realistic when setting your budget, don't be worried about it looking like it costs too much you need a clear idea of the real costs before getting started so that you don't have to cut back at a later date.

What you need to include in your budget will be different depending on your legal structure and your venue costs, the below list gives an idea of costs to consider:

- Rent,
- Business rates if applicable (Ltd companies and CIC's),
- Planning permission fees,
- Utilities – heating, electricity and water,
- Insurance,
- Supervision costs – payroll,
- Decoration and workshop DIY,
- Equipment purchase and maintenance,
- Material and tool purchase,
- Sundry items – refreshments, cleaning materials admin consumables,
- Promotional materials,
- Organisation overheads (if you are hosted by a larger charity),
- Training,
- Health and Safety Protective Equipment,
- Volunteer/Committee Expenses.

Many of these will be unknown and you will have to make some informed guesstimates.

Funders will not query these if you are able to explain what informed your figures and they are realistic. You may be able to work out what the average commercial rent is in your area, look up the average price of tools online. You can also speak to other Sheds about their costs to help inform your budget.

Putting together a budget may also help you to identify where volunteers can help out with tasks. For example you may need to carry out some decoration and basic DIY in your Shed space and instead of paying a professional, a volunteer team can do this for the cost of the materials. In cases like this you can still put a financial value on the activity and this can be used as an example of match funding.

Guideline costs

Every shed will be different so it is difficult to give examples of finite costs against potential expenditure. The below gives information on average costs from five sample sheds, and also provides the range from which these averages were worked out.

Category	Average	Range
Premises costs	£1095	£10 - 3640
Administration	£389	£14 - 800
Promotion	£384	£0 - 850
Tools	£1526	£65 - 3500
Materials	£2036	£220 - 5600
Insurance	£685	£385 - 1170
Utilities	£4000	£0 - 4000
Training	£800	£0 - 900
Miscellaneous expenses	£38	£0 - 68

Identifying Need

Once you have a committee, an idea of premises and an outline budget the next step for getting funding is to prove to a funder that there is a need in your community for a Men's Shed.

This will involve:

- Providing research and statistics on your local area,
- Information on the benefits of a Shed to men's health and wellbeing.
- Feedback from local people.

Local area information

Some local information can be found online for example:

- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA): www.essexinsight.org.uk
- Age UK loneliness maps: <http://data.ageuk.org.uk/loneliness-maps/england-2016>

In addition your local authority will have strategies and assessments that are helpful. For example you will usually be able to find a Local Strategic Plan or a local health and wellbeing plan. These are usually available from your local district/borough Council or Clinical Commissioning Group. Alternatively you can speak to your local CVS who will be able to help. They can often also be found on websites so Google will also be your friend here.

You might find that within your area you have:

- Higher than average populations of older people;
- High numbers of people unemployed or low skilled;
- High prevalence of people claiming disability benefits;
- Issues around access to services/support.

When you read the strategy look for evidence that support your thoughts about who might benefit from a Shed. With any luck the strategies will back up what you already know to be true as a member of the community and will add weight to your claims.

Health Benefits

There is a range of empirical evidence that demonstrates how Sheds can be of benefit to men's health and explaining this to a potential funder will encourage them to support your project.

Examples of evidence are:

Peer Support

When it comes to discussing worries and concerns, health issues and other matters men and women are quite different. Where women will open up to others and speak to professionals men can be more closed. By providing an environment where practical activities and hobbies can be undertaken and shared it builds a strong peer community which encourages men to open up.

Studies have shown how beneficial peer networks can be to all parties involved, The Mental Health Foundation in 2012 published the "Need2Know Peer Support" paper which highlights that peer support relationships have greater levels of empathy and respect than other support relationships and improve confidence, self-worth and wellbeing in all parties.

Reduced isolation/loneliness

'The Lonely Society?' (Mental Health Foundation, 2010) outlines how chronic loneliness can have both physiological and mental health repercussions. It cites negative effects on stress hormones, immune function, cardiovascular function as well as increases in anxiety levels, risk of suicide and risk of substance misuse. Similarly, it outlines how isolation can have a detrimental impact on individuals recovering from mental health issues, preventing them from accessing support services and social networks. This finding is replicated in a study on the effect of isolation on older people in rural communities carried out by the Commission for Rural Communities in 2012 which states that Social isolation has been found to exert an independent influence on risk for mortality comparable with well-established risk factors such as smoking.

Encouraging healthy lifestyles

The Shed environment has been proven to be a conduit to changes in health related behaviour amongst men. It has been so successful that in 2008 the concept was highlighted in the Irish Men's Health policy which states *"Men's Sheds' are another good example of community-based health promotion targeting men. Since the mid-1990s, 192 of these organisation have been established, engaging mostly with older men who are no longer working in paid employment and who have proved difficult to engage in conventional health, education and training initiatives. Through the provision of 'mateship' and a sense of belonging through positive and therapeutic informal activities, 'Men's Sheds' achieve outcomes of positive health, happiness and well-being for those men who participate, as well as for their partners, families and communities."*

Intergenerational Skill Sharing

A Shed can bring together generations, that may not usually mix, in a relaxed but structured environment. By welcoming Sheddors of different generations you can foster understanding, provide an opportunity to learn new skills, provide a sense of purpose, alleviate depressions and isolation in older people and provide role models to young people.

According to Erik Erikson, one of the first psychologists to describe social development across the lifespan, the final stage of emotional development is experienced around the age of 60 and older. During this stage, people seek to find meaning in their lives and make sense of the lives they have lived. Developing connections with a younger generation can help older adults feel a greater sense of fulfilment. In fact, linking older adults with youth can provide advantages for both groups as described above.

Other health

A paper written for the UK Mens Shed Association by Dr. Snorri Bjorn Rafnsson, UCL Department of Epidemiology and Public Health entitled "Social engagement, health and wellbeing of older men" identifies a surprising number of ways that community involvement has health benefits for men ranging from reduced impact of a disability, improved dental health, reduced use of medications, lower levels of depression, reduced emotional distress and delayed onset of dementias. In this paper Dr Rafnsson asserts that *"the scientific evidence shows that the likelihood of dying associated with having poor social relationships may be comparable to that of having a chronic disease such as diabetes. On the other hand, better social participation is related to additional years lived in good health and fewer years spent in poor health."*

Health inequalities

When it comes to health there are a number of inequalities that demonstrate that men need focussed support and need to be treated differently to women. The Men's Health Forum provides a wealth of information about the how men's health is an important issue. For example one in five men will die before the age of 65. Men are also at higher risk of cardiovascular issues or cancer and more at risk of these being fatal, men are more likely to be smokers or to drink heavily, they are more at risk of diabetes and less likely to know about it. More worryingly the biggest killer of men under the age of 35 is suicide with four out of five preventable deaths being from suicide, there has also been a sharp increase in suicide numbers in the 35-65 age range.

Men are also less likely to access support from their GP or other community support services such as smoking cessation, weight management or pharmacies.

These inequalities demonstrate clearly that men need support that is specific to them and the Shed environment can provide it.

Where to find research

There are many places you can look online to find information that support Men's Sheds. Below is a sample of the many online resources:

- Australian Men's Shed Association website www.mensshed.org (mostly Australian)
- UK Men's Shed Association website <http://menssheds.org.uk/news-and-ideas/research-that-support-sheds/>
- Campaign to End Loneliness www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/loneliness-research
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation www.jrf.org.uk/publications/loneliness-resource-pack
- Mental Health Foundation <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z>
- Men's Health Forum www.menshealthforum.org.uk

Aligning with priorities

When you are applying to a funder be sure to align your request for funding with their priorities. For example some funders will only be interested in providing capital funding. This means they will pay for tools and workbenches but won't be interested in insurance costs or the cost of tea and biscuits! Others might work the other way round so it is important to be clear from the outset so you don't waste time writing a bid to someone who will reject your application straight away.

As well as the difference between capital costs and revenue (ongoing costs) funders will probably specify particular interests such as young people, mental health, access to training, health improvements etc. Be sure to familiarise yourself with these so that you ensure that your application to them highlights how you meet their priorities.

You might wish to apply to one funder for all your project costs or it might be appropriate to split the capital and revenue elements. You can apply to more than one funder at a time, just be sure to withdraw an application if you are successful elsewhere.

Remember funders will ask for evaluation and monitoring reports to show that you have achieved what you planned so don't be tempted to promise the earth or distort your project to match their priorities. Be clear about what you intend to achieve and the difference you want to make.

Monitoring impact

One of the key things that funders will look for is what difference their funding will make to people's lives. Many will want to see a lasting change in people's circumstances and improvements in health, wellbeing, quality of life or skills.

Monitoring information can generally be put into two categories - Outputs and Outcomes.

Outputs

Outputs are information about what you do for example:

- How many members you have;
- Demographic data about your Shedders e.g. How old they are, what their employment status is etc;
- How many sessions have been held;
- How many times individuals have attended.

Outcomes

Outcomes are information about what difference you make for example:

- People feel less isolated;
- People feel more involved in their community;
- People feel more confident.

While you are writing your application you might want to think about how you will evidence you have achieved your stated outcomes and benefits. Outputs are easy to measure as they are largely quantitative data however outcomes are not as clear cut and it is useful to think about this early.

One popular way of demonstrating change in people is to capture baseline information when you begin to provide support i.e. when they join the Shed and this can be used as a comparison after a specified time period has passed. Baseline data could include subjective measures of how confident they feel, how involved with the community they are, how often they feel isolated or lonely and how well they feel both physically and mentally and can form part of your membership form.

Where to find funding

There are lots of grant making organisations out there including charitable trusts, statutory bodies and private companies. Knowing where to start can be difficult and your local CVS will be able to help you to identify those funders who are most likely to support your project.

You can also look online at Funding Central www.fundingcentral.org.uk

Some key funders to look at are:

Awards for All: Depending on the size of your project Awards for All is a good option for Sheds. It is the small grant fund from the Big Lottery Fund making grants of between £300-£10,000. They will not be suitable if you have a big building project on your hands or if you need to employ staff but for all other Shed costs such as tools they are approachable. The priorities of Awards for All are:

- People have better chances in life – with better access to training and development to improve life skills.
- Stronger communities – with more active citizens working together to tackle issues within the community.
- Improved rural and urban environments – which communities are able to better access and enjoy.

- Healthier and more active people and communities.

Reaching Communities: This is the large grant scheme from the Big Lottery Fund and funds applications over £10,000, they will include larger building projects and staff costs. For this fund the Lottery want to fund projects that make positive changes in your community, with particular interest in projects that:

- Lasting and sustainable changes to places and spaces,
- Communities to develop happier and stronger relationships with each other,
- Taking action to focus on the root causes of social problems to tackle them at the earliest possible stage.

Find out more about both of these funds online at www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

Essex Community Foundation: The Essex Community Foundation manages different funding streams for the Essex region. Applicants can apply to the foundation with a general application form and the foundation then finds the most appropriate fund.

Generally the maximum grant is for £10,000 however the average grant is £3,500.

You can find out more and apply online at www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk

The Fowler Smith and Jones Charitable Trust: a large grant making organisation based locally in Essex. They are particularly interested in funding church-based and community projects in Essex. The trustees consider grants for the following areas: Arts, Churches, Community, medical, miscellaneous, Overseas, Youth and Capital projects.

There are no guidelines on the amount that can be applied for, but based on previous awards; grants of between £2000 and £4000 are normally made. Full details can be found online at www.fsjtrust.org.uk

The Oak Trust; a small charity, which makes grants of £250 - £4000 to UK registered charities. They support people who are disadvantaged (in the widest sense), medical and environmental charities.

Over the years the Trust has made grants to a wide variety of charities, many of which have been assisted annually over a long period. There are no specific criteria, but consideration is given, among other things, to:

- People who are disadvantaged (in the widest sense)
- Personal development through adventure
- The environment

The Grants made to successful applicants vary from about £250 to about £4,000. preference is given to small charities (annual turnover below £1 million). For full details visit the website www.oaktrust.org.uk

The Tudor Trust: The Tudor Trust makes grants, and provides other types of support, to voluntary and community groups working in any part of the UK. They particularly want to help smaller, community-led organisations which work directly with people who are at the margins of society: organisations which support positive changes in people's lives and in their communities. There are no minimum or maximum grants and they can be multi year.

Find out more online at www.tudortrust.org.uk

Writing a Funding Bid - Top Tips

- Always read the criteria and ensure you are eligible to apply. Use the "What we fund" info as a checklist to ensure your application will be considered and double check your project details against the exclusion list.
- Check your planned activities against the funder's priorities and ensure that your application demonstrates how your project will meet these priorities.
- Write your bid to a stranger – do not assume that the individuals reading your bid will have any background knowledge about the services you provide, your geographic area or service-user group.
- Make sure your answers convey the key elements of your project clearly and are focused on the question. If you have a lot of background information to include then consider including it as a separate appendix or supporting document.
- When explaining your project's objectives, include both outcomes and outputs. An example of an output is "*we will hold 6 shed sessions with 15 attendees*", whereas an outcome might be "*attendees will have improved quality of life through increased social contact and reduced feelings of isolation*"
- Provide facts and figures relating to your project. Funders will want to see a demonstrated need for the project, you may need to run a survey of members, hold focus groups or show evidence of consultation with other service providers.
- Don't assume that you shouldn't repeat yourself if you have answered the question in another part of a form. Treat each question individually and ensure you have completed them as well as possible – assessors may look at a particular question in isolation from the rest of the form.
- Consider the future of your project. If you are applying for general running costs how will the project continue after the funding ends? Can it become sustainable? How will its successes be monitored?
- Ensure your budget is accurate, includes quotes as necessary and is broken down into capital and revenue costs. If there is a reason why an item on the budget is particularly high or low consider including an explanation of how the figure was calculated.
- Check what supporting evidence is required and ensure that it accompanies your application. This may include getting information from your bank, developing policies and procedures or getting references so ensure you look at this when you first sit down to write the application as they may take time to put together.
- Do not leave funding applications to the last minute. Find out when the deadlines are and plan your time so the application is not rushed. Remember you can always contact your local CVS for advice when filling out the application or ask them to look over an application once completed.

Income generation

Charging for membership

You probably don't want to introduce large membership fees for your Shed as high costs can be off-putting. It can also put more pressure on you to deliver high quality service rather than an informal session. A nominal fee, however, for membership and/or Shed sessions attended adds value to the Shed and allows you to cover some ongoing costs such as refreshments.

Fundraising

Getting money from other sources of income might need the involvement of a few people and raise less money at one time. However the funds will be able to be used for any purpose and can strengthen your organisation both financially and in regard to your awareness in the community. It can also involve and motivate Shedders.

There are many alternative ways that you can raise funds for your organisation, for example:

- Events – such as jumble sales, bake sales, raffles, quiz nights, dances or sponsored walks,
- Collections,
- Business sponsorship/support.

Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is raising money, usually online, towards a target through a series of small donations. The concept has been around for years, everyone remembers funding thermometers on the side of churches to show how much they have raised towards their repairs. The principle of crowdfunding is exactly that through now it is usually facilitated by an online platform such as Justgiving or Spacehive.

Essex County Council have a substantial fund available to support small scale local projects - good ideas that can have a real impact locally. They want to support as many ideas as possible and can pledge up to £500 to do so. These £500 pledges will kick start a crowdfunding campaign, ensuring your campaign builds momentum quickly. While they are open to what kinds of projects are created, to get a pledge from the County Council, ideas should transform a shared or publicly accessible space in Essex, enhance and bring communities together offering a clear deliverable for those backing the idea.

Upload your idea on the Essex Crowd page on the Crowdfunding platform Spacehive to get fundraising www.spacehive.com/movement/theessexcrowd

Selling products

One of the great things about Sheds is that goods can be made there that can be sold to support ongoing costs. Simple things like bird boxes and planters will always sell and can also be used to help familiarise people with tools and processes to help with up skilling. You can sell at community events such as carnivals and village shows, from your Shed premises or at car boot sales.

How to price items

There is no set method of how to price items, one good way is to look at similar items in the marketplace and set your prices to be competitive with them. Look to other Sheds and also calculate the production cost of the goods including time invested and the cost of the materials.

- Transaction value – the price the buyer is willing to pay,
- Setting values of similar items available in the market place,
- Calculating the production cost of the goods, including the cost of any materials, manufacturing and any other processing used in production.

Resource Raising

In tandem with fundraising Shed projects can benefit from resource raising. Resource raising is generating donated resources to grow an organisations capacity alongside the more traditional donations of money and time.

Where funding is becoming increasingly competitive developing a strategy that includes resource raising for things such as goods and services, facilities, knowledge and skills or influence could be of benefit.

We are living in austere times so even though people may want to give generously, it may not be a viable option. Offering would-be donors a way of helping without having to part with their money, is a perfect way of simply getting more donations.

Take some time to decide what kind of resources you need. Once this is agreed upon think about who might be able to offer those resources as an in-kind donation or at a reduced rate.

Many businesses believe that offering skills and other non-cash resources would make much more of an impact on their charity partner's mission delivery than purely cash-based relationships. Build on this and create a dialogue with potential supporters to ensure you meet their objectives too. Whilst they may have altruistic aims, it always helps if they get an added benefit as well.

In the case of Sheds you may be able to negotiate a reduced rate on tools from a local supplier or you can take advantage of the UK Men's Shed Associations partnership with Triton Tools who offer a discount to member Sheds. Other options are wood off cuts from timber yards or training and demonstrations from local trades people,

Read more about resource raising

<http://knowhownonprofit.org/how-to/resource-raising-why-bother>

Community Resources

There are some companies and groups that have processes in place for giving to charities and community groups for example:

- Local supermarkets: many of the big local supermarkets will have Community Champions who have a budget and remit to allocate small amounts of funding and produce to community projects. Sometimes they can also supply volunteers for group. Find your local one in stores such as Tesco, Asda and Morrisons.
- Charity RePaint www.communityrepaint.org.uk, will donate damaged and discontinued lines of paint to the local community.
- There is a B&Q scheme to donate damaged goods to local good causes www.diy.com/corporate/community/waste-donation
- Managers at Travis Perkins have the ability to donate off cuts www.travisperkinsplc.co.uk/responsibility/community.aspx

Planning an Event

Simple tips for organising a successful fundraising activity

Be Prepared:

- Set your date and venue well in advance.
- Confirm speakers, exhibitors, entertainment etc. A.S.A.P.
- Evolve your action plan and delegate tasks.
- Can you involve your volunteers.
- Have a check list and a running order.

Time your event:

- Pick your date carefully to avoid clashes with:
 - National fundraising activities such as BBC Children in Need
 - Important sporting events
 - High profile local events

However timing your event to coincide with a national awareness day can help to maximise publicity, for example Men's Health Week in June and National Shed week in July.

Budget:

- Consider additional fundraising activities to raise income e.g. can you include a raffle at your event?
- If appropriate aim to have some income prior to the event e.g. ticket sales.
- Consider all expenditure and expected income early on in your planning.

Venue:

Consider

- A central location?
- Car Parking?
- Disabled Access?
- Suitability for size of room, toilets location etc.?

Sponsorship:

- Can local business donate any prizes or resources?
- Can you get a free or charity rate for the use of your venue?

Remember many local businesses are feeling the pinch in the current economic climate so may not be able to contribute financially but may be able to give a donation in kind.

It is best to offer a reciprocal arrangement – can you offer inclusion in promotion or advertising at your event?

Legalities

You are likely to need a licence if you are:

- Providing alcohol or entertainment (which includes recorded music).
- Holding a raffle, lottery or auction.
- Doing any sort of public collection.

Raffles and Bingo

The 2005 Gambling Act provides a statutory definition of lottery: it must involve payment to enter, and winners must be chosen solely or initially by chance. Provided they are initially chosen by chance, processes involving skill or judgment can be a factor in subsequently narrowing the winners.

There are still some things you can do without asking permission from the local authority or the Gambling Commission. These are called exempt lotteries and there are now three types:

1. Incidental lotteries

This is a lottery that you would hold which is incidental to a non-commercial event, for example, you can have a raffle at a fete or a dance or a sports day or some similar event, provided that all of the money raised at the event, including entrance fees, is for purposes other than private gain.

2. Private lotteries

These kinds of lotteries and raffles can either be between members of a group, club or society, or between people who live or work on the same premises.

3. Customer lotteries

These are less likely to be relevant to voluntary groups, but are similar to a private lottery. A customer lottery is one run by occupiers of business premises who sell tickets only to customers on their business premises.

The Gambling commission has a handy guide that explains how to organise a small lottery available online at <http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/PDF/Organising-small-lotteries.pdf>

Public collections

If donations will be collected at or nearby an event you should check with your local authority whether a licence is required.

For more information about fundraising at events and more generally visit the Institute of Fundraising website www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/guidance

Event Insurance

For an event involving members of the public you should ensure you have public Liability insurance. Public liability insurance covers legal liability to pay compensation to members of the public if they are injured or their property is damaged as a result of an accident caused by the insured, or caused by products sold or supplied by the insured.

Most organisations will already have insurance in place but it best to check you are covered for fundraising events. Your venue may also have insurance that will cover your event, check the details with them do not assume you will be covered! Alternatively short-term insurance to cover a specific event can be taken out.

The Charity Commission has produced a document called "Charities and Insurance" that provides information on why charities and not for profit groups might need insurance. This can be downloaded from their website www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Section 4: Running your shed

Laying the groundwork

Before you open the doors to your Shed and invite people in there are a few things you need to make sure are in place. It is important to ensure that you have a safe and friendly environment for people and that the way in which this is achieved is communicated to people.

Insurance

One of the key things you will need to get sorted before any Shedder picks up a tool is your insurance. You will need to have public liability insurance to cover any injuries that might occur and contents insurance to cover your tools and materials. You may also need buildings insurance depending on the details of your lease or if you own the premises you will be operating out of. Trustee indemnity insurance should be in place if you are not a incorporated organisation.

Public liability

Public liability insurance is arguably the most important of your insurances and may be the most complicated and expensive part of the on-going costs. It is likely to cost upwards of £500 per year because you will be undertaking high risk activity. An insurance company will ask you to provide a range of information to show that you have taken appropriate steps to guard against risk. This can include:

- A list of the tools you will have in the Shed including the specifications of the tools,
- Copies of risk assessments for all of the tools,
- Evidence of PAT testing where appropriate,
- Statement of experience and training for everyone who is in charge of maintaining health and safety,
- Information on storage of substances and waste management,
- Health and Safety Statement, workshop rules and code of conduct,
- Induction policy and forms,
- Information on where/how you intend to sell items made at the Shed.

Ensuring that the insurance company is happy to provide cover and is fully informed of all planned activities is extremely important and takes time to get right. It is advisable to begin talking to your insurance company in plenty of time, don't assume you're going to get insurance straight away, they will invariably have questions and you don't want to delay a launch or opening because they you are still waiting on their final decision.

Buildings and contents

As with any other building containing valuable equipment you will need contents insurance cover. Building insurance may be provided by your landlord but it is a good idea to check exactly what they will be responsible for and what they expect you to cover. For example some may be happy to cover the fabric of the building but will not cover fixtures and fittings where some will. Your insurance company will probably specify a minimum security standard they expect to be in place and it will be your responsibility to ensure this is maintained otherwise you risk voiding the policy.

Trustees Indemnity Insurance

Trustee indemnity insurance protects the trustees on the committee from being personally liable for anything that happens such as someone having a serious accident with a power tool. The insurance is low cost but worth having if you are an unincorporated organisation with no legal identity.

Writing policies

There are a few different policies that you should have in place before opening your Shed doors. A solid foundation of policies and procedures means that trustees, Shedders and staff know what is expected of them and what they can expect in return.

Policies and procedures can assist in:

- Providing a safe and comfortable environment for vulnerable people,
- Providing an outlet for grievances,
- Outlining training requirements and provision,
- Setting out safe working practice to minimise risk,
- Explaining recruitment procedures, and requirements,
- Indicating how to raise concerns and explaining how they will be dealt with,
- Ensuring accidents are dealt with safely and documented correctly,
- Ensuring equal treatment of all those involved in the organisation, or accessing its services,
- Safeguarding individuals' data protection rights,

In addition many funders look for policies before awarding a grant.

Good policies help protect the individual and organisation from misunderstandings, which can lead to time consuming and sometimes distressing disagreements or even legal action.

What policies do we need?

Depending on the size and activities of your organisation you will need different policies. Some policies such as Equal opportunities are good practice in every organisation whereas some are specifically related to your operation such as safeguarding or manual handling.

Additionally if you employ staff you must have a disciplinary and grievance policy and if you employ five or more staff there is a legal requirement for a written health and safety policy.

You may also wish to develop policies that specifically relate to the type of work that your organisations does e.g. a drug and alcohol policy for organisations that involve driving or operating machinery or a computer and internet use policy for office based staff.

Equal opportunities

It is good practice to have an Equal Opportunities Policy and this is one of the key policies that a lot of funders will look to see before awarding funding.

The details that are contained within an Equal Opportunity Policy will vary depending on the size of the organisation. Some smaller organisations may wish to have a simple equal opportunities statement whereas larger organisations and those that employ staff should go into more detail. Organisations must provide an environment free from discrimination of any kind for its employees and it is good practice to extend this to all those with access to their service for example volunteers and service users. Legal action can be taken against employers who demonstrate unfair discriminatory practices.

Equal Opportunities Statements

An Equal Opportunities Policy should open with a statement of intent this is usually a paragraph that acknowledges that discrimination exists and confirms your group's commitment to providing equal access to your service regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religion. For small groups your policy can stop and start with this statement.

For example:

Organisation name recognises that discrimination can exist in society and strives to ensure that all individuals involved with or using the services of *Organisation name* are treated with dignity and respect. *Organisation name* is committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere to all individuals regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.

Organisation name is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity to all users, volunteers and staff.

Larger groups may wish to provide more details for example:

- Implementation: How will you ensure the policy is adhered to e.g. making staff/volunteers aware of their responsibilities under the policy, provide regular relevant training as needed and / or incorporating equal opportunities into role descriptions.
- Meeting specific needs: How you will adapt services and information to be accessible to all demographics e.g. production of large print document, alternative languages, use of an accessible venue etc.
- Recruitment of staff: If you are an employer you will need to consider how Equal Opportunities relates to your staff in regard to advertising vacancies, the recruitment procedure, conditions of employment etc.
- Handling complaints: How you will address any complaints relating to equal opportunities.
- Monitoring and review: How the policy will be monitored and updated.

But Men's Sheds are just for Men

One difficulty with an Equal opportunities statement or policy for Men's Sheds is that the vast majority of Sheds will seek to discriminate on the basis of gender and restrict membership or beneficiaries to men only. How do you write an equal opportunities statement on that basis?

A bit of background to this is the Equality Act 2010, this passed into law on 28th April 2010, it consolidated previous anti-discrimination legislation into a single Act and introduced new rights, responsibilities and changes.

One of the key aspects affecting the voluntary sector is the "charitable exemption". Under previous legislation charities were able to restrict their beneficiaries in line with their governing document. This exemption has now been removed and organisations will have to prove a "legitimate aim"

Charities can targeted services towards a particular demographic who share a protected characteristic¹, in the case of Men in Sheds this will be gender. This is only permissible if your governing document outlines this restriction and the your aim is to tackle a particular disadvantage faced by people who share a protected characteristic or the charity is not tackling a particular disadvantage but is seeking to achieve some other legitimate aim in a fair, balanced and reasonable way.

1: protected characteristics covered by the Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.

Putting this into the example of a Shed project

When writing your governing document you are allowed to expressly name men as your beneficiary group as gender is a protected characteristic. Shed projects are usually set up because there is recognition that men interact differently to women and the resulting outcomes are often that they are at higher risk of being socially isolated. This being the case Men in Shed projects are tackling disadvantage linked to a protected characteristic and can apply the charitable exemption as explained below:

A charity is set up to deliver a Shed project to reduce social isolation in men only. The charity can only follow the restriction to people of a particular gender if the risk of isolation is particularly high in men. To meet the disadvantage element of the charities' exception, the trustees must be satisfied that the risk is higher for the group it is working with, namely men (although you could restrict to older men if preferred) than for the general population.

Full details of how the charity exemption can be applied can be found on the charity commission website:

www.charity-commission.gov.uk/library/equality_act_guidance.pdf

Having identified a legitimate charitable exemption to limit your activities to a particular gender your Equal opportunities statement/policy must focus on other areas of ensuring equal access. For example how will you ensure people are not disadvantaged in accessing your Shed due to mobility issues, age, language etc.

Safeguarding

As a Shed you may feel that some of your Shedders may be classed as vulnerable adults in which case you will need a policy and procedures to outline any support that you offer.

Don't be worried that by opening a Shed you will all need to receive training on supporting people with additional needs and be equipped and ready to provide professional support and caring duties. Overall many Sheds take the stance that they do not provide care and therefore if someone is in need of a support worker or carer in their day to day lives then that person should accompany them to Shed sessions. This can be the beginning of your policy; however it does not remove all your duty of care.

Duty of care requires that you do everything 'reasonable' within your power to protect others from significant harm. This harm can come in different form such as:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect
- Discrimination
- Institutional abuse

A safeguarding policy should outline your commitment to your duty of care and the measures that you will take to ensure this commitment is met. The first stage of this is to include the need for additional support to be provided by the individual's carer/support worker however you also need to give some guidance about what you should do if there is a suspicion of abuse, neglect or harm.

This will probably be a reporting process where concerns are highlighted to the Chair or a committee members and acted on as appropriate, this could be taking advice from somewhere like Action on Elder Abuse <http://www.elderabuse.org.uk>, reporting to social services or the police or doing a third party referral to the Samaritans.

Anti Bullying Policy

The purpose of an anti bullying policy is to state clearly your Sheds opposition to bullying or harassing behaviour by Shedders and volunteers including committee members and to provide a clear process for dealing with such behaviour.

The policy should recognise the right of every individual to be treated with dignity and respect and to be part of the Shed an atmosphere free of bullying and harassment.

Definitions of Bullying & Harassment

Bullying may be characterised as:

Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Harassment, in general terms, is:

Unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of people. It may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident. The key is that the actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient.

Financial Procedures

As part of the treasurer and the committees role of ensuring the Shed remains financially viable it is a good idea to have in place financial procedures that are followed to ensure income and expenditure is monitored and accountable.

For example you may wish to have a finance procedure which outlines:

- How financial decisions are made and how these are recorded - for example you may require purchases over a certain value to be made by the committee while smaller purchases can be made on a day to day basis by a fewer people.
- The requirements for making a payment e.g. keeping receipts/invoices for all purchases regardless of size.
- How payments are recorded and by whom, you may have a different system relating to Petty cash than cheque and BACS payments.
- Who can access Petty cash.
- Who will act as signatories for the bank account and cheques.

Section 5: Shed Safety

When you walk into a typical community Shed you will see a number of opportunities to do yourself considerable harm such as band saws, circular saws, grinding wheels, electricity etc. it is the responsibility of those of you running the Shed that the chances of this harm actually taking place is reduced as much as possible.

Health and Safety

The first place to start is a commitment to Health and Safety, this is done through a Health and Safety policy, this policy is generally an overarching document that will reference other procedures.

There is a wealth of information available from the Health and Safety executive at www.hse.gov.uk

Sitting below the overarching statement will be a series of lower level procedures that drill down more detail. This will include Codes of Conduct, Risk Assessments, Maintenance procedures, COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) assessments and guidance on the use of equipment.

Equipping the Shed

Part of your Health and Safety appraisal and Risk Assessments will be the use of safety equipment and it is your responsibility to ensure that these are easily to hand for people to use and that they are maintained.

Fire Extinguishers

Depending on the size of the Shed you will need at least one of these, probably more and you may also need a fire blanket. Fire extinguishers are colour coded and used for different fire types, ensure you have the correct type of extinguisher or you could inadvertently make a bad situation worse.

Codes of Fire Extinguishers

Red:- Water extinguisher, used on fires involving organic materials such as wood and paper, not safe on electrical fires or burning fat/oil.

Blue: Powder extinguisher, used on fires involving organic materials such as wood and paper and can also be used on grease and oil based fires although not safe on chip or fat pan fires. Safe on live electrical equipment, although does not penetrate the spaces in equipment easily and the fire may re-ignite. This type of extinguisher does not cool the fire very well and care should be taken that the fire does not flare up again. There is danger of inhalation if powder extinguishers are used within buildings.

Cream: Foam extinguisher, used on fires involving solids and burning liquids, such as paint and petrol but not suitable for chip or fat pan fires. Safe on fires caused by electricity if tested to 35kV (dielectric test) and a 1m safety distance is adhered to.

Black: Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) extinguisher are used on live electrical equipment, Fumes from CO₂ extinguishers can asphyxiate if used in confined spaces: ventilate the area as soon as the fire has been controlled. Only use CO₂ extinguishers with frost-free horns, as the hand holding the horn can otherwise be frozen to the horn, as the gas is getting very cold during the discharge.

Fire Blanket:, Fire blankets are made of fire resistant materials. They are particularly useful for smothering flammable liquid fires or for wrapping round a person whose clothing is on fire.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment is equipment designed to protect an individual from harm whilst carrying out activities. In a workshop environment such as a Shed this could include:

- Protective gloves: can protect against chemicals and other skin irritants. Avoid gloves when operating machines such as bench drills where the gloves could get caught.
- Protective goggles: can protect against dust and splinters and chemical splashes.
- Protective ear covers: can protect against extreme noise.
- Protective masks: can protect against inhalation of dust, fumes and airborne particles.

PPE should be stored correctly, regularly checked and replaced as needed. Hygiene and contamination should be considered for items such as goggles that may be used by more than one person and antibacterial wipes are a good way of keeping equipment clean.

Other items

As well as fire safety equipment and PPE there are other things that you should have in the Shed as part of your health and safety procedures and these could include:

- Accident book: used to record any accidents that occur, to adhere to the Data Protection Act you will also need a secure place to store any completed forms that will have peoples personal contact details on.
- Signage (such as no smoking, wet floor, fire exit).
- First aid kit.
- Smoke alarms.

Regular checks

Having health and safety plans and procedures are only worthwhile if they are maintained and reviewed. It is important that regular checks are carried out so that problems can be spotted early and accidents prevented. Often this can be a monthly walk round carrying out a visual check of equipment, this should be recorded and signed off so that you can demonstrate your commitment or keeping things safe if problems arise.

Things to check include:

- Visual check of plugs and leads.
- Smoke alarms in working order – checking batteries and dust build up.
- Visual check of power tools – checking for dust build up, lubricating moving parts and checking safety features.
- Checking dust extraction for build up of dust and debris.

As part of your regular checks there will be annual checks needed on electrical equipment. PAT tests (portable appliance testing) check for electrical defects that cannot be detected through visual examination are an important part of maintaining safety in the workshop.

Fire extinguishers should also be serviced on an annual basis.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are processes that enable you to identify potential risks, their likelihood and severity and steps that should be taken to minimise those risks.

Risk assessments should be carried out on all activities and this is vital to ensuring your Shed remains a safe environment. This may include carrying out assessments on the use of a particular tools or machinery or a particular activity. You may also need to carry out a risk assessment on a particular individual e.g. someone with Asthma, a back injury, on a medication that may cause drowsiness or recovering from Stroke. You may assess that they need one to one support on machinery, to always use a protective mask or that some tools are not safe for them to use in any circumstances.

It is also looking into what risks associated with the building you are using are your responsibility and what you need to be reporting to you landlord. For example: if there is poor lighting in the car park this is likely to be something the landlord needs to be aware of and address, however if you place a cable across a floor it is up to you to minimise the risk of someone tripping.

5 Steps

There are 5 simple steps to carrying out a risk assessment.

Step 1: Identify the Hazard/Risk

Take a look at the activities that will be carried out.

- What/who could potentially cause harm?
- Is there a history of incidents/accidents to consider?
- Check manufacturers guidance on equipment or chemical products.

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

For each identified hazard think about who may be harmed:

- Is there a particular risk to a specific group of people such as older people, those with disabilities, children?
- What might happen to them?

Step 3: Evaluate the risk and decide on the precaution

What can you do

- Can you get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can you control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

Step 4: Record your findings and implement them

Write down your findings and ensure that precautionary measures are taken where possible. Ensure others are aware of their responsibilities.

Step 5: Review and update

Risk assessments should be consistently reviewed to ensure that they are still relevant. This should be at least annually but also should be part of event planning or reviewed in the case of an incident occurring.

Risk Matrices

One way to assess risk is to use a Risk Matrix. A Risk Matrix defines various levels of risk such as how likely a risk is and how severe the outcome will be. This can help to identify where extra precautions must be taken or if an activity should be avoided entirely.

		Severity			
		Major	Serious	Minor	Insignificant
Likelihood	Very Likely	Extreme	High	High	Medium
	Likely	High	High	Medium	Medium
	Unlikely	High	Medium	Medium	Low
	Very Unlikely	Medium	Medium	Low	Low

Where a risk is assessed as High or Extreme careful consideration should be taken as to whether you can continue with this activity, certainly safety precautions must be put in place to lower the risk.

If an activity is Medium further safeguards should be investigated and put in place if possible but it is usually considered OK to continue with these activities in the short term.

Activities that score low are generally considered to be an acceptable level of risk but must still be reviewed regularly.

Within a Shed environment you will need to consider Risk Assessments for the following:
(please note this is not an exhaustive list and you should look at your individual Shed set up to ensure you have considered all potential risks)

- Individual power tools
- General power tools usage
- Use of hand tools
- Manual Handling
- Fire risk
- Noise risk
- Slips, trips and falls
- Wood dust
- Electricity
- Hazardous substances
- Working alone
- People with health conditions

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

As well as considering the affect of tools and environmental factors on risk you will also need to consider how particular liquids and substances may affect people. For example some are flammable and need to be stored in a metal container, others might be toxic if inhaled or ingested or could be an irritant to skin. Where any of these are the case guidance needs to be given in regards safe handling, storage or minimising exposure, this is known as a COSHH assessment.

In a lot of cases manufacturers of products will provide datasheets for their product that will outline the hazards, safeguards and protections you need.

Remember COSHH assessments will be needed for things like cleaning products as well as paints, stains and oils. You should also carry out a COSHH assessment on things like wood dust.

The Health and Safety Executive is again a great starting point to find out more and they have a section dedicated to COSHH www.hse.gov.uk/coshh

Letting people know

The final part of the process of developing health and safety protocols and risk assessing activities is to communicate your findings to people who are affected. A lovely set of policies and guidance will do you no good if they are neatly stored on a bookshelf and collecting dust, they need to be working documents.

'A Men's Shed is a safe and enjoyable space. All Sheddors should be clear about the purpose of the Shed and 'how

There are a number of ways you can ensure that people are made aware of what they need to do to ensure health and safety is upheld.

Induction

Every Shedder should go through an induction process; there will be a broad spectrum of abilities within your Shed, with many people not being experienced machinists. An assessment programme should be put into place in which people are introduced to the machines on a one-to-one basis with an experienced supervisor and then assessed on their ability to use the tool. Some people will be assessed as competent straight away others will need support to reach competency.

The induction process for each member should also included health and safety issues. For example the key points of health and safety explaining the overall context and rules. Sheddors should be asked to sign the an induction form stating that they have received and understood information given. The purpose of this is so that if there is an injury at a later date, it can be evidenced that the individual had received information to stay safe. It provides an auditing trail for anyone to see and protects the organisation from litigation.

Code of conduct

As part of signing up to become a member of the Shed, individuals should also sign up to adhere to a Code of Conduct which can be explained as part of the induction. Sheddors should all have a copy as well as it being displayed in the Shed. What is included in the Code of Conduct gives a good baseline for upholding health and safety and can also be a way of outlining behaviours that are not acceptable at the Shed. This helps to maintain a welcoming and supportive environment.

Example content for a Code of Conduct includes:

- All Sheddors to treat each other with dignity and respect at all times,
- No swearing, shouting or raised voices within Shed premises,
- No use of offensive language,
- No smoking within Shed premises,
- No drinking or taking drugs within Shed premises,
- No one under the influence of drink or other substances will be allowed to participate in a Shed session,
- No gambling to take place within the Shed premises,
- All Sheddors to respect health and safety at all times and to ensure rules and procedures are adhered to.

Signage

You can consider having key points or risk assessment on display near tools, for example what PPE needs to be used with each machine and reminders about tying back loose hair and clothing.

Signage should also include “do not use” signs if an issue has been identified with a particular tool, wet floor signs, fire exits and safety information, no smoking signs etc.

Training

Given that most of the Sheddors will probably not be experienced machinists, they will require training to use the power tools. This can be provided by the Supervisors who have been selected on the basis of their ability to use the tools safely. If not they will also require training before they can pass on their knowledge to others.

You should consider what training your Shed could benefit from, you may wish to put all those responsible for maintaining health and safety through some first aid and health and safety training but this could also be extended to Sheddors? You could also consider training on managing difficult situations or communication skills.

You can also make sure that information leaflets are to hand within the Shed building the Health and Safety executive has a wide range of publications available to download or order. Visit www.hse.gov.uk to find out more.

First Aid

Accidents may well happen within your Shed and it will be important that people are on hand with knowledge of First Aid and a well stocked First Aid kit is both present and easy to access.

A basic first aid kit may contain:

- Plasters in a variety of different sizes and shapes.
- Small, medium and large sterile gauze dressings,
- Sterile eye dressings,
- Triangular bandages,
- Crêpe rolled bandages,
- Safety pins,
- Disposable sterile gloves,
- Tweezers,
- Scissors,
- Alcohol-free cleansing wipes
- Sticky tape.

It is not advisable to have medications and creams in a kit as you may not know if people have allergies. Individuals wishing to take painkillers or anti-histamines etc should bring their own to the Shed.

Remember you should always record accidents no matter how small in an accident book. This will help you to firstly record the details of an incident while it is fresh in your mind and also to review if there are common accidents occurring and you can review your practices in accordance.

Section 6: Filling your Shed

Letting People know

Once you have a building, funding, your insurances and structure sorted out, tools and equipment and all your policies on place you need the last and most important ingredient to a successful Shed project and that's people. You will now need to begin promotion.

Press and the media

Involving the local media as early as possible is vital in publicising the project and finding interested parties in attending the Shed and or becoming a committee member. You should find out who within your local papers is the correspondent for your area and send things directly to them.

Remember you will need to have a contact point for all press releases and public enquiries, if people do not want to give out personal information consider setting up an email account specifically for the Shed or purchasing a pay as you go mobile phone to take calls.

Branding

Simple branding can be quite effective and can be more memorable than words alone. If you have a Shedder with competency with graphic design you can develop a simple logo. If not you could choose to use a particular font or colours (works for Coca-cola) use this consistently and people are more likely to remember you.

Marketing materials

You will need to have some materials printed with information about your project to give out at events or to leave at community venues etc. If you don't have someone within your Shed team who has the skills to put this together focus on putting together the words you want to use in the first instance. You can then see if a local printing company can help you with some low cost or free design work or you might be able to find a volunteer who has the skills you need. Contact your local Volunteer Centre to see how they can help.

Website

In order to reach as many people as possible it is important to have a website.

BT community connections provide websites for free for community groups that are simple to set up. They don't come with an email address but there is a contact form and you can send the contacts to a private email address or can set up an email account for your Shed using a free service such as Hotmail, Google or Yahoo. Make sure someone is committed to checking that email address if you do.

Other options are blog platforms such as wordpress or blogger.com

Social Media

Many people take part in social media and it is a good way of getting word out to people. The most common are Facebook and Twitter but there are many more out there such as Google+ and Instagram. If you are not familiar with social media then the best approach is to choose one and do it well rather than trying to spread yourself across a range of platforms.

Mailing lists

Mailing lists don't need to be complicated, Mailchimp, for example is a free online service which allows you to send out messages electronically to people on a mailing list, you can collect the email addresses of people who are interested in your project and send out updates to them regularly so they know about all your activities and updates.

Word of mouth

One of the best forms of promotion is word of mouth, talk about your project with people you know and encourage them to do the same. Make sure you have leaflets available to give to people and key information like your web address, opening times etc.

Develop partnerships

One way to attract interest and new Shedders is to develop partnerships with other local groups. This could be groups whose members might also be interested in being Shedders such as "in Bloom" or Allotment groups, Rotary or Lions clubs or hobby clubs. Or it could be groups whose beneficiaries might want to attend such as Age UK, RVS and other health groups. Your local CVS will be able to help you spread the word through their network of community groups.

Writing good copy

It is important that your promotional materials are easy to read and convey key information clearly. You will need to have a clear idea of who your target audience is – for example are you writing something that you want potential Shedders to pick up and pique their interest, are you letting local health service professionals know about the Shed so they can refer people or are you trying to sell products or attract donations. The way in which you communicate with these different audiences will be different and you will have to adapt.

Some key points to consider are:

- avoid jargon or acronyms – assume no knowledge from the reader,
- keep your message short – no more than 250 words for a press release or 15 words for a sentence,
- put together a notes for editors spiel that can be attached to the end of press releases that contains background information for the journalist,
- put yourself in the readers shoes,
- spend time working on a headline or title – this is the first thing people read and it needs to hook your reader,
- include a call to action and always ensure contact details are easy to find.

When writing a leaflet consider these three steps

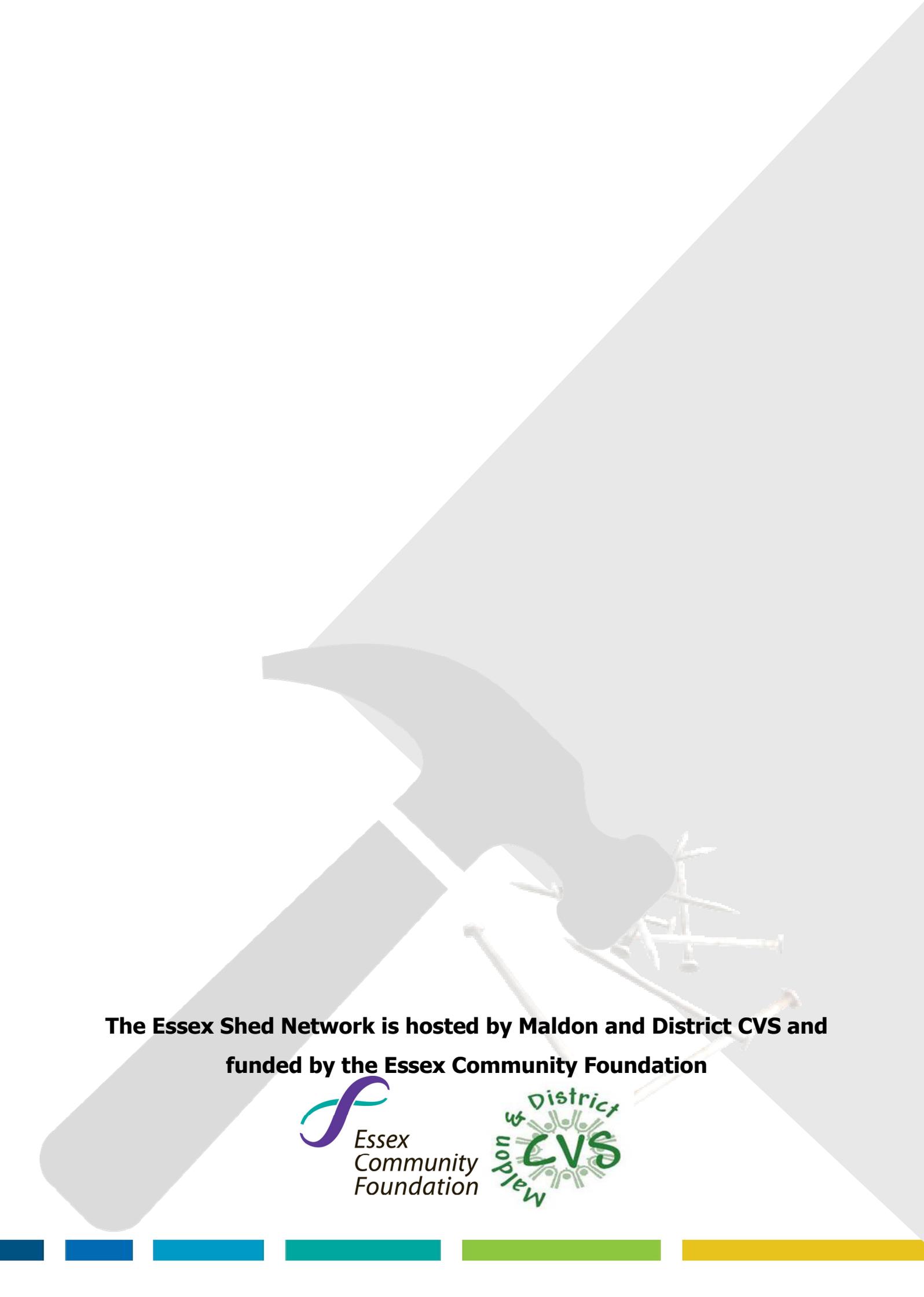
1. Identify why someone might come to the Shed and explain what is in it for them.
2. Answer any concerns they may have - I don't have any skills is the Shed for me? I have lots of experience is the Shed for me? I'm over 65 can I come along?....
3. Tell them how, when and where

Don't forget the pictures

Using pictures is a great way of communicating a message so if you have a Shedder who is good with a camera then get them down to your Shed taking photos. People can relate to photos as it helps them to picture themselves doing something.

Pictures of your building and a good map can also relieve any anxiety about finding where you are.





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