

22 August 2019

Dear Sir/ Madam

I am writing in support of Inverclyde Shed in their search for premises. Inverclyde Shed is part of a growing and successful men's shed movement. In Scotland in 2013 there were five sheds. There are now fast approaching 180 men's sheds in development or fully operational. Men's sheds are sustainable organisations that are here for the long haul. Men's sheds are supported by a range of funders, including NHS Trusts, National Lottery Community Fund, Asda Foundation / Royal Voluntary Service, Robertson Trust, Scottish Government Climate Challenge Fund, Age Scotland and local authority participatory budgeting. These funders recognise the massive difference men's shed are making.

Men's sheds provide positive views of aging and later life, enhance men's health and well-being and combat loneliness and social isolation. This is evidenced in Age Scotland's The Shed Effect <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/documents/EN-GB-SC/The%20Shed%20Effect.pdf?dtrk=true> and Age Scotland's Health and Well-being Survey <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-scotland/documents/community-development-documents/age-scotland-mens-sheds-health-and-well-being-survey.pdf>

Many sheds having been supported initially by external funding are now self-sustaining through the products and services they make for sale, by donation, through their maker culture. Men's sheds save money for local authorities and the communities they serve. Research from the Scottish Men's Shed Association shows that for every £1 spent on the Westhill Men's Shed in Aberdeenshire there was a return of £9.34 in terms of health and social care and community learning outcomes. Communities benefit from projects that men's sheds deliver such as: buddy benches and mud kitchens for schools; planters and wheelchair accessible raised beds for community gardening; and nesting boxes and feeders to encourage biodiversity. Many of these products are made from recycled materials contributing to carbon emissions' reduction by keeping wood, metal and plastic out of landfill.

Inverclyde Shed help Inverclyde Council, in the spirit of the Christie Commission, to make a shift toward prevention. The operating procedures of the Inverclyde Shed are in line with Christie's recommendations in that they "...are built around people and communities, their needs, aspirations, capacities and skills, and work to build up their autonomy and resilience."

Men's sheds are enabling local authorities to achieve some of the Scottish Government's Revised National Outcomes locally in particular:

- We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination
- We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential
- We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely
- We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
- We are healthy and active
- We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment

Men's sheds are very different from other community organisations in that they possess the skill set to ensure the premises they lease or own are safe, secure, well maintained and effectively managed.

Inverclyde Council's physical assets are in a 'safe pair of hands' with the Inverclyde Shed because of the considerable human and social capital of the shedders who are equipped with a rich and diverse range of skills and experience.

Yours faithfully,



Community Development Officer (Men's Sheds)