

Membership

As is usual, we have had a few members not renew their subs, often because of health or family related issues. Russ left for pastures new, and has been heavily involved in setting up a Shed in his new home town. It is great that we have been able to welcome a raft of new members, most of whom waited patiently on the waiting list for a couple of months before spaces became available. Join me in welcoming Ron Whiting, Keith Morgan, Phil East, Ken Zetie, Roger Giles, Simon Kibble, John Sears, Chris Hosey, James Taylor, Bernie Manton, Nick Sidhu, Kenneth Jevons, Neil McCluskey, Membership now stands at our current maximum of forty. Thanks to all existing members who have been so supportive in helping them bed in.

During the year we introduced a booking system, designed by Derek. This has been well received by all. Designed originally to cope with the changing capacity due to Covid, its use will continue. In particular, it helps members select less busy days where they so wish. The design has recently been tweaked to allow us to book onto courses and special events such as today's. Many thanks Derek for this fine creation.

Projects

We have continued to build our relationship with the local parks, and I have regular meetings with Tim Williams, the Parks Manager. We also hosted a show round the local and regional manager of the Groundworks Trust. These entities accounted for our major projects during the year; the Colne Valley signage, the Langley Welcome Shelter and the container storage roof being the main ones. We also continued with the refurbishment of the cafe furniture, and will soon start a garden project for the Black Park office, led by Ron. Such projects encourage members to acquire new skills and help build fellowship and it was great to see everyone pulling together to get these done on time and to budget. Special thanks go to Jim, always willing to help and offer advice and with his amazing design skills that certainly helped gain the contracts we were awarded.

The above projects raised significant funds for the Shed. Monies raised have been ploughed back into major purchases such as the band saw, jigsaw, improved dust extractors, and various other tools.

We have also continued with our community work, especially helping refurbish the Rotary Cottage, and various school projects. We are always open to suggestions for community projects. We can discuss how to increase our community work under AOB.

We must also remember the significant ongoing upgrades to the Shed facilities- improved ventilation, heating and dust reduction, more outdoor work stations, auxiliary tools, new external racking etc.. Some of these have been made possible by Les's considerable expertise in acquiring grants, as he will cover in his report.

Finally, we have significantly improved the garden area and our open spaces, which allowed us to chill outside when Covid restricted our numbers indoors. We have a

really lovely environment now, which is the envy of all who visit. Thanks to Chas and our other gardeners.

Health and safety

The year has been dominated by Covid. The committee constantly reviewed the ever changing rules to ensure everyone stayed safe. At the onset of the second lock down we approached the council to be formally recognised as a support group, which gave clarity as to our legal position re numbers and members travelling to the site. We are proud that members responded positively to the restrictions put in place meaning no outbreaks occurred at the Shed.

The committee have worked steadily behind the scenes to ensure we have a safe environment. We will expand the training and induction, but are reliant on members asking for help and guidance if using a tool which you are unfamiliar with, or have not used for some while. As mentioned, we have upgraded the ventilation, and we have just commissioned PAT testing of all our electrical equipment, have up to date fire extinguisher certificates and have thoroughly checked the contents of the medical box to ensure legal compliance. We have comprehensive insurance in place for our various activities.

We need to always ensure we have your emergency contact details, and up to date medicines list, in case of accident. Amanda recently sent a request to update details if required, and she can let you know what we currently hold on record if you are uncertain.

Future

Several Sheds folded during Covid because their finances were precarious, and some supporting grants were withdrawn. We have built a healthy balance, so we are not dependent on grant income. This also places us in a good position to fund any expansion 'over the road' should ongoing dialogues prove fruitful.

Other

We continue to be actively engaged with the UK Men's Sheds Association (UKMSA), and make use of their expertise / knowledge sharing. We also point out and forward to members any particularly interesting articles.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year as Chairman, and thank all those on the committee and in the membership for their support. Let's look forward to a year where we can all return to greater normality and less stress in our daily lives.