

# Men in Sheds

Men's Sheds or Community Sheds are non-profit organisations that originated in Australia and have since been appearing across the country with over 500 in the UK alone. There are 15 Sheds on the Isle of Wight, 12 of which were established by Age UKIW's Men in Sheds Project.

The main aim of the Sheds is to reduce social isolation and help with health and wellbeing. Sheds mostly attract retired older men, but some have women and younger members too. The Sheds provide a place for Shedders to be productive, form friendships and to undertake community improvement activities. Shedders can learn new skills and are also able to share their time and knowledge for the benefit of others and local communities.

Every Shed is different. The Island has several 'traditional' Men's Sheds which undertake woodworking and gardening, as well as some more unusual Sheds. Both Newport and Wootton host the 'Acoustic Music' Sheds, a space where budding Buddy Hollies can learn new songs, or polish up well known ones in a relaxed group setting. The Isle of Wight Airport at Sandown is the location of the Aviation Shed which works in partnership with the Wight Aviation Museum to create the museum and its exhibits. We even have a Shed restoring a small Ruston Engine Power Station that is over 70 years old.

In 2019 Age UKIW celebrated the Island Sheds with the first Isle of Wight Shed Fest. The event brought together Sheds from across the Island and South Coast through the Southern Men's Shed Network. Shedders and festival goers were able to enjoy an afternoon of information, live local music, stalls, free training, health checks, games and refreshments.

The 12 Age UKIW sheds manage themselves, with help and support of a Project Coordinator. The Shedders decide what local community activities, projects and organisations to get involved with and how to manage their group. Many Sheds work in local partnerships, like the Aviation shed, whose Shed is hosted by another organisation, this provide solutions for all involved. All Sheds work towards the benefit of their members by providing mutual support and low level signposting. A cup of tea and some banter goes a long way.



Shed Men at the PLUTO Shed in Sandown

# 48%

of attendees self report an overall improvement in their health

"We've done different projects, with different skills and timescales, and magically it all just drops into place and we get stuff done. It is just magical being able to be part of a team like that"

"Life has totally changed for me. I've become more active doing things, learning new skills and meeting up with a great group of guys."

# 60%

of attendees feel that they can influence decisions in their local community

