

Somerset Levels and Moors Shed

December 2018 newsletter

Welcome to the December 2018 edition of the Shed Newsletter.

This is my first edition as Newsletter Editor. I would like to express a big thanks to Gerry for his sterling work throughout 2018 on the newsletter (and in a number of key areas elsewhere in the shed) and for his unwavering guidance and support. He leaves VERY big shoes to fill!

We will continue to benefit from his influence and presence in the shed as he will continue as a member. Very grateful thanks are also due to Matman Studios for their sponsorship of the newsletter throughout 2018.

There are a number of really good goings on in the shed at the moment and we are about to enter an important period of the shed with the appointment of 3 more shedders onto the committee and the change to charity status.

Regrettably I managed to miss our most recent day out to ShedFest18 owing to my bus licence training taking up the preceding week. My stay away extended into the following week so I've missed quite a bit of November's developments in the shed.

As always with the newsletter, your contributions are most welcome. Keep it clean and legal and I'll be happy to include it here. My contact details are at the back of this newsletter.

Colin writes....

ShedFest18 was a big success for the SLAMS members that attended. Lots to see in the exhibition and some very worthwhile and thought provoking discussions on good Shed practice in some of the workshops. Inspired and enthused by what they experienced at ShedFest, Tom and Cherrill are now keen to take a greater role within SLAMS and have both volunteered for Committee. Top guys!

Tom will be taking up the all important Health and Safety Officer position. This is a bit of a return to his former working life for Tom; so we are fortunate to get the benefit of his lifetime's experience. I know H&S can be regarded as something we all ought to do, but often don't. Tom will be taking a proportionate and pragmatic approach to H&S in the Shed, so it should be very possible for all of us to be able and willing to co-operate with him, so we ensure that we and our fellow shedders keep safe.

Having enjoyed the ShedFest day out so much, Cherrill has kindly offered to take on the role of Social Secretary. (*I've included a separate report - Ed*) She'll be wandering around the Shed talking with Sheddors to see what kind of events people like to take part in. Once she's got a better view, watch out for future Newsletters and read the noticeboard for upcoming events and diary dates. Got ideas? - speak to Cherrill.

Finally, although a relative newcomer to the Shed this autumn, Peter (Smith) has already put himself forward for Committee. He will be looking at bringing together some of our safety sheets on tools (Ted C is already reviewing and simplifying these) with an outline plan for safety training and assessment on some of our more dangerous tools. So if you are looking to improve your knowledge on how to safely use any tool, but particularly the "yellow" or "red" graded tools, or you are a skilled and safe operator and want to volunteer to train and assess fellow shedders, then Peter is the man to see. With lots of skills in the Shed and many members wishing to expand the range of tools they can use, Peter's initiative in pulling all this together for 2019 is a welcome development.

In terms of community projects there is a very strong possibility that SLAMS will be collaborating with Bridgwater Arts Centre in making some display cabinets and other items for them. We previously made BAC a load of patio furniture and planters from recycled pallets. BAC is also likely to allow us to use some of their display space that we will make to advertise and sell some of our

items. So the intended partnership goes beyond just the community project but longer term will give us access to their retail space - a great opportunity for SLaMS. More information to follow when the exact requirements are fleshed out.

Finally, with Christmas coming up and many members busy with domestic arrangements, and consistent with our practice in earlier years, the last Shed session of 2018 will be Friday 21st December. The Shed will be closed during Christmas week and will re-open on Thursday 3rd January 2019

Have a peaceful and enjoyable Christmas season.

Health and Safety

Everybody knows about it, but how many adhere to the rules?

Most of us use machines. Do we all use the correct Personal Protective Equipment (P.P.E)?

All the P.P.E. you need is readily available.

We all know we should, but do we?

We tell ourselves, it's only one cut or a little sanding etc.

So do we wear it? We know we should. But hand on heart can we all say we do?

I think not and I am as guilty as you.

Should there be an accident, who is to blame? I think everybody is.

I am not picking on anybody, but we must get better at it.

I, apparently am in charge of Health & Safety and I do not want any fingers pointed at me if there is an accident

So, please do not get upset when I start moaning and throw some P.P.E. at you. I only have your safety in mind.

Many thanks

Tom Hart H&S

New Website

Following some 'offsite' development work we have relaunched the SLaMS website at a new location - <https://www.slamshed.org/>. This replaces the slams.org.uk site which currently remains live but is no longer being updated. Eventually this will be deleted.

If you have the 'old' site saved on your bookmarks/favourites then it is worth replacing the link with the new website address.

The new website also has web friendly copies of the 'members' newsletters which are distributed to the membership once a month. These offer an excellent snapshot of what goes on down the shed during the course of a month.

It will also be easier to update goings on on the new site - so more of the facebook photos should make it there in due course.

Christmas Meal

On Thursday 20th December we will be having our Christmas gathering in Wetherspoons in Bridgwater Town Centre. If you want to come along, there is a list on the notice board for you to add your name to.

Our intentions are to meet at the shed then go across to Wetherspoons for the afternoon. At least one of the membership won't be drinking, so there is possibility of lift(s) home for those who may need it. Please have a chat with me should you wish to take this up. Mike Dando has offered to run a Christmas Club for those wishing to save up for the Christmas Meal – please make contact with him if you want to do this.

SHEDFEST 2018

It was a very interesting day at ShedFest18, the UK Mens Sheds Association annual celebration of all things "Sheds". Being able to interact with other Shedders and how they had achieved their goals was inspirational. To hear that some sheds had a very substantial membership and are operational 6 days a week showed what great opportunities there are for more members to be proactive and productive.

We picked up some good ideas on making products and other Shedders were very happy to share the process of making some of the lovely items that were showcased at the event.

Discussion sessions on Funding and Health & Safety aspects of running a shed were a mine of valuable information and practical experience. I never realised just how much goes into making a shed viable and the important role the Committee has to secure the shed and to make a real difference to peoples' lives.

I personally would like to say thank you to Colin for driving us to ShedFest18; seeing first hand of what the aims and goals are for Sheds in general; for SLAMS existing and future members; and what it seriously involves to keep the shed up and running. I never realised just how much work it entailed. Also thanks to Tom, Brian and Dave for letting me tag along, a super day out filled lots of laughter and got to know them a lot better. Overall a good team building day and I look forward to the next and many more.

Cherrill

Our boats are ready to set sail...

One project now concluded is the pair of boat shaped planters for Friends of Bridgwater Docks. I understand that the comprehensive sea trails have concluded on the project and now the boats await delivery. Bert, Dave and Marcus have done sterling work on this project (assisted by some painting from Mark and your newsletter editor).

Following our end of October visit to Westpoint I suspect this may not be the end of SLAMS' ship building adventures. I discovered a most interesting book titled 'How to build a Coracle' which Dave has purchased.



Photo Caption above: One of our latest shedders, Tony has made a bowl from 100% English ash which gives it a distinctive look and then under the instruction of our resident Woodturner, Mike, spent some 10 hours turning the bowl in the shed. Mike was instrumental in ensuring the finished bowl was turned to a high standard before he would let Tony take it home.

It is now at home where he is finishing the Danish oiling and then he will complete the wax polishing over the next few weeks.

The bowl is destined for special family friends in Australia who asked for something English as a memory of their visit next year.

Rocking Horse

We have received an offer of £30 for the Rocking Horse, which has been a very long term resident of the shed (going back to 2016) though has had some recent work courtesy of John Stephens. If anyone wishes to offer more for the horse, please make contact with a member of the committee.

November Maintenance Day

The third maintenance day was held on Wednesday 28th November. At the tail end of the session the main bench was dismantled in preparation for being split into two sections. Work continued on

Friday 30th on this. A couple of OSB boards have been requested to complete the two benches. Courtesy of Christmas 2018 there isn't going to be a December maintenance day, the one for January is to be confirmed.

Church Pew

Thanks to Sparky, we have a new resident in the shed, a church pew. This arrived on Tuesday 27th

November and the session on the 30th saw further work by Gerry. Originally dating from the early 1960s, the pew was extended in the 1980s/1990s to its current length and so is two different sections.

Sparky is retaining the ends of the pew for two plaques which will be presented to the church and the shed will be making two smaller benches from the rest.

Looking to take up Allotment Gardening?

If so, then Bridgwater Allotments Association currently have plots available around Bridgwater.

To find out more call: 01278 321050 or 07704 297511

Remember, if you've got something to contribute to the newsletter, you can make contact with me via email at newsletter.slamshed@gmail.com or just have a chat with me during a shed session.

*For those who don't know me I'm normally the one hiding in a corner **trying** to paint things.*

In closing, I'd like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Stephen Oxbrow

Newsletter Editor

Shed Opening Hours from 1st November 2018:
Tuesday 10.00-1500, Thursday 1300-1600 & Friday 1000-1500.

Facebook <https://tinyurl.com/ycx8vgvh> **website** <https://www.slamshed.org/>