

From: Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care and Public Health

Andrew Scott-Clark, Director of Public Health

To: Adult Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee

Date: 11th September 2015

Subject: Kent Sheds Update

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Division: All

Summary:

Kent Sheds is a pioneering and ambitious approach to improving the mental wellbeing of the population (principally aimed at men) by delivering community activities. Sheds were pioneered in Australia and New Zealand in the 2000's due to the lack of men accessing help for emotional wellbeing. Kent has higher suicide rates for men and in 2013 a partnership between public health and KCC Policy developed the SHED programme for Kent, then attracting LIBOR funding for veteran and ex-military men.

Since 2013 the programme has become popular with local people. There are currently 20 Sheds across Kent, including a mobile Shed, that are targeted at men aged 40 to 60, but are inclusive to all adults. There are over 200 members attending Sheds on a regular basis and around 3,000 attendances to date. Kent has the highest density of 'SHEDS' in the UK.

Kent Sheds are given some start-up funding to help them develop and members are encouraged to support Sheds in their local area so to help them become sustainable and attract new members (Shedders).

Recommendations:

Members are asked to comment on the paper, and to support the Sheds programme within their communities.

1. Background

1.1. KCC Public Health has been supporting local, individuals, community groups and organisations to establish a number of Shed projects across the county as part of the Kent Mental Wellbeing Investment Programme. The project improves both physical health and mental wellbeing of participants; benefits local communities and supports men in developing skills for employment.

- 1.2. The Sheds movement originated in Australia, where there are currently 690 Sheds and over 90,000 Shed members – frequently referred to as ‘Shedders’ (AMSA, 2015). The Sheds movement has spread to other parts of the world, and there are now over 80 Sheds up and running in the UK.
- 1.3. According to the Australian Men’s Sheds Association (2015) a Shed can be defined as: “a community-based, non-profit, non-commercial organisation that is accessible to all men and whose primary activity is the provision of a safe and friendly environment where men are able to work on meaningful projects at their own pace, in their own time, in the company of other men. A major objective is to advance the wellbeing and health of their male members” (AMSA, 2015).
- 1.4. The Kent Shed concept and brand was developed with the help of Activmobs (a community insights organisation), Groundwork South, KCC representatives from both Policy and Public Health and most importantly local men in 2013. It had two main objectives, to support ex-military men to reintegrate (externally funded) and to provide accessible opportunities to combat social isolation for men of all ages in Kent.

2. How Kent Sheds operate

- 2.1 A Kent Shed is a place where men (and women, if they are interested) can go to socialise, share skills and spend time with other men while working on practical projects of value to the community.
- 2.2 The Kent Sheds programme has been commissioned out to a lead voluntary sector organisation called Groundwork South. The Kent Shed Officer employed by Groundwork helps interested men develop their Shed idea and where needed put in a grant application to the Kent Sheds fund. The programme is also part funded by the Libor Fund which looks to support veterans and ex-service personnel. As such, we support groups who want to establish Sheds that welcome ex-service men and women
- 2.3 Funding is awarded to enable the setup of the Shed, rather than an ongoing commitment of funding. The activities or Sheds are commonly low cost and Shedders give their own time and resources to make the Sheds a success and build a sustainable project. Sheds are also encouraged and supported to source additional funding so to maximise the KCC investment.
- 2.4 Kent Sheds have taken a different approach to the traditional Men’s Shed; we encourage men of all ages to get involved. Whereas elsewhere, Sheds have tended to be focussed on older men, we have younger men who may be at risk of isolation through unemployment or caring roles, participating as well as some women who attend. Intergenerational skills sharing and mentoring were seen as important factors in moving to ‘all ages welcome’ Sheds.

3. Evidence for Sheds

- 3.1 The rationale behind the Sheds movement is that men especially those who are aged 40 to 60 years may be less likely to access conventional approaches to improving mental wellbeing e.g. counselling and talking therapy. Instead, research indicates men prefer to be engaged in the company of their peers, and practical activities. The Sheds approach sees men working 'shoulder to shoulder' to support each other.
- 3.2 A wealth of research supports shows that the Sheds model leads to improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes for men (Ballinger, Talbot & Verrinder, 2009; Brown, Golding & Foley, 2008; Cordier & Wilson, 2013; Morgan, Hayes, Williamson & Ford, 2007; Ormsby, Stanley & Jaworski, 2010). The key outcomes include feeling a sense of purpose, being part of something and having a sense of belonging, learning new skills in a supportive environment and feeling like they can give back to the community (Ballinger, 2007, Ballinger; Talbot and Verrinder, 2009). This does not mean that men cannot benefit from psychological therapy – but due to their poor access in seeking help– they are more vulnerable to extreme expressions of distress and commit suicide at higher rates than women.

4. Progress to date

- 4.1 There has been an overwhelming response to the programme and twenty Sheds have been funded to date. Sixteen are currently open, with four which are still in the planning stage. Further information can be found in appendix 1 on individual sheds or via the website www.kentsheds.org.uk.
- 4.2 There is a huge diversity of the sheds funded and many are themed around sustainable activities such as gardening, woodwork, boats or arts, whilst others are focused on supporting the local community. One of the sheds is a mobile shed which is currently touring the county across the summer months to generate further interest for new sheds.

5. Key outcomes

- 5.1. With 20 Sheds funded to date this currently represents around 20% of Sheds in the UK. 5.2. In 2014/15 252 individuals attended Sheds including 111 veterans. There have been 3,281 attendances at Sheds to date and an average of 218 attendances per month.
- 5.2. Based on initial analyses of their Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Score (in March); 87% improved their wellbeing score using the Warwick Edinburgh wellbeing scale. A number of Sheddors have also gone on to gain paid employment as a result of their work in Sheds.
- 5.3. A number of other Sheds that have naturally developed have also affiliated with the Kent Sheds brand including those in Medway and a network of champions has been set up facilitated by Groundwork to help Sheds to share best practice and build sustainability.

5.4 Kent Sheds has attracted national attention. It has been featured in a men's forum research report on promoting health and wellbeing in men conducted by the Leeds Beckett University (*What Works?*). It has also been featured in part of a film on Sheds broadcast on a community Chanel (*Better Shed than Dead*) and in a book on Sheds written by the Australian Barry Golding (*Australia Men's Sheds Pioneer*). Over the next year the Kent Sheds team will continue to encourage groups across Kent to set up their own Shed project and help those who have opened to be sustainable.

6. Future for Sheds

6.1 Over the next year the Kent Sheds team will continue to encourage groups across Kent to set up their own Shed project and help those who have opened to be sustainable.

7 Recommendation

Members are asked to comment on the paper, and to support the Sheds programme within their communities.

8 Background information

Please visit: www.kentSheds.org.uk

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9. Contact details:

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Appendix 1: Location of Sheds and mobile Shed programme

Sheds to date:

SHED DETAILS	LEAD CONTACT	CONTACT DETAILS	MAIN ACTIVITY	
Dartford Men's Shed	Darren Riley	07871 972934 dartfordShed@outlook.com DA10 0JR	Community	Open
Kenward Trust Shed - Yalding	Michael Bourne	01622 814187 michael.bourne@kenwardtrust.org.uk ME18 6AH	Creative woodwork shop	Open
Boat Buoys - Gravesend	Ian Stevenson	01474 535022 i.stevenson@sky.com Gravesend Promenade DA12 2BS	Boat restoration	Open
Aylesford Shedders	Maria Gallego	07500 602031 maria.gallego@rbli.co.uk ME20 7NL	Gardening & allotment	Open
Buckland Shed - Cliffe	Scott Tovell	Bucklandfisherys@gmail.com ME3 7RT	Social/environment and skill sharing	Open
The Ashford Shed	Marc Pearson	01233 331919 marc@ashfordvineyard.org	Community/woodwork	Open
Abbey Physic Garden - Faversham	Stewart Morris	stewartmorris59@gmail.com ME13 7BG	Creative, sharing skills, gardens , support	Open
Maidstone Mind Men's World	Julie Blackmore	Maidstone Mind 23 College Road Maidstone ME15 6YH 01622 692383 julieblackmore@maidstonemind.org	Woodworking	Open
Bodger's Hut - Whitstable	Becky Richards	07759 772109 Stream Walk Community Garden Millstream Close Whitstable CT5 1RH	Woodworking	Open
Folkestone Shed	Mark Connorton	01303 259007 markconnorton@volunteershepway.co.uk 3 Mill Bay Folkestone CT201JS	Various community & creative	Open
Dover Community Shed	Vivienne Adam Secretary	07717863010 01304 211070	Community and creative	Open
The Shed - Northfleet	Gary May & Peter Scollard	07895876170 gary@nowallsgardens.org DA11 9SW	Gardening, creative, woodwork & community	Open

Dover Boat Shed	Terry Dickson	info@terancedickson.co.uk Dover Boat Shed Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club CT16 1LA	Social, learning boat skills, sharing	Open
Mobile Shed - County wide	Linda Jones	07732 491914 lindajones10060@yahoo.com	Mobile Shed / community projects	Open
Park Wood Men's Shed - Maidstone	Nat Moody	Fusion HLC Park Wood Parade Maidstone ME159HL 01622 691177 natmoody@aol.com	Social weekly meet	Open
Riverside Active Lives Gravesend	Vince Durrant	Riverside Community Centre Dickens Road Gravesend DA12 2JY Riverside.activelives@aol.com	Creative/gardening	Open
Eaton Lands Shed Folkestone	Mark Connorton	01303 259007 markconnorton@volunteershepway.co.uk	Not yet operational	Planning
Elephant House Shed Maidstone	Derek Whitehead	Derek.Whitehead@kent.gov.uk Forstal Road Aylesford ME20 7AG 03000 414 842	Conservation / woodworking	Planning
Take Off Shed	Mark Kilbey	01227 788211 34 Military Road Canterbury CT1 1LT	Music/photography/ woodworking/craft/ healthy eating focus	Open
Mongeham Over 50's	Chris Burwash	07580350152 Christian Burwash chrisburwash@hotmail.co.uk	Gardening in the community Deal CT1	Open

Mobile Shed Programme of Visits

MONTH: August 2015

Date of planned visit	Location address where Shed will be parked	Planned Activity
30/07/15	Faversham	Promotion of Sheds project
4/08/15	Margate / Ramsgate	Promotion of Sheds
6/08/15	Maidstone	Promotion of Sheds
12/08/15	Cliftonville	Wood working
13/08/15	Canterbury	Promotion
18/08/15	Dover / Folkestone	Promotion
19/08/15	Ashford	Promotion
21/08/15	Sittingbourne	Wood working
24/08/15	Dartford	Gardening Community Allotment
26/08/15	Tonbridge / Tonbridge Wells	Promotion
27/08/15	Isle of Sheppey	promotion

More sessions are being planned for September