

Men in Sheds

Men in Sheds is a project aimed at older men who are feeling isolated or experiencing major changes in life, such as retirement or bereavement

The groups are based in sheds or workshops, where many men feel comfortable and at ease. The aim is to socialise while working on projects, sharing skills, learning new skills and making new friends.

It is also compulsory to eat cake or biscuits and drink lots of tea!

If your church is looking for a way to reach men not connected to church, men who could well be searching for meaning in a new phase of life, here are ten suggestions for setting up a Men in Sheds group.

1. Pray for someone with heart and energy for Men in Sheds.
2. Ask the PCC to support the project and help with costing (ask them to contact the diocese for funding advice).
3. Visit a working Men in Sheds group and take the PCC and potential volunteers along.
4. Ask PCC to form a sub-group to select a possible venue – could be church land on which to put up a shed or an existing building.
5. Form a group and ask other churches, faith groups, local doctors and the voluntary and statutory sectors to join so you can share your vision.
6. Set a time for a meeting and then gather regularly, sharing food and friendship, and as the money comes in start to build a workshop, and relationships.
7. When the building has started, ask for second-hand tools (it's surprising how many people have sheds full of tools doing nothing).
8. Ask builders merchants for off-cuts of wood (tell them what you are doing and they will pass on the news to retired tradesmen).
9. Elect members to be responsible for the workshop; they will need first-aid training and volunteer assessments (contact diocese for information on training).
10. Sell what the men make at charity shops, craft fairs and church events, keeping costs low and having sustainability in mind. ALWAYS pray at every meeting.

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