

Poringland & District Men's Shed AGM Monday 24th April 2023

7:30 pm @ The Community Workshop

27 members were present.

Apologies: Phil Bamford, Libby Chapman, Martin Fry, Martin Hirst, Jan Wood

Last years minutes

These had been circulated prior to the meeting and were agreed.

Reports

The Chair Henry Gowman, The Treasurer Peter Stuart, and The Secretary Steve Dowall read their reports (all attached to these minutes)

AOB

A question was asked regarding incorporating WS membership into our publicity posters. This will be taken forward to the committee.

Tim Ridgley outlined plans for a metal workshop.

A question was asked regarding having mixed group sessions. This will be reviewed alongside increasing our opening hours. It was emphasised that will mean having more Responsible People (RP's) in place to spread the load.

Amy Farn-Ramsay expressed her thanks for the opportunity to form a Women's Shed division. The take up had demonstrated the need. She expressed the hope that the two divisions will become more integrated with regard to projects.

David Gillingham put forward an idea to raise funds.

Election of Trustees

Steve Dowall outlined the process written into our constitution. This year Les Banks has stood down and his contribution to the success of PDMS was acknowledged.

Five candidates had put themselves forward for election and each gave a brief outline of their background. With just four places available an election took place.

The four candidates elected are:-

Amanda Austin
Amy Farn-Ramsay
John Mallott
Tim Ridgley

This result was announced at the AGM and takes immediate effect.

The meeting was closed at 9:00pm

CHAIRMANS REPORT FOR PDMS AGM 2023

This has been a momentous year for us – and except for 2013 when we formed – has been the most important year of our existence. In that our achievements will cement our future.

We started with a chat over beer in The Royal Oak, borrowed space in Brooke Scout Hut and then rescued the redundant blacksmiths forge, also in Brooke, and turned it into a fully functional workshop. From there we borrowed Roger's barn behind The Dove where we stayed for many enjoyable if challenging years. All of our landlords were generous and none charged us rent. Despite all the disruptions of moving, we stuck together and continued as a community workshop, learning and growing our Shed project.

Over the past year, we negotiated with the Parish Council and other interested parties to acquire a long lease, at a peppercorn rent, on the redundant Poringland Bowls Green. We were successful in applying for a £90k grant from Norfolk County Council Social Infrastructure Fund, which together with monies from other sources, enabled us to buy and build our new Shed and fit it out as a modern community workshop. Very importantly, we were involved in the build – we poured concrete and renovated the old club house into our quiet space known as The Shack, where we widened the doors and built an 'access for all' toilet suitable for men, women and wheelchair users. We future proofed as far as we could by having the building heavily insulated, installing air source heat pumps, sky lights and eventually (!) solar panels. I can't be the only one who stands smiling, whilst watching the electricity meter go backwards. Our energy efficiency has just been rated at A.

We officially opened last July, but before that we had decanted from The Dove and built a fully functioning and modern workshop that we were able to proudly show to our guests on opening day. Achieving all this depleted our coffers and it is true to say that we still have important things to get done, including a stand-alone space for the metal workshop and making our outdoor recreational area with benches under the Oak Tree and a nearby BBQ and brick pizza oven. We have irons in the fire to get everything done soon. We do need to start making progress as we are hosting a Norfolk Shed Mardle on Saturday 9th September when members from Sheds across Norfolk will come and see us – chat and ponder how they can achieve the same as us.

Nothing is more certain than if an organisation stands still, it will fail, and so we are continuing to evolve. We are morally obliged to make maximum use of our new Shed – granted a long lease from our Parish Council, with funding from Norfolk County Council, being open for just nine hours a week doesn't cut the mustard. Following several enquiries over the years, we have encouraged and helped form a Women's Section who are using The Bungalow at Framingham Earl High School as their main base, as well as making use of our main community workshop. They have their own sub-committee and will be represented on the main Shed committee and I am sure that they will be successful and become part of the whole that is our Shed project.

Neither the Shed nor The Bungalow are what makes our project. That is us. It is the people that matter and we are all about supporting each other through life's sticky patches. We do this by engaging in practical tasks, mainly for the benefit of our Community. Being together, working together and providing a service together leads to us feeling better about ourselves. It is a human need to be part of a group, or extended family if you like. Making and fixing, especially for other people, brings a satisfaction and sense of well-being. We have had fun, learnt new skills and achieved some remarkable results. Umpteen household electrical items have been repaired, antique chairs and music boxes fixed, duck houses made and floated, a village sign replaced, an inter row hoe rebuilt, a giant toadstool made, dibbers fashioned, a Cindy caravan restored....and much, much, more.

I would like to say a word about respect – an old-fashioned concept I know, but then we are old enough to have grown up in a pre-digital age, which is a minor miracle of engineering, but seems to generate a lot of disrespect. Our Shed is held in high regard within our community and our regard and respect for each other was demonstrated recently by the splendid coffin that was made very recently for Phillip. Those old kitchen cabinet doors were transformed with respect and care that put a smile on everybody's face at the funeral service, especially Phillip's family, who expressed their gratitude to us. Phillip was local in every sense of the word, born in Stoke Holy Cross – employed at Bussey's in Norwich and lived for many years in Poringland and of course, he was a Canary supporter, being a steward at matches for many years. He was a great character and back at The Barn, when he was more able, he helped with the planning and implementation of our electrical supply. We will miss him rocking up on his chariot with some large piece of kit in tow.

We have a new Shed but we are still making plans for our new future – the metal workshop will be built – the raised beds filled with soil courtesy of British Sugar - will be sown with seeds soon – the BBQ area will happen – and more. I am talking to two promising sources for funding so we can buy and fit out a metal workshop. We are talking to a local and important artist about running therapeutic art courses, as being engrossed in making art can be balm to the mind. We now have 60 members or so and we are looking at extending our opening times.

A great deal of hard work has got us to where we are now and I wish to give my sincere thanks to my fellow committee members for their support and the work they have put in behind the scenes and of course front of house. Most of our membership who were able, rolled up their sleeves, dug, delved and poured concrete and then lugged our stuff from The Barn to the new Community Workshop. John Mallot has done a splendid job in turning an empty shell into a fully functioning workshop, where there is a place for everything and everything is in its place. Steve Dowall, our Secretary, has kept us up to date with our IT. He has refashioned our website, put us on Facebook and joined us up through our own WhatsApp group. He has sorted out WiFi in the Shed and Shack and hauled us into the 21st century.

I want to pay particular thanks and respect to Peter Stuart our Treasurer. I am not going to spare his blushes because without his input our new building may not have happened. Peter liaised with the Parish Council in getting their consent to build on their land, the Memorial Trust who manage the area, a national organisation called Fields in Trust, he liaised with South Norfolk Council and submitted the Planning Permission and Building Control paperwork, he sought out and selected the contractors, he poured concrete and almost singlehandedly refurbished the loo and installed the new sewer system, he was the Project Manager for the entire build, liaising with the contractors. And – through all of this - he was ill and underwent a life altering operation for cancer.

Finally, I must tell you that this is my final stint as your Chairman and I will stand down at the AGM of 2024. I have spoken to my fellow trustees about taking over the role of leading our project but without success. Hopefully a new member will join who has the time, energy and commitment to take the project forward.

I will also be relinquishing my Ambassador role for UKMSA. It has given me a deal of satisfaction to have been instrumental in helping new Sheds come into being across Norfolk. When I first became a Ambassador there were eight sheds – there are now nearly thirty and counting.

Our Shed is a great project with some great people and it gives me great pleasure and satisfaction to have been your Chair since we formed ten years ago. Our Shed will go on evolving and benefitting our community and its membership for generations to come. The Future is Bright – The Future is Shed!

Henry Gowman Chair of PDMS 24th April 2023

Poringland and District Mens Shed

Finance Report to the AGM on 24th April 2023

The main focus of my report is rightly on our finances for 2022. These have now been audited by our independent auditor who is a senior finance assistant at Norfolk County Council and these will shortly be uploaded to the Charity Commission's website.

Having received a significant grant from Norfolk County Council Infrastructure Fund in the last quarter of 2021 we were able to plan and invest in the construction of a brand new 144 square metre Community Workshop on a plot leased to us by the Poringland Parish Council for a peppercorn rent.

Initial construction expenses on the new workshop in 2021 was about £17,290 and then in 2022 we spent a further £109,350 on further construction. This was about £10,000 more than we hoped because early work on the foundations disclosed the water table was higher than anticipated and a more expensive reinforced foundation was required. However, we had a contingency budget to enable us to cover this and by June the building was sufficiently completed for us to be able to move in. The result is we now own a major Mens Shed facility which we valued at the end of 2022 at the total construction cost by that date of about £125,000.

We also reviewed and updated the value of our other assets such as equipment and tools taking the total value of assets to £133,649. Our insurers have been notified of all these changes and have not significantly increased our premiums.

Our income in 2022 was £21,165.97 and this included grants totalling £9,000 which enabled us to refurbish the old bowling green "shack" on the new site and install a disabled toilet facility with connection to main drainage.

We started 2022 with funds of £116,333.80 however having spent so much money on the construction of the new workshop we ended 2022 with funds of just £16,135. Some of this money being reserved for outstanding activities and materials to complete the finishing of the workshop during 2023. This will take the total construction costs to a final of about £134,000.

Now looking forward in 2023, To date (up to 22nd April 2023) we have received further income of £3,367 of which over half was from member subscriptions and the rest from projects and associated donations. This year so far, we have spent £10,548 most of this being for the new solar panels which have now finally be installed plus the new roller shutters on the Bowls Shack. We also spent £1,128 on the new bench saw. We have a few minor remaining expenditure commitments related to the new building but after this we will have a balance of about £7,500.

Please note we have a policy of maintaining a reserve balance of £5,000 for unanticipated expenditures so we must ensure any further spend does not cause us to breach this limit.

Finally, I would also like to mention GIFT AID. In 2022 we obtained more than £650 from the HMRC based on donations made in 2021. This year I expect to be able to claim a bit more than this for donations made in 2022. However though overall donations in 2022 were over £4500 many of these were from non-gift aid sources such as charities and public bodies or else we do not have a Gift Aid form on file for the donor. Please can we make more effort to get signed Gift Aid forms from donors.

Peter Stuart

Treasurer

Poringland and District Mens Shed AGM 24th April 2023

	2021 Accounts	2022 Accounts	2023 Accounts
Total Funds at start of year	£21,645.72	£116,333.80	£16,135.10
Income			
Members Donations	£1,365.57	£2,796.39	£1,950.00
Virgin Money HMRC etc	£1,342.37	£953.39	£111.78
Other Donations	£532.79	£4,537.21	£228.97
Grants and Awards	£109,908.09	£9,000.00	£0.42
Income from Projects	£2,010.56	£2,231.50	£787.60
Boot Sales and Fetes	£140.00	£515.98	£0.00
Asset and investment sales	£192.00	£1,131.50	£288.50
	£115,491.38	£21,165.97	£3,367.27
Expenditure			
Rent Heat Elec & Insurance	£1,310.57	£1,437.39	£880.66
Office and Admin	£39.00	£347.19	£137.38
Comestibles and trips	£877.50	£196.11	£73.41
Materials & Consumables	£122.93	£2,415.17	£474.08
Specific Project Spend	£1,113.20	£1,165.59	£385.10
Small Tools < £25	£49.93	£102.85	£0.00
New Shed Fees	£822.00	£144.00	£72.00
New Shed build costs	£16,468.00	£109,206.39	£6,408.00
Bowls shack Refurb	£0.00	£5,978.29	£989.41
Hand and power Tools (>£25)	£0.00	£371.69	£0.00
Workshop machines	£0.00	£0.00	£1,128.95
	£20,803.13	£121,364.67	£10,548.99
Total Funds at end of year	£116,333.80	£16,135.10	£8,953.38
		Total Cost of new shed	£133,120.39
Total value of assets at 31st December 2022		£133,649.00	

Total value of assets at 31st December 2022

Community Workshop Building	£125,000.00
240 Volt Hand Tools	£575.00
240 Volt Bench Tools	£280.00
Cordless Tools	£1,679.00
Large Tools	£2,165.00
Electrical Items	£575.00
Other equipment	£1,875.00
Miscellaneous	£1,500.00
Total Value	£133,649.00

Steve Dowall
PDMS Secretary
23 April 2023

Annual Report

I shall comment on the four main areas I oversee.

Membership.

As anticipated since moving to the Community Workshop our membership has grown rapidly. We have had one or two new members join each month and of course we also have the newly formed WS division so our total membership stands at 60 members. Last year following a suggestion from members we introduced a monthly sub payable by Standing Order. This was set at £10/month and will be reviewed again in April 2024.

External Communications

To coincide with the opening of the Community Workshop we placed posters in business premises in the local area. But if you know of a location that needs a poster ask me and I can supply one. We joined the Poringland Facebook group which alongside our website (which had a highest ever number of hits) has raised our profile in the community. But these media need a regular supply of fresh content to keep them interesting and relevant so please send me your photos and stories of projects completed. Preferably with happy smiling faces!

Internal Communications

Email remains the main channel for “official news” but in addition we are producing newsletters in hard copy form for people to read in the shack. We also raised the profile of the WhatsApp group and encouraged more members to join. This channel is for members to engage/chat with each other, showcase completed projects , request help etc etc.

Charity Commission

We have to report annually to the CC and I can confirm all the required documentation has been filed on time.