

## UPDATE ON SEVENOAKS MEN'S SHED PROJECT

Health Liaison Board - 9 September 2020

Report of Chief Officer People and Places

Status: For Information

Key Decision: No

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**Executive Summary:** This report provides Members with an update on the Men's Shed project in Sevenoaks District.

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**This report supports the Key Aim of** providing the right support at the right time, reducing health inequalities and improving health and wellbeing for all, priorities in the Community Plan

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Kevin Maskell

**Contact Officer** Hayley Brooks Ext. 7272

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**Recommendation to Housing and Health Advisory Committee:** That the information in the report be noted.

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### Introduction and Background

- 1 In 2013, the UK Men's Shed Association was formed. The aim behind the Shed movement was to support local people to thrive in informal community based spaces, in the company of others and through engaging in practical activities within their own community. Although the projects were initially aimed at retired men, all members of local communities are welcome to take part.
- 2 At a Shed, local people can take part in practical group activities such as work-working and gardening, sharing and learning new skills and therefore improving the overall health and wellbeing of local people. The one thing that all sheds share is their concept of providing a safe place for likeminded people to come together for a sense of belonging.
- 3 In 2016, this Council worked in partnership with West Kent Communities (the charity arm of West Kent Housing) and Kent County Council, as part of the Kent Shed network, to set up the first Men's Shed in Sevenoaks District.
- 4 The project was initially set up with start-up funding from Kent County Council. This Council has supported the project to develop its own constitution, so it can apply for other external funding for equipment, training and supplies.

- 5 This Shed Project offers a woodwork workshop based in the West Kent Housing's Abacus Furniture Project in Sevenoaks. It provides a place where people with a similar interest can come together, make social connections, build friendships and have fun.
- 6 The 'Shedders' work in partnership with West Kent Housing, helping to upcycle and repair donated furniture, getting it ready for re-sale through the Abacus Furniture Project. The Abacus Furniture Project provides essential furniture items at low cost to local vulnerable families.
- 7 The project also works with local schools and community organisations, building wooden items on request such as bird and bat boxes, garden furniture, handmade doors, planters and outdoor benches. They have also designed bird box kits for primary school students to make themselves. The Project uses recycled old timber, unwanted/broken furniture and wood offcuts donated from local timber companies to create their products.
- 8 The Shed normally meets twice a week at the workshop, obviously during the COVID-19 pandemic, the project has been closed, but the Shedders are looking forward to getting back to work when Abacus reopens this month.
- 9 Representatives from the Sevenoaks Men's Shed Project will attend the meeting to update Members on this project.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

There are no financial implications for the Council associated to this report.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications for the Council associated to this report.

#### Equality Assessment

No decision is required as part of this paper and therefore no perceived impact on end users.

### **Conclusions**

For Members to note details of the Sevenoaks Men's Shed Project, presented by a representative from the Project.

### **Appendices**

None

### **Background Papers:**

Further information can be found at:

Sevenoaks Shed Project -  
<https://shedsevenoaks.weebly.com/>

UK Men's Shed Association -  
<https://menssheds.org.uk>

Kent Sheds - <https://www.kentsheds.org>

**Sarah Robson**

**Chief Officer People and Places**