



# The Royal Wootton Bassett Shed

## The RWB Shed Annual General Meeting,

Thursday 7th December, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.  
Held in the Conference Room of The RWB Town Council  
at 117 High Steet, Royal Wootton Bassett.

### Minutes of The Meeting

Date issued: 8th December, 2023

#### **1. Apologies**

Ray Brady, John Theobold, Albi Richardson

#### **2. Present**

Phil Howell(PH) Treasurer, Geoff Speake(GS) Deputy Chair, Steve Hares(SH) Secretary, John Loran(JL), John Fellowes(JF), Mike Bamford(MB), Graham Wakeling(GW), James Sadler(JS)

#### **3. Approval of Minutes of AGM held 2nd December 2022**

Acceptance of the minutes approved by all present.

#### **4. Review of Actions and Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising or actions outstanding.

#### **5. Chairman's Report by GS**

Obviously for 2022-23 we have run without a Chairman in post. The position has been covered by the Deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Whilst it hasn't been an unduly busy year the three remaining committee members have covered quite well.

As already said, not a lot has happened to create projects other than those done by individual members.

The one major item of concern though has been the temporary suspension of The RWB Shed for reasons we are all aware of.

All of the kit and fixings have been placed in store at the RWB Grounds Maintenance facility in Whitehill Lane. Our thanks must go to Mark Hopkins for arranging the service and also to Bryan Cassingham & his team for making the space available.

Can I also thank the members for their assistance for packing up the various items of kit as well as for the dismantling and disposal of the buildings.

## **6. Secretary's Report**

SH reported that there had been various telephone contacts from the public but that there was nothing particular to report as most general points had been covered in the previous reports.

One item that has not been mentioned was that late in 2022 we were contacted by the Curator of R.E.M.E in Lyneham and asked if we could make some items for them for their new nature garden area.

They said they would supply the timber, if we could provide a quantity requirement for the items in question. We were told that they were very much into recycling and that they had a connection for good quality repurposed timber at no cost.

When it arrived, the timber was absolutely soaking wet and was in fact poor quality pallet material.

It took several weeks for the timber to dry before any work could be undertaken to even consider making anything with it.

The committee spoke to the R.E.M.E. Curator, via a conference call, where it was strongly suggested that the timber was not only the correct sizes, but that it was also extremely shoddy and not really suitable for that which they required. We suggested the we could purchase suitable stock which would produce a better overall appearance. However, to do so would incur a cost. The Curator said that they would need to consider that and that they would get back to us.

We heard no more until early November this year, when the Curator again contacted us to recommence the project. He was informed that as we had heard nothing from R.E.M.E for such a long time that it had been assumed the project was dead and with the timber taking up valuable storage space, it had been disposed of.

It was then that the Curator informed us it had cost them £160. It is hard to argue this fact other than we know we can generally obtain pallets free of charge. He then said we should have contacted him to get R.E.M.E. to collect the timber, that we had no right to dispose of it and what we were going to do about compensation.

The committee pointed out that as we are a voluntary organisation with limited members and funds, that compensation would not be forthcoming.

We have heard nothing since, but we have said that if they do take the matter further, we will produce an invoice for timber storage.

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

### **7.1. Accounts Examiner comments**

JL as accounts examiner reported that he could confirm that the presented accounts were accurate and approved. He also thanked the treasurer for producing accurate and understandable accounts. He also went on to thank the committee for the work they do behind the scene in the act of replenishing consumables at the shed.

### **7.2. Accounts for the year from 1st November, 2022 to 30th November, 2023**

At the end of the 2021 - 2022 financial year we had ;

£ 2,386.33 Cash at Bank

£ 175.06 Petty Cash

This gave us a total Cash in Hand of £ 2,561.39

At the end of the 2022 - 2023 financial year we have ;

£ 2875.52 Cash at Bank

£ 230.06 Petty Cash

This gives us a total Cash in Hand of £ 3105.58 as at 30 November 2023.

This produces an increase in our financial total of £ 544.19, which when considering the reduction in member numbers this year, the current and ongoing financial climate, I feel we have come out overall with a very healthy balance sheet.

The continuing wariness in relation to Covid does not help matters, with a number of members still not returning this year because of general health concerns.

Because of the general financial climate and reduced shed members, projects for fundraising were non-existent. Only two projects were undertaken. The first was the cleaning, painting and renewing of the nature trail signage at Jubilee Lake. There was no expense incurred as all materials were provided by RWBTC.

The second project was cleaning and repainting of the benches in The Royal British Legion Garden of Remembrance .

We have again been accepted as a cause in the Co-op Community Fund. They have been informed that we are in temporary suspension, but that seems not to have bothered them.

The second payment from our previous inclusion is shown in the 2022-23 accounts.

For the 2022 - 2023 financial year we have 13 subscription paid members. However this has now been reduced by 3, with the loss of Albi Richardson, Ian Berridge and Tony Dennison.

A later agenda item will discuss member numbers and shed promotion.

The subscription year ends 31 December.

The income for the current year has been £ 475.00, £155.00 lower than 2021.

Needless to say, as well as income there has been expenditure. Apart from the usual of Insurance, UKMSA subscription, we gave Steve West a present for his work on the bench sander. We also bought a bouquet of flowers for Max at Jubilee Lake Tea Room. There was a gift to our 'sparks' for doing the PAT Testing as well as a farewell gift to our departing Chair, Albi.

The only other expense was the cost involved in closing and moving the shed.

### **Shed Insurance**

We have agreed to continue our association with the group formally known as Export & General having been acquired by the original partner which is Wessex Insurance Brokers.

Our insurance premium for 2022 was £349.48.

The insurance expired on the 30th November and with delay in this AGM because of closure I have settled this years premium already. If the members wish any changes, then these can easily be accommodated.

The RWBTC required us to insure our kit separately from any of their cover. On this basis I have negotiated with Wessex Insurance Brokers to have £5000 cover for contents only. This is at a premium of £78.92.

It needs to be understood that when we renew our operations, we will need to increase cover with Employers/Public Liability at £225 plus buildings cover at £118 (this is for a minimum value of buildings of £52000)

### **8. Election of Officers and Committee**

The three present committee members had agreed to stand again and as such were accepted unopposed.

### **9. Nomination of Accounts Examiner for 2024**

JL was proposed to continue as Accounts Examiner for the 2023-2024 year.  
Proposed PH, seconded GW

### **10. Shed promotion and Membership**

It was agreed by all, that as the shed was in current hibernation, it would be impractical to consider any public form of promotion. However discussions with potential members could still be undertaken.

### **11. Subscriptions for 2023-24**

It was agreed by all to maintain the current level of subscription to £35.00 pa.

### **12. Equipment review**

Similar to previous comments that as the shed is in hibernation there was no need for a review of kit.

### **13. Any other business**

#### **13.1. Health & Safety (Dep Chair)**

##### **13.1.1. Risk Assessments (Committee)**

PH reported that our insurers had strongly requested various procedures being undertaken as and when the shed resumed normal operations.

Firstly, that full Risk Assessments be completed for all operations, using the template provided.

JL and assisted by GW agreed to undertake this task.

Secondly, that a new register of training for all members, whether existing or new, be updated.

Thirdly, that all members sign in and out when at the shed, so as to provide a formal fire register.

#### **13.2. Insurance (Treasurer)**

This item was previously covered in the Treasurer's Report

#### **13.3. The future of the RWB Shed**

13.3.1. JL presented a paper on various options for the future of the shed.

##### Introduction:

The RWB Shed has been running successfully for 7 years. Although we are very open to female members and indeed, over the years, we have had female members, it is predominantly attractive to retired men. We are affiliated with the UK Men's Sheds organisation and our aims align with theirs in our work towards "banishing loneliness and isolation" in older people, particularly men. As they state:

Connection, conversation and creation – that's what joining a Shed is all about.

Part of the success of our club has come from the generous contribution of the DW Fire Service, who have allowed us to place 3 small sheds in their car park and access their electricity, toilets, kitchen and meeting space - all for no charge. Sadly, the Fire Service have withdrawn that community involvement from all of their Fire Stations and as a result we have now put all our tools into storage and have demolished the

Sheds.

Future Options:

Option 1 – Minimalist:

Maintaining the central Royal Wootton Bassett (RWB) location, we could arrange to meet for coffee as a group, weekly or monthly, using a High Street coffee shop, or pub meeting Room.

Option 2 – Re-create the current model:

By partnering with local clubs and organisations, we could add on to facilities that are already in place, but currently underutilised. Examples that we have already approached (so far unsuccessfully) include Scouts; Guides; Sea Cadets; Army Cadets, Rugby Club; Sports Club.

In such places we could place a large shed (or shipping container), linked through a meter to an electric supply that is already in place, and with access to a warm space for tea and coffee (and toilets).

Option 3 – Expanded model 1:

There are various commercial units in RWB that could be used to house a well-equipped workshop. To justify the cost of running such a unit, we could expand the organisation to have several 'sub-clubs' (e.g. Weekend Shed, Monday Club, Thursday Club, Craft Group, etc.)

The likely annual costs to cover all groups in such a venture might be:

Commercial rent	£5,000
Electric supply (including heating)	£2,000
Water supply	£500
Community charge (if applicable)	£1,000
Insurance	£1,500
Legal Fees (one-off re. set up of lease)	£2,000
Initial fix of accommodation	£3,000

These estimates suggest an annual cost of approximately £10,000, with an additional set-up cost of £5,000.

The possible income could be:

- The initial set-up cost would need to be sought from a grant (which might need to be covered by matching funds – some from current funds)
- Annually, the 4 'Sheds' might have an average of 12 members each – say a total of 50
- With a £40p.a. membership fee, the income would be £2,000
- Each 'Shed' could be charged with raising £1,000p.a. from various fund-raising ventures (e.g. selling crafts at craft fairs).
- The residual £4,000p.a. would need to be sought from grants / benefactors.

#### Option 4 – Expanded model 2:

RWB is surrounded by smaller towns and villages such as Lydiard Millicent, Purton, Cricklade, and Lyneham. The RWB Shed organisation could expand its remit to include the wider district. Indeed, the name could reflect that, by becoming The RWB and District Shed.

In each of these locations it would be possible to set up smaller localised Sheds that all operate under the one central organisation. The model adopted in each location could be any one of the above Options according to the specific circumstances of that particular location.

#### Pros and Cons:

##### Option 1:

The minimalist approach has the advantages of being simple to set up and with no financial complications. The down side is that whilst it might be a good 'holding strategy' in the short term while we sort out another option, it is unlikely to be viable in the longer term. In general, men are not greatly attracted to coffee mornings.

##### Option 2:

The advantages of this model are that we are familiar with how it works; there's little financial risk; and the initial set-up cost of buying a shed and connecting to an electricity supply, could probably be funded from a grant.

The problem is that, so far, we've been unable to find a suitable partner organisation.

##### Option 3:

An expanded model such as this would be a very exciting prospect for the community, bringing the benefits to many more people, attracting more people to the organisation and having the benefit of scale (i.e. greater stability). The obvious downside is the greater level of financial commitment and risk, plus greatly increased responsibility for the organising committee (or trustees). It might be beneficial to register as a charity and indeed we could form a limited company registered with Companies House, bringing additional bureaucracy and scrutiny (but reducing financial risk to individuals).

Option 4:

By expanding in this way with satellites from a centralised organisation, it would allow us to be opportunistic and grow 'organically' as circumstances allow. Currently there is a possible chance to set up a Lydiard Millicent Shed. Doing this would allow the current membership to work on a new venture. In due course, other opportunities would come along – possibly an Option 2 model in RWB – and the greater strategy could evolve.

#### **13.4. Future get togethers & Frequency**

A quick very discussion was had and decided that fortnightly was the preferred frequency. The venue(s) were yet to be decided and JL suggested and to investigate the possibility of using the upper room at Dandelion cafe in the High St. It was also agreed that the first 'get together' would not be practicable until the New Year.

#### **13.5. Social media involvement**

The members present were asked which people should be included within email or WhatsApp group messaging. The decision was that only subscription paid members should be included

#### **13.6. Problems with group email addresses.**

PH reported that the shed currently uses a group 'catch all' email address of *members@rwshed.uk*, which includes members email addresses.

However, there have been occasions when some members have reported not receiving the email.

Therefore in the future, emails will be sent directly to each individual and not by using the group address.

It is possible that some missing emails may have been subject to changes in the email addresses. It is therefore important to stress that any changes to a members email need to be reported to PH for update.

\*\*\* The meeting finished at 11.20am \*\*\*