

Women's Shed launches in Frome

FROME Women's Shed is now up and running with their first workshop session in the Remakery, Welshmill Hub held on Monday 21st May.

More than 30 women came along, and 25 were inspired to become members straight away. Encouraged by this turnout, the Women's Shed ran a second session on Bank Holiday Monday. The plan is to run a workshop every Monday from 9am to 1pm, with the hope to include evening sessions in the near future.

Louise Aylward, secretary for the Women's Shed reports, "At this first session, supported by the Frome Men's Shed, a group of women gathered in the Remakery. Some wanted to learn woodwork or metalwork or how to make stained glass windows; others came to knit, others to paint.

"Some were offering to share expertise, including design technology, weaving, painting, silversmithing, macramé. Others were drawn by curiosity and the vague feeling that something good was happening which couldn't be missed.

"And some just came for a chat over a cup of tea. All were welcome in the friendly, relaxed space open to inspiration, new connections and suggestions for Women's Shed projects.

"Sally-Anne Fraser set the ball rolling. She arrived with a heavy bit of wood to discover if she could turn it into a garden bench. With the help of John from the Men's Shed, Sally-Anne, who had never used a power tool before, learned to use a belt sander."

Sally said, "I felt nervous but I set to and the sander seemed to dance across the surface. I settled in to really enjoying the task and seeing the results of what I had done. Help was at hand for the particularly rough, tricky bits. Now, a fine piece of elm just needs a bit more work with fine wet and dry sanding."

Louise continued, "At the second workshop, Women Shedders painted, knitted, stitched tapestry, sanded down a table and examined an old mechanical knitting machine with a view to fixing it. A visitor said that she wasn't going to stay long, as she wasn't



in the best of spirits. But she did stay, and, on leaving, said she felt much brighter. She appreciated feeling welcomed, included and engaged.

"Proposed future projects start close to home and include constructing a bookshelf in the Shed to house the wide selection of reference books currently hidden away in drawers, and customising some aspects of the space so that women can more easily use the machines. The Women's Shed also plans to be involved in the upcoming Children's Festival, participate in some community projects planned by the Men's Shed, and help Sally-Anne finish her garden bench. Anything is possible.

"That is the feeling that lingers. Anything is possible. This fledgling venture, housed in the bright, airy space of the Remakery, furnished with reclaimed wood and humming with inspiration, promises an opportunity for women to come together and achieve things, whether it's a life-changing community project, a garden-enhancing personal project, learning or sharing a skill, or simply forming new friendships.

"So far, so good. Come and see for yourself!"

To keep in touch, go to the Frome Shed website and the Women's Shed Facebook page, or contact Ros Whitehouse from the Women's Shed on 07500-061624 and Women@fromeshed.org.uk.

