

# Message from UK Men's Sheds Association



Dear Partners and supporters,

We wanted to update you on the actions UK Men's Sheds Association are taking amid the current crisis.

We are following government advice and best practice as we try to keep a level of normality to our work and programmes. Our primary aim is to keep people connected, albeit remotely.

As a movement, we recently saw the 575<sup>th</sup> open Shed in the UK and this is thanks to the tremendous work by everyone working in the sector, sadly our hopes to see the 600<sup>th</sup> Shed open circa May time are now on hold, but I am sure the movement will bounce back stronger and better in the near future.

## Operations

UKMSA operations shall continue with all staff being home based and reporting to be in good health. We will be working with a little more flexibility in terms of staff hours to meet the needs of our employees and volunteers. We will try to retain service as usual as much as possible.

Email is always the most efficient way of contacting us, but like Shedders, we do like to talk!

## Connecting Sheds

Sheds have now closed across the UK. Throughout this period we advised Sheds to follow government advice to keep Sheds and Shedders safe. We are actively encouraging Sheds to stay in touch and looking at how we might support Sheds to look at virtual opportunities such as a Virtual Shed. We continue to use our facebook group for Shedders with other social media channels to keep Shedders in good spirits and connected.

We are also looking at how we utilise our tremendous volunteer Ambassadors to stay in touch with Sheds and promoting connectivity within and outside the Shed community.

Thanks to the support from Patrick Abrahams, one of our Ambassadors, Frome FM, and funding from partners we have been able to initiate a Radio Show – Shed Happens.

The radio show will launch today at 10am and will run for two hours every week at the same time for the next eight weeks. We will also look to identify funds to expand this should it be necessary. The link for the show is - <http://frome.fm/listennow/> and there will also be the opportunity to catch up on the show via a podcast on - <http://Frome.fm>

## ShedFest

UKMSA shall continue to plan for ShedFest a and the Shed of the Year Awards. We are currently reviewing options in terms of new dates and will keep everyone informed. ShedFest will be an important event for Sheds as a focus and an opportunity to regroup and celebrate when everyone is able to resume normal life.

## Partners

We recognise that the next few months will be a challenge for our partners and wish you well in this difficult time.

Thank you to those partners that have been in touch and provided messages of support, flexibility with funding and plans. These are unprecedented times and together we all stand Shoulder to Shoulder with the Sheds.

Stay safe and look after one another.