

BPC – ANNUAL ASSEMBLY – 26 APRIL 2023

BramShed – Briefing Notes

Introduction

Since opening in January last year, the BramShed has continued to thrive and it now provides an excellent facility with a wide range of DIY facilities and a relaxed social meeting place for those villagers who may otherwise become isolated and would like to try their hand at something constructive.

Infrastructure

Having moved into 4A Montague Road, finding space in the Shed is a challenge. We have built an extension to house the wood chip/dust extractor and converted an adjacent garage into another workshop for the storage and cutting of larger pieces of timber. Weather permitting, we also work outside on the patio, beside our well-kept garden and the bike stands we have installed.

Having passed a recent fire/risk assessment, the landlord is fitting a new alarm system, detectors and appliances. We have carried out a H&S risk assessment, installed First Aid equipment and have booked a training day with the Red Cross, on 11 May. We are receiving quotations for security enhancements which will install secure doors and window shutters to protect our assets – using funding from the S106 contract.

Finance

Generous startup grants and personal donations from villagers, shedders and supporters have allowed us to set up the Shed and install a good range of equipment. (Hence the security enhancements.) A steady income from membership fees, tea bar contributions and ‘donations’ for repairs/refurbishments of (typically) furniture and bicycles, should enable us to meet the majority of our annual running costs – which are: rent, insurance and broadband.

We have partnered with a local builder’s merchant – Rose Building Supplies – who have already donated free timber, fixings and clothing, plus they are offering all BramShed Members a significant discount on other tools and materials. The High Street Co-op has also donated tea bar goods.

Membership

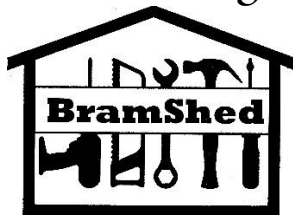
Not all members renewed in February, but there is a steady number of inquiries and ‘walk-ins’. There are over 30 full members, 9 supporters and we can accept more. Should the number of Shedders begin to crowd the workshops, we will simply increase our opening hours. (Currently 4-hour sessions, 3 days per week.)

There is no doubt about the wellbeing benefits of the BramShed; feedback from all quarters has been very positive. Members have found a new life and interest in the Shed and, as our reputation has spread, the village community has also benefitted from a variety of repairs and technical help. Recently we have carried out cycle repairs for some of our refugee families, and there is a steady stream of inquiries to fix electrical appliances and broken furniture.

What we do and can do

Shedders are free (and encouraged) to pursue whatever they want to do in the Shed. Woodwork is a strong interest, but we now have a very well-equipped metalwork shop, with a donated lathe/milling machine. The range of skills and knowledge of the Shedders is wide and a great asset to the shed when it comes to repairs; and we all learn from each other. The shed can also offer a blade sharpening service and now has a qualified 'PAT' tester. This is primarily to ensure safety in the shed (our landlord requires this) and for any repairs we carry out, but we may also be able to offer this service to other village groups – for a donation! (To recoup some of the cost of the equipment and training.)

Steve Hodgson



Chairman