

## Chairs Report for Aldridge Shed 1<sup>st</sup> AGM 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017

It's hard to believe that the embryo of our shed only began here (Aldridge Youth Theatre) on 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016. Around 50 people attended and were given a presentation by Jo Phillips, Project Manager –Sheds with the RVS (Royal Voluntary Service)



We were asked if we were interested in being part of a committee to put our names down and we would be contacted. Which we duly were.

Our first meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at Wetherspoons in Aldridge where a few intrepid people were unsure of what they were letting themselves in for. Sean Carey a fireman from Aldridge Fire Station was with us from the start and supported us along the way. The journey had begun.



New tasks had to be learned. People who had never met each other before were thrown together. Following a visit to the Kings Heath Shed 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016 we had our first 'real' meeting to discuss the ramifications of running a Shed. We were very enthusiastic but as you can imagine we were like a new born baby trying to walk for the first time but guided by our 'parents' in our case Jo, Sean and John (who I will mention more about shortly) we gradually, after meeting on average twice a week started to grow stronger in our roles. Writing our Constitution, Finance policy, Membership Form, Fundraising, Finding premises etc. If I am honest paperwork I really dislike but to get a good result it must be done.

Here I would like to give a massive thank you to Jo who's expertise and support has been invaluable, she has always been available either face to face, emails or telephone calls without complaint helping and guiding us and we could not have done it without her. Sean's passion and vision for a shed was very enthusiastic and we would not be here today celebrating our 1<sup>st</sup> AGM if he hadn't found the premises at Alrewych Court.

Also a massive thank you to John Morris Area Manager of Aldridge and Beacon Area Partnerships.

has also been



John has been with us from our first minuted meeting and invaluable in his guidance, support and wise words.

Sean Carey and I met with the management of [Housing & Care 21](#) (awaiting logo) Alrewych Court, 220 Northgate, Aldridge, Walsall, West Midlands, WS9 8AF Tenants meeting 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016 they thought it was a great idea but the committee had to agree to the Shed coming here. On 29<sup>th</sup> April 2016 we met with the committee and they agreed unanimously to us setting up in their day care centre which was rarely used. Subsequently we met with the Management to agree terms, rent etc.

We had three open days where the general public came along, albeit to quite a sparse room, to see what the Shed is all about. Everyone seemed very enthusiastic even Wendy Morton our local MP who popped in.

After many shed committee meetings, building of work benches, general sorting out and equipping, we officially opened on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

### Funding Successes

Without the help of the following organisation in monetary support we would not be at the stage we are today. So our grateful thanks go to



# ASDA foundation

Transforming Communities, Improving Lives



Health Action Group (Walsall East)

Highlights of the year:

- Having a committed team
- Support of organisations
- Finding premises
- Open days
- Radio & TV Coverage

During the year we have had numerous donations of equipment, machine tools, hand tools, computers, wood etc. We are overwhelmed by the generosity of members and the general public without whose help we would be much further behind with equipment. A massive thank you on behalf of all the committee.

We have had massive support and promotion from:

The Pioneer Magazine

The Chronical

Radio WM

Midlands Today

Plans for the year ahead

We are looking to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Purchase Serious dust extraction unit

A new web site

More open days

Shaylors (Awaiting Logo) a local building company where I am their Workplace Chaplain, are looking at providing the Shed with timber that is not used up on their sites under the 'Considerate Constructors' scheme, this will be a massive help, thank you. It is being trialled at a site in Stoke on Trent and if successful will be spread to all areas of the country where work is being carried out, which will benefit many more Sheds.

At present we have 66 members which from a standing start is really encouraging. More women are joining us and one lady last week who had lost her husband of 30 years said, "It's the best thing I have ever done joining the Shed" More promotion of the Shed is needed, word to be spread, and if you can help promoting that would be great.

#### General information

We are now open Monday – Thursday 9:30am – 4:00pm hoping to open on Fridays as well once we have people to cover. Yearly membership has been kept at just £24 as has session fees of £3.50 Mornings £3.50 afternoons, if members want to stay all day they just pay £5.00. At our last committee meeting we agreed to reduce session fees to £2.00 for any in receipt of job seekers allowance. Hopefully all past members will renew their membership but realistically we feel half may but feel we have a solid base to build upon.

We have many activities taking place: Woodworking, wood turning, craft work, Embroidery, Sewing, Making new, repairing old, upholstery the list is almost endless. We are a members driven shed so what the members want we will try to support.

Thank you again for your support and encouragement.

Follow us on Facebook under Aldridge shed

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