**11 March 2024**

**For immediate release**

**UK Men’s Sheds to host ‘The Parliament Shed’ in Westminster**

UK Men’s Sheds Association (UKMSA) will erect a Men’s Shed at Portcullis House in the Palace of Westminster estate from 18th to the 22nd March 2024 in a drive to raise awareness of men’s wellbeing and the Men’s Shed movement.

‘The Parliament Shed’ has been custom-built and is designed to highlight the health, wellbeing and social benefits of community-run Men’s Sheds and the key areas where Sheds make an impact.

Expert partners from partners and shedders such as the Zero Suicide Alliance and the Centre for Ageing Better will join UKMSA and shedders from around the UK to explain the causes and promote the benefits of their work. Topics include: Suicide Prevention, Mental Health, Men’s Health and Loneliness.

With over 1,100 Men’s Sheds across the UK and over 33,000 ‘Shedders’, the UKMSA aims to use this platform to engage with people working in the parliamentary estate and government to raise the profile of the Men’s Sheds movement, and highlight the causes and partners engaged at the event.

Charlie Bethel, chief executive officer said,“Men’s Sheds work because they are a simple concept people can relate to. Whether it is a Shed building bird boxes or mending football boots and bikes to give to disadvantaged children in their communities, you can see a real pride and sense of achievement in everyone who comes through the door of a Shed.’

In addition, UKMSA will be announcing a formal partnership with Royal British Legion at The Parliament Shed. ‘Many Sheds in the UK have veterans in. With the Royal British Legion we hope to increase that number by helping Sheds become more accessible, particularly for people with conditions such as PTSD. We believe this agreement will also see more Sheds opened and we can have more of an impact on communities across the UK. We are particularly proud to be working on establishing Dementia Sheds across the six RBL Care Homes.’ explained Charlie Bethel of UKMSA.

**The Parliament Shed was donated by Wickes, Onduline and Power Sheds and has been adapted by Black Park Shed in Buckinghamshire for the week-long event in Parliament. Tools, equipment and supplies have been provided by Axminster Tools Ltd, TiteFix and Ronseal.**

Ends

# Notes to Editors

To further details or to arrange an interview or visit ‘The Parliament Shed at Portcullis House, please contact:

Media information contact - media@ukmsa.org.uk

Or our spokesperson Charlie Bethel, CEO, UKMSA charlie.bethel@ukmsa.org.uk

**UKMSA Charity Partners include:**

Zero Suicide Alliance: <https://zerosuicidealliance.com/>

Royal British Legion: <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk>

Centre for Ageing Better: <https://ageing-better.org.uk>

Men’s Health Forum: <https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk>

**Background Information**

**Men’s Sheds work**

* **96% of Shedders felt less lonely after joining a Men’s Shed**
* **89% of Shedders reported to be less depressed.**
* **75% of Shedders reported to be less anxious.**
* **97% of Shedders made new friends after joining a Men’s Shed.**
* **88% of Shedders felt more connected to their community.**
* **39% of Sheds report that they have either saved a life (25%) or believe they have saved a life (14%)**

**Over 1,100 Men’s Sheds across the UK that is over 33,000 Shedders.**

**UKMSA was founded in 2013 and celebrated its 10-year anniversary last year.**

**What is a Men’s Shed?**
Men’s Sheds are community spaces for men to connect, converse and create. The activities are often similar to those of garden sheds, but for groups of men to enjoy together (many Sheds also have women members too). They help reduce loneliness and isolation, but most importantly, they’re fun. Find out more about them.

**What do people do in Men's Sheds?**
Their members decide on what they do. Men's Sheds are community spaces where men gather to engage in various practical activities, share skills, and foster social connections. The activities at a Men's Shed can vary based on the interests and preferences of the members, but here are some common activities that men typically participate in at a Men's Shed: Woodworking and Carpentry, Metalworking, Gardening and Horticulture, DIY and Home Improvement, Electronics and Technology, Arts and Crafts, Music making, Gaming and Hobbies, Socialising and Conversation, Skill Sharing and Workshops, Community Projects, Health and Wellbeing Activities and drinking tea!

# **For more information visit our Frequently asked questions section of our website.**

https://menssheds.org.uk/faq/