



# Westhill & District Men's Shed

Make friends, share interests and help our community

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May 2018 organisation structure changed and document updated.

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## 1 Why this document?

We are often asked for advice on how to start a shed and more recently this has changed to 'how do you run your shed?' This is how we do it, it works for us. Probably 95% is solid but is still changing and probably always will. This is not to say it will suit your shed, if some of it does and it saves you time then great, but we hope you will just pick bits out and get back to us with your improvements. Any comments, things missing etc. are welcome.

## 2 Cool Runnings

Our shed is run, as far as possible, with no pressure and no deadlines. We are mostly retired men and have had our fill. The shed is a form of relaxation and a chance to talk with other men. The atmosphere, often commented on by visitors, reflects this hence: Cool Runnings.

The other aspect is "there are no bosses, we are all volunteers" in our model of how to run a shed. There is a structure however because decisions need to be made, efficiently, that apply across the shed.

## 3 What is the shed for?

The Shed is a place where men can meet and socialise. However it has a practical side using the workshop for individual project or projects where the shed helps the community. It is this combination that makes Men's Sheds popular with men.

Men can at major changes in their lives lose their friends (retirement, bereavement, moving to be nearer family support for example). Women are much better at making new friends, joining activity groups, charity work and evening classes.



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Men's Sheds are a rare example where men will go because they are attracted by the practical nature of the shed. We follow that up by making it a friendly place to go. There is plenty of work for men to do but it is important that we avoid deadlines and pressure; being mostly retired men we have had our fill of those.

The shed is apolitical and secular, independent and is not a service provider. Our policies (section later in the document) make clear what that means in various circumstances.

Government, local authorities, social workers and charitable grant-givers appreciate the benefits to society. In a recent study of Westhill Men's Shed the Social Return on Investment (reduction in costs to society due to men having a brighter outlook and remaining healthier, less loneliness and depression, improved relationships at home and including monetary value generated by the shed) versus the cost of running the shed (£5000 p.a.) is expressed in pounds as a 10:1 benefit.

The low cost of running the Shed has two major parts; one that all the men are volunteers and secondly Aberdeenshire Council, recognising the benefit to residents have leased the building at a peppercorn rent.

## 4 Formal Organisation

### 4.1 Initial setup

From the start there were two parts to the organisation: board and supervisors. This was adequate for three years until we had reached about 150 members. At this point the board needed to reduce its workload and co-ordination of operations became important so that we were not reinventing the wheel. We changed to the model explained below.

### 4.2 Redesign of the organisation for a larger and more active shed

We are all volunteers and equal in that- but there is a need to make decisions efficiently so there is a structure that means we don't need to run every discussion by a full members meeting as this would slow things down too much.

**The organisation consists of four main groups:**

**the MEMBERS** - who have the right to attend members' meetings (including annual general meeting) and have important powers under the constitution; in particular, the members appoint people to serve on the board and take decisions on changes to the constitution itself.

**the BOARD** - who hold regular meetings, and set the direction of the organisation; the board is responsible for monitoring and controlling the financial position of the organisation and ensuring the legal obligations are adhered to.

The posts are : Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary , Treasurer and Board member.



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**OPERATIONS**- are responsible for all practical aspects of running the shed from communications, membership records, project delivery and management and workshop operation through to maintenance of the shed; this is most easily understood by reviewing the organisation chart (below). The operations co-ordinator is the biggest job in the shed.

**the SAFETY SUPERVISORS**- are an integral part of Operations but have a key role in running the shed on a daily basis. They are responsible for daily monitoring of the shed and its operation and particularly making sure everything is being done safely. In addition they take part in welcoming new members, introducing them to the shed procedures and assessing competence to operate machines.

In addition, individuals or groups are asked to be project leads for the various projects we undertake, to manage major changes to the shed, when a study is needed to decide on a supplier etc. They are appointed with varying degrees of formality as activities start and act as the coordinator and, if a commissioned project are responsible for progressing the project in the management system (estimates, quotes, build phase and invoicing).

## 4.3 Structure

As the shed has grown in numbers and range of activities it is increasingly difficult to manage the majority of shed activities. The structure below reduces the board responsibilities to the core and splits the operational activities to a wider number of men. We don't wish to increase the workload so as the new structure beds in the board will reduce the frequency of meetings and number of trustees. The new operations committee will need to agree a chairman, who must be a trustee, and methods of working.



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## 4.4 Board

### Board

-Finances kept in order  
- Statutory reporting  
- Solvent and sound future  
- Operations overview  
-Safety monitoring

Policies, guidelines and misc.  
procedures

Publicity /Press

Liaison with other bodies

#### Expansion:

**Board:** Structure of board is Chairman, vice chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and board members (all are also known as trustees) this is a legal requirement.

**-finances kept in order:** keeping books

**- statutory reporting:** annual return to OSCR, Annual report, AGM

**-solvent and sound future:** monitoring of budgets vs income, business plan, strategic direction

**- Operations overview :** report from Operations co-ordinator

**- safety monitoring:** safety report at board meetings

**- policies and misc procedures:** a single document contains all the policies and

**- Publicity/ press:** promoting the shed at shire, nation etc. levels

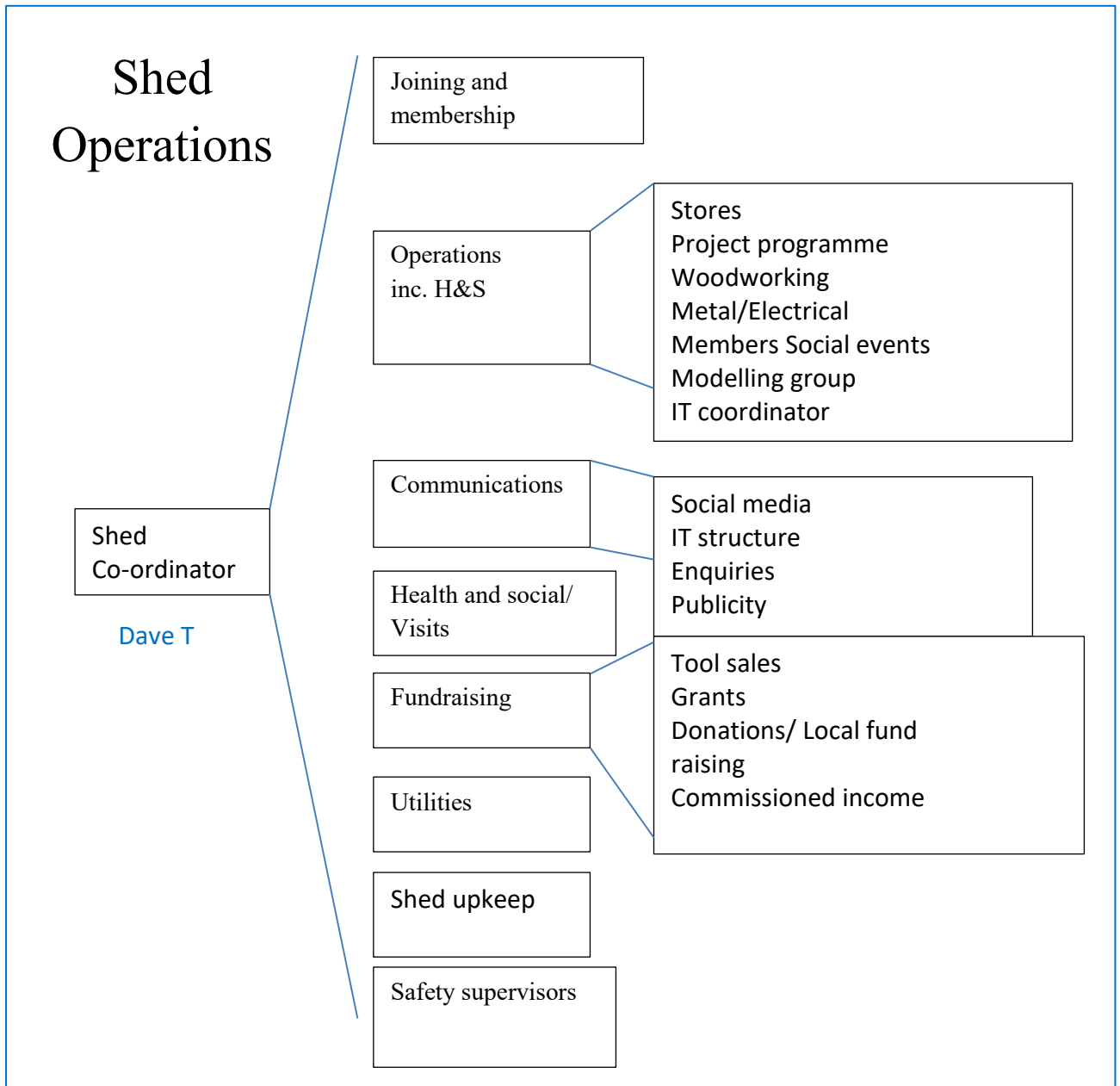
**- Liaison with other bodies:** Inter-shed /global liaison Council/ Government ,coordination at board level and through operations project/equipment



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## 4.5 Operations



Names are added in blue; this is the main person to coordinate that area; they will of course be helped by many others. One person may take on several roles.

**Shed co-ordinator:** overview and control of all shed operations. This man must also be a board member.

**Joining and membership:** welcome form, induction, tool competency records and training, membership records



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**Operations inc. H&S:** Running the shed to make a successful shed: maintenance, running the workshop and Health & Safety. This is a big area so is broken into:

- **Stores:** taking in donations, processing them, co-ordinating with the workshop and moving them on (tool sales, online sales etc.)
- **Project Programme:** acceptance of projects, process for managing, delivery and billing.
- **Woodworking :** woodworking in the workshop including maintenance of equipment. Health and Safety focus as this is where the main risks are.
- **Metal/Electrical :** metalworking in the workshop including maintenance of equipment. Health and Safety focus as this is where the main risks are.
- **Members Social events:** These are currently defined as the meals where family are invited but could include other events in the shed.

## Communications:

- **Social media:** currently face book, website front page.
- **IT Structure:** the provision and running of the infrastructure consisting in 2016 of: Webhosting and Email lists, Website structure and management, Cloud (Box sync) management, Broadband.
- **Enquiries:** mainly email via contact email address.

**Health and social/ Visits:** in keeping with our purpose to improve health where we can, we run health talks of interest to the men and trips of interest to the men.

## Fundraising:

- **Tool sales:** as it says on the tin, local tool sales, car boots, online sales.
- **Grants:** we apply for and receive grants
- **Donations/ Local Fundraising:** cash donations and raffles/draws etc.
- **Commissioned income:** money from making and repairing items to order.

**Utilities:** usage and review of suppliers- electric, phone/B-band, lease, insurance

**Shed upkeep:** monitoring of the condition of the shed, rectification of problems, routine maintenance (e.g 5 yearly electrical inspections)

**Safety Supervisors:** responsible for being in charge of the shed everytime we are open on a rota basis. They welcome new members and keep an eye on everyone to ensure that the shed and men are working safely.

Everyone is a volunteer. This makes the shed very cheap to run- assisted by Aberdeenshire Council who rent the building to us at a peppercorn rent. The difference between costs and income is made up by producing our own income (commissioned work, tool sales, raffles etc.) and grants.



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## 4.6 Safety Supervisors

We then have a pool of Safety Supervisors. One is on duty whenever the shed is open and our opening days are balanced with the number of supervisors so that a duty is required once per fortnight; opening three days each week we need 8-10 supervisors for the 6 sessions to allow for times when men are unable to come to the shed.

Supervisors are proposed by existing supervisors after observing members in the shed. What we are looking for is someone who works safely themselves and gets on well with others. A supervisor does not have to be an all-round expert in the workshop the key is that they should have sufficient competence to recognise when some activity is not being done safely; then they should have sufficient authority to ask a man to stop and solve the problem and for this to be accepted.

When on duty they are also responsible for keeping an eye on everything happening in the shed, welcoming new men to the shed and, if the men are going to become members, giving the induction- emergency procedures and checkout or training on any machines the man needs to use. Further information is given later in this document.

Supervisors also take in commissioned work from the community; ask for help to do whatever needs doing- from hoovering, buying biscuits and milk or tidying up.

There is an opening and closing procedure for supervisors to follow. This includes checking the workshop looks ready for use and fire exits are clear.

## 4.7 Supervisors meetings and routine maintenance

Supervisors have regular meetings, about every 2 months, to discuss any issues. There is also a table listing each machine and some shed overall activities (testing fire alarms, checking fire extinguishers checking mains wiring including emergency stop and RCD operation).

Each machine has a routine testing procedure (unplug, check through adjustments and condition, fix any problems and finally power up and test). This procedure is listed in a document per machine. We aim to test each machine at least quarterly and more often for those that are used more often.

All supervisors have a first aid certificate or will get one at the next course.

## 4.8 Incoming donations and Project management

Incoming donations and commissioned work are recorded where they are likely to require work in the shed. A mower that needs repair or a broken chair would fall into this category; the tag attached allows anyone finding the piece to discover where it came from, what is required to happen and that the lead person will coordinate the effort.

Item	Who From Name, Tel, address.	Date in	Work needed and notes	Lead person	Costs £	Paid? Tick
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See the Policies on Commissioned work for our pricing strategy.

## 5 Informal organisation

We find that men coming to the shed want to get involved and be productive (the vast majority anyway). This is often based on their expertise so a woodwork teacher becomes the go to person for the woodwork workshop. The IT guy looks after the PCs, the natural fundraiser fundraises. Donations of tools are received, sorted and moved on by the guys interested in that.

There are only a few that are prepared to do the paperwork, keeping the books, writing the annual financial report and filling in the return for the regulator (OSCR), applying for funds and writing the resulting reports, responding to queries, keeping the list of members etc. This is arguably the area where being a men's shed has its most difficulty. Breaking the tasks down does work; so dealing with the donations and petty cash as a task has worked OK.

Much of this is organic, happening naturally over time. An occasional push is needed to get someone started.

## 6 The Welcome and Workshop induction and Membership process:

### 6.1 Welcome

On first coming to the shed we think it is key to welcome men to the shed, show them round and see what they are interested in. Everyone is alert to a man coming in for the first time. We find out what interests them and if possible ask them to assist with an ongoing job. A man needs to leave having achieved something practical. A sign in book is completed each time a man comes to the shed but this is usually the only paperwork needed unless they are so taken they want to get right in to it.

We do not make a charge for use of the Shed; we do this so that cost is not a reason for someone to be unable to use the shed. If our circumstances change we may change this.

### 6.2 Shed procedures

On a subsequent visits we also ask each man to sign in and note what he intends to do (workshop, health talk, meeting etc.). Knowing how many are using the shed and for what purpose is used for reports back to funders, publicity etc. It also allows an interaction with the other volunteers in the shed.

They are asked to complete a **Welcome Form**. This proposes him as a member (each applicant must be approved by the board) and to agree with the shed safety procedures, records his name and address, emergency contact details and any medical conditions he thinks we should know about. Part of this process is pointing out the fire exits and safety arrangements.

If he intends to use the workshop then a workshop Induction is carried out and recorded on the **Individual Training Record**.



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## 6.3 Individual Training Record

This is a table with the rows the individual name (we find it best to sort everything by first name as that is the way we know people) and the columns the skills/training. This starts with a workshop induction and safety briefing that includes:

- Emergency procedures (fire alarm, exits, assembly point)
- General workshop layout (includes the metal flammable liquids cupboard, steel bins for waste, emergency stop buttons for electricity etc.)
- Personal protective equipment location and range available.

The columns carry on through use of hand tools and then list each piece of machinery, the safety notices displayed by each machine are explained and importantly that he must be checked by a supervisor for EACH machine he intends to work on.

There are two ways to go from here:

- 1) If they say they are competent then the man is asked what the hazards are; the steps he will take to mitigate the hazards and a run through how he would operate the machine. If this is satisfactory they are signed off.
- 2) If they are starting from no knowledge then a supervisor will go through how to use the machine safely. This is followed by observation of the man and when competent they are signed off; the supervisor signs the training record on his Individual Training Record for that machine.

Some machines are very complex and are only used with a supervisor assisting until they and the man are comfortable with it.

The supervisor will continue to keep an eye on all activity and 'remind' men to use PPE or whatever is necessary to keep everyone safe. The record is on the wall in the workshop and any supervisor can check the competence record for any man. Occasional audits of attendees training are carried out.

Some men choose never to use the workshop, others use hand tools only and are helped by a supervisor when a machine is needed for a cut.

## 6.4 Domestic

By which I mean cleaning of the shed, toilets, floors etc. We make the point that we are all volunteers and the responsibility for keeping the shed tidy belongs to all of us. There may be some reluctance by men for this work and it will depend on the mix of men how it is solved. One thing is for sure- it cannot be left until trip hazards become commonplace and disease strikes the shed.



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We have not solved the 'everyone' must do something issue. Some have had strokes and are unable to help- we don't mind that. Where it does get contentious is where men have never done domestic chores and are not going to start now. We have had this problem and gone through several options before solving it (at least for now) so it might be worth recording them.

## 6.4.1 Workshop

In the workshop everyone is expected to clean up their own mess and do a little bit more for the general good. Workbenches are to be kept clear unless it is not possible to move the work (wet glue for example) or work will carry on at the start of the next session. The supervisor usually calls time 15 minutes before closing time when the tidy up starts.

## 6.4.2 Tea coffee

This is the next level of problem. We had to instil a culture of 'everyone washes their own mug'. This works generally with a few doing the extra to clean the table tops.

## 6.4.3 Toilets and Kitchen

???

## 7 Insurance

Running a shed with all volunteers it is possible to just have public liability insurance. Any accident would be covered under this.

We feel we need more and so have cover for trustee indemnity, personal accident cover for supervisors and trustees, legal expenses.

The majority of the cost is the public liability, in 2015 we are paying £730. Details of who with if we have a conversation about it.

## 8 Policies

We have developed a number of policies or guidelines. These formalise the thinking behind the statements and by being written for use by others mean we can explain our rules easily. In summary:

- 1) Working outside shed is discouraged. Primarily because we are aware of competing with local traders and as a charity of volunteers could take their livelihood from them. We do make exceptions- where another charity has tried to employ local traders and failed, judgment is made on a per case basis.
- 2) Men coming to the shed should be able to look after themselves or bring their support, of either sex.

We make it clear we are not a service provider and are not trained social workers. We also



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do not have disclosures for working with the vulnerable or children, a responsible person must be in attendance.

- 3) Commissioned projects. These come into the shed and are discussed by a board member or supervisor, ideally in consultation with other shedders. We will take projects for local individuals and for other charities generally. Some projects for commercial companies are undertaken on rare occasions. We must remember that men come to the shed because they enjoy it- they are usually willing to work hard but deadlines and pressure must be avoided where possible.

If a project is accepted the pricing algorithm is cost of materials plus an estimate of the hours needed times 10 and a donation. We explain that without payment very soon the men's shed won't be around to ask. The resulting price may be varied based on a view taken of the person asking (retired individual or a charity catering for the disabled would be examples where the prices would be discounted). Also if judged to be the right thing we will just ask for a donation.

- 4) Tool Donations policy. Incoming donations are first offered to the shed to see if they are needed in our workshop. If not they are then offered to shed members, put into the tool sale, recycled or skipped.
- 5) We have not yet needed to use a disciplinary procedure.

More detail available on individual application to Westhill Men's Shed.

## 9 Building facilities:

### 9.1 Fire

A fire assessment was carried out by a council employee as we took over the building. We will need to get this refreshed periodically. This includes fire extinguishers and we have arranged for an annual inspection and refill/renew where needed.

Fire escapes are checked for being clear by supervisors and hazard tape placed on the floor to show the area that must be kept clear.

### 9.2 Electrical

As the building was previously a library, emergency lights, fuses and disconnection devices are all installed. For the workshop we masked the existing 13Amp sockets so they cannot be used. We then put in an overlay system, with emergency cut-off switches and RCDs.

## 10 Other

### 10.1 Pat testing

To sell anything electrical it needs to be PAT tested. Initially we relied on electricians doing this voluntarily but soon found that with our tool sales we were imposing too much on them. We now have our own PAT tester and anyone who is familiar with electricity can learn the methods needed.



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## 10.2 IT and computing

There is an IT donation programme that is subscribed to by many companies. They donate the software and services free of charge. The scheme is administered by tt-exchange and they distribute the software for an administration fee. You need to register with them and then, for example, the full Microsoft Office suite is available for £25.

## 10.3 Cash Donations

The "red can" sits on the desk and invites people to contribute to the tea and coffee fund and any other donations also go in here. Green can donations are for tool sales. Records are kept in the safe with the petty cash box and transferred to the bank as it builds up; items of up to £20 can be claimed using petty cash and are recorded here also.

## 10.4 Tool sales

They are held about 4x a year from whatever we don't need to use in our own workshop or have repaired. We hold them in Westhill at the shopping centre where there is a community space for these events.

## 10.5 Local Fundraising

This ranges from raffling signed shirts, applications to funding bodies (council, lottery, businesses, private funders),

Income comes from commissioned projects and tool sales.

## 10.6 Workshop operations

We have a detailed Workshop operations manual. The contents are listed here and a sample copy is available for download.

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## 11 Sample Welcome Form

### WELCOME FORM

Full Name: .....

Address: ..... Telephone: .....

.....

..... email: .....

I wish to apply to be a member of the Men's Shed.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

Your safety in the Shed is of utmost concern to us and we want all our users to leave with the same body parts they came in with! Therefore we ask you to make this promise:

When working in the Shed I will only undertake activities when I know I am competent to do so without endangering myself or others. I will only operate machinery AFTER I have been approved by a Supervisor (this may involve training). I will not undertake activities if to do so would be contrary to any medical or professional advice I have received. Any faults with shed equipment will be reported to the Safety Supervisor on duty in the Shed. I am aware that the final say on issues regarding safe work in the Shed lies with the Safety Supervisor. Sign only if you understand and agree to these conditions.

Signed..... Date.....

In addition I have received the Safety Briefing. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

In the event of an emergency, who would you like us to contact?

Name: ..... Relationship: .....

Address: .....

Telephone: .....

Optional: If you have any health issues you think we should be aware of (e.g. eyesight, deafness, diabetes, epilepsy, mobility problems, medications, blood disorders) or have SOS/Medic Alert card please inform us.

.....  
.....



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## 12 Individual Training Record

Before working in the workshop each man must have a safety induction.

Name: .....

We understand that there is a wide range of expertise among the people who use the Shed. We wish to respect all our users and encourage the sharing of skills and the learning of new ones. Therefore we have this checklist to recognise your areas of competency. It is common sense (and an insurance requirement) that we make sure that the tools are used safely.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY AGREEMENT** When working in the Shed, I undertake to work safely and not endanger either myself or other users of the shed. I will only operate machinery AFTER I have received instruction on its safe use. Any faults with machinery including wiring or plugs will be reported to Safety Supervisor. Any incident of cuts or injuries is to be reported. initialled \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_

	Date	Initials of trainer
<b>1 Personal Protection</b>		
Safety Briefing (electrical safety, fire exits and keeping them clear, tackling fires etc.)		
PPE: ear, eye and breathing protection		
Use of dust extraction, gloves		
<b>2 Hand Tools</b>		
Safe use of saws, Battery powered machines		
Chisels		
Mains powered hand tools (planer, jigsaw)		
<b>3 Hazardous fluids</b> (handling use storage)		
<b>4 Drill Press</b> (use of machine vice)		
Etc. per tool		

Notes relating to numbered lines.

1. Safety briefing= fire exits/assembly point, electric cut-off buttons, fire extinguishers, ???

All men understand that we don't know whether they are competent to use a machine and there has never been a problem running through this check.

Each tool will have a Safety Summary sign associated with it- standard format (Hazards, Safety, Procedure).

If a man says they are competent, cover the sign and ask what the hazards are, how he would reduce them and how to use the machine safely. On passing this a brief run over the tool and observation during use are sufficient.





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If they are new to the machine run over the signs points and then give a training course at the machine.

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