**North Ayrshire Council Participatory Budgeting2024-2025**

B.B. - I became a member of the CCCMS when it opened in 2023. One year on I have become very

aware that men have issues which they don’t talk about. They do not bond the way women

do. Having spent the last year with our members I have notice how several have opened up

to each other, even comparing and supporting each other with issues they may have.

Having come together as a group of strangers many of them have become firm friends and

socialise with each other. Furthermore, several have branched out and not only share

activities in the Shed but have formed a ‘walking groups’ with others setting up a ‘guitar

class’ for complete beginners who are being taught by a few experienced guitar players. The

atmosphere in the Shed on our ‘operational’ days is quite something to behold, with

Members sharing banter while also doing something constructive and satisfying, building

basic joinery projects. Some of our more advanced skilled Members carry out commissions

for the local community while carrying out repairs to furniture items for them also.

My role includes mentoring a young man with mental issues and also a highly skilled elderly

gentleman recently diagnosed with dementia who wants to pass on his toy making skills to

others while he can. It’s quite humbling.

Since joining the Shed, I have witnessed firsthand that mental health and wellbeing is a real

issue for many men and that Mens Sheds are playing a positive part in allowing those men

to feel they are not alone who are able to express themselves to like-minded others.

I.R. - The key part of our remit in the mens shed is to build relationships and support activity within the group. A key part of that is our ability to comfortably and easily build what is required by our customer set. The impact drivers, screws and wood you funded make it easy to perform the required tasks while allowing time for interaction and "messing around" which builds relationships and the feeling of self-worth.

G.G. - I have been retired for a few years and my self-confidence was poor. I joined Clyde Coast and Cumbrae Mens Shed with no woodworking experience and little conversation. The opportunity to work with wood, made so much easier with power tools like impact drivers, has given my confidence and overall mental health a significant boost and encouraged me to speak more freely with others.

M.C. - My  personal experience at the CCC Mens shed with these items has been extremely positive. When I joined, I had never used an impact driver on my DIY woodwork projects. I have learnt how to use this very useful tool in conjunction with fitting the correct driver bit for the screw that are used for the different types and sizes of wood.  There are differing techniques for each type of wood. This has enabled me to progress to more complex projects, and work more efficiently for the CCC Mens Shed projects.

D.C. - As I have rheumatic joints in my wrists, the impact drivers now enable me to firmly secure screws into wood with ease, this gives me great satisfaction as I can now make items without suffering aching joints.

A.M. -Since the creation of the Clyde Coast and Cumbrae Mens shed, I have been able to create items and use tools which would have been beyond me previously. We try to recycle wood wherever possible from pallets, old furniture etc, but we mostly use timber which is treated for outdoor use. We also buy better quality untreated pine timber for special projects or for items which will be used in a kitchen, for example. All timber is sourced from local merchants. The choice of screws and other fixings is determined by the quality of the wood and the finish required. The use of Cordless Impact Drivers is essential to ensure screws make a good joint. Cordless (battery) tools allow us to make best use of the limited space available when the shed is busy.

Since joining the shed right at the beginning, I have made many friends and obtained knowledge from many of these guys which is invaluable. Being able to help the local community by building planters and dog bowls, for example, and repairing cherished furniture for local people has been a bonus.

The shed community has been a bonus to me and I will attend the shed for many years to come.