

Debenham Shed report to Debenham Parish Council for AGM 12 May 2025

Debenham Shed is a part of the Men's Shed network of 900+ sheds in UK, a place where you can make things by yourself, with guidance or with others, and there lots of tools and materials. It is also a Women's Shed, and about 1/3 of our members are women. It is also for social connecting and friendship building, sharing skills and knowledge. About half of our 40 or so members live in Debenham and the rest come from nearby villages and Ipswich.

We continue to thrive on the 2 Fields community supported farm site on Low Road, open Monday mornings and all day Fridays, plus monthly Saturday workshops. Everyone is welcome to visit. Donations of tools are always welcome, even if we can't use them at the Shed.

Supported by a £1,500 grant from the Parish Council in January 2023 (and another £4,500 from other sources), our woodworking area is fully working with a variety of machinery including wood lathes, bandsaw, radial saw, pillar drills, bench grinders, router table, table saw and benches. There is also storage for materials and ongoing projects. Heating, lighting and dust extraction are provided. This is in use every week and has enabled us to do many projects for which we did not have the space or the tools to do them.

We now have a small shed for painting and spray painting, away from the dust in other areas. We hope soon to have a separate area for welding and other hot work, e.g. angle grinding, which will require some additional funding, and a concrete pad outside for some repairs on cars and motorbikes.

Recently we have registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered charity 1212367, which allows us to enter a proper legal agreement with our landlord, to claim Gift Aid on qualifying donations and also limits the liability of the members and post-holders.

The mental health of our members is a key part of our work by reducing social isolation. Imagine someone living on their own and near or past retirement, with a shed in the garden or a work-room in the house. They may be able to carry on their hobbies, DIY and other projects by themselves, but it isn't much fun and many are lonely as a result, particularly the men. By joining Debenham Shed they can work in the company of others, take advantage of the skills and experience of others as well as the resources we have.

In August we are collaborating with the Debenham Green Team on their stall outside the Lion pub (Saturday August 2nd, 9-11am) to promote Repair and Reuse, giving advice on repairs of all sorts and maybe undertaking repairs if feasible. This may be a more regular thing in the future. We also partner with a Mobile Shed, which takes equipment and projects to care homes and village halls in Suffolk.

Tony Hutt
Treasurer, Debenham Shed
www.debenhamshed.org.uk