

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

19 SEPTEMBER 2013

AGENDA ITEM C2

GREYTOWN MEN'S SHED – REQUEST TO OCCUPY SHED BEHIND OLD BOROUGH CHAMBERS, MAIN STREET, GREYTOWN

Purpose of Report

To inform Council of the request by the Greytown Men's Shed Group to occupy the SWDC storage shed and land behind the old Borough Chambers, Main Street, Greytown and of the Greytown Community Board's support for the proposal.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receives the information.*
2. *Instructs officers that the Greytown Men's Shed (once incorporated) is to be granted a licence to occupy the above premises at a peppercorn rental.*
3. *Instructs officers to remove the SWDC-owned material currently stored in the shed for disposal or storage elsewhere.*

1. Executive Summary

A voluntary group in Greytown is advancing planning for a Greytown Men's Shed under the guidance of Peter McNeur from REAP. The group has raised sufficient support to make a local Men's Shed viable. The storage shed on land owned by SWDC behind the old Borough Chambers has been identified as a suitable base. The Men's Shed would pay a peppercorn rental to SWDC. All improvements such as skylights, power, site cleanup and fencing would be paid for by the Men's Shed. There would be no costs to SWDC beyond rates and the cost of the removal SWDC-owned material currently stored there. At its August meeting the Greytown Community Board showed its support for the proposal, and recommends that Council grants the licence (GCB2013/62).

2. Background

Men's Sheds now exist in many towns in New Zealand and are created as ground-up local initiatives. The Henley Men's Shed in Masterton is a very

successful local example. They provide a social gathering point where (mostly) retired men carry out personal and community projects.

Public meetings and discussions with locals have established that there is sufficient support to make a Men's Shed viable in Greytown. Workbenches, materials, tools and furniture have already been donated or ear-marked for the group.

Men's Sheds provide a valuable social gathering point for men. Research shows that they reduce social isolation and improve well-being of their members. They provide services to local communities such as toy-making for fundraisers, tool sharpening and contribution to community projects. There are already plans to involve the Men's Shed with small tasks on the Stella Bull garden.

3. Discussion

3.1 Options

The shed sited behind the old Borough Chambers on Main Street has been identified as a suitable location for the Men's Shed project. The land and shed are owned by Council, and are no longer required for storage by the Council's contractors. Bagged sodium bicarbonate which had been stored there has already been moved to City Care's new Greytown depot. There are still some old water pipes stored there – those which are to be retained will be moved to City Care's depot, and the remainder of the pipes are to be disposed of.

This site is preferred because it faces the sun and is located close to potential "clients" such as the local playschool and Cobblestones Museum. There is a bus stop close by for Featherston and Martinborough members. There is gate access onto West Street to provide off-Main Street parking for members.

There are other vacant buildings in Greytown such as the Manchester Unity Building and a garage in East Street which are potentially usable as a Men's Shed. Peter McNeur, who provided the impetus for the Henley Men's Shed, advises that the SWDC storage building is easily the best site out of those available. Security of tenure, building suitability and location were all considered.

3.2 Legal Implications

Greytown Men's Shed is not yet registered as an Incorporated Society and there is currently no legal entity to take up the license to occupy. Registration application is underway now.

3.3 Financial Considerations

There will be costs to clear out the existing building, but these would have been incurred anyway. The rates on the property (currently \$1923.60) would continue to be paid by SWDC. There would be no other direct costs to SWDC.

The quid pro quo for the application of a peppercorn rental is the expectation that the Men's Shed will contribute skills and labour to community projects.

Greytown Men's Shed will carry public liability insurance. A condition of the licence to occupy would be that all improvements to the property would revert to SWDC in the event of termination.

4. Conclusion

Giving Greytown Men's Shed use of these premises will be at no cost to rate-payers, and will improve the social wellbeing of both individual members and the community as a whole. There is zero financial future risk to SWDC, and many potential benefits from the Group's ability to contribute to community initiatives.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Menz Shed New Zealand About Us – from website
<http://www.menzshed.org.nz/about-us/what-shed/>

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Appendix 1 – Menz Shed New Zealand About Us



[Home](#) [About Us](#) [Latest news](#) [Sheds](#) [Membership](#) [Resources](#) [Donations](#) [Links](#) [Library](#)

We are often asked what a Menz Shed is, and the answer can be long! But to put it in a nutshell, a Menz Shed brings men together in one community space to share their skills, help and work on practical tasks individually (personal projects) or as a group (for the Shed or community).

The sort of projects a Shed tackles is entirely up to the Shed concerned, however most Sheds in New Zealand take on some community projects, examples of which include building playgrounds, school centres, repairing toy library stock, repairing old bikes for distribution to poorer communities, building planter boxes for the main street of the local central business district, and the list goes on.

The Menz Shed is a great place for blokes to learn new skills. We see retired builders teaching engineers some of their skills and visa-versa, we see retired accountants being shown a plumbing they never had the opportunity to learn in their working life. Many Sheds also have ladies where husbands and others teach women many skills which may have always mystified them.

Many couples find that after retirement, the shock of suddenly being with each other every (waking) hour can cause friction, so the Menz Shed is a great place to escape the stresses of retirement syndrome", and the result is that women are among the most ardent supporters of Sheds.

Men are known to have smaller circles of friends than women, so the Shed offers opportunity for new friendships outside the social circles their partners establish. One Sheddie once stated after months of development of his local Shed with a membership of more than fifty; "Ten months of us knew each other, but now it feels like we all went to kindergarten together!"

On a more serious note, Menz Sheds are an ideal place for health professionals to gain access to men who may otherwise not take as much care of themselves as they could, and many Sheds in fact give informational talks and basic health checks at the Shed in the men's own environment. The informality makes for a more relaxed atmosphere.

MENZSHED New Zealand is the body which represents and supports Sheds nationwide. We

- Bring Sheds together to enable them to establish relationships and collaborate where possible.
- Promote the concept to communities without Sheds, and support groups as they go through the establishment phase – and this includes linking new groups with nearby established Sheds.
- Establish relationships with sponsors nationally. This function is also carried out at a local level by the Sheds themselves.
- Encourage Sheds to act autonomously. We encourage Sheds to make their own decisions and rules – however we remain available to offer advice on this if asked.

- Operate at minimal cost to Sheds. The only cost incurred by Sheds is the \$25.00 annual membership fee.
- Organise national conferences, which are currently on a one-year cycle.
- Allow Sheds to drive the organisation rather than the organisation driving the Sheds.

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