

Felixstowe Men's Shed



Mr Graham Newman
Felixstowe Mayors Office
Town Hall
Undercliff Road West
Felixstowe
IP11 2AG

31st December 2018

Dear Graham,

Letter of Appreciation Grant Award

I am writing on behalf of all 20 members of Felixstowe Men's Shed to say how much we appreciate the grant awarded for the purchase of a 'flip saw' to assist equipping the workshop at Felixstowe Museum.

As we approach our first anniversary since inception we are faced with new challenges to produce meaningful items for the community and at the same time learn individual or improve existing skills. The past year has been a steep learning experience and our grant application to Felixstowe Town Council was only the second such experience in this field.

The Staff, especially Debbie Frost at the Town Hall has been exceptionally helpful in the grant application that is always daunting to those unfamiliar with such processes.

Would you please pass on our gratitude to members of the award selection committee and council members for providing such a fantastic funding pool.

We relish the opportunities that this grant has provided and look forward to being able to report back on progress in a very positive manner.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Allen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line underneath.

Tony Allen
Chairman Felixstowe Men's Shed

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FELIXSTOWE MEN'S SHED

Standing Shoulder to Shoulder

Background

Men's Sheds are similar to garden sheds, a place to pursue practical interests at leisure, to practice skills and enjoy making and mending. The difference is that garden sheds often solitary in nature while Men's Sheds are the opposite. They're about social connections and friendship building, sharing skills and knowledge and of course a lot of laughter. Sitting alone in your shed is not good for your health. Over 600 UK Men's Shed are registered with the National Men's Shed Association.

Felixstowe Men's Shed (FMS) start up-was in January 2018 following a public meeting at Felixstowe Library. Initially meetings were held at a cabin within the grounds of Sanctuary Housing, Langley Close, Felixstowe. These were planning meetings while members sought suitable workshop facilities. While at Sanctuary Housing members enhanced the site by staining the cabin and maintaining the grounds. Our relationship with Sanctuary Housing continues and will hopefully develop further.

Development: In September 2018 FMS signed a memorandum of understanding with Felixstowe Museum to use the workshop at the museum, part of which is used as a store for English Heritage, owners of the site. With strict restrictions in place FMS has set about utilising the space and turning it into a practical and well equipped workshop. This has been possible with donations and grants from various bodies. Currently there are 21 members bringing a wide range of skills to share. Felixstowe Town Council fulfilled a grant application of £799 for a DeWalt Flip Saw (one side a table saw, flipped to provide a cross cut saw). Being in constant use this is ideal for tight space constraints and has become the heart of the workshop.

Further funding has come from a 'What No Cake' Ukulele Concert held by FMS that raised £330 and a donation of £250 from Walton Church that held a weekend of hobbies under the banner 'Inside the Shed'. These and other grants and subscriptions have provided sufficient funding for the first year.

Achievements: FMS has provided a wide spread community based services that include litter picking, gardening tidying for Walton Parish Church Hall, providing some marshals for Art on the Prom and some panelling for an elderly lady to her bathroom that local tradesmen had declined. The Firs a residential home, a not for profit organisation sought help from FMS in redesigning and decorating the day room to an Art Deco finish. This included construction of a bar providing soft drinks but with a real 'pub' appearance. This will be completed in April 2019.

The workshop has produced seven wooden planters for the museum front, repairs to displays and exhibits producing ten wooden toy trains for Ipswich Children's Hospice. Felixstowe General Hospital have asked FMS to enhance their garden by making two raised beds that can be tendered by wheelchair patients. In addition FMS is looking to provide a cabinet for the day room that will have household products on display from yesterday to help dementia patients remember 'the good old days'. Enquiries have been received for making large raised flower beds at Felixstowe Rail Station. In addition members upholstery repairs have been completed; donated furniture renovated and repaired and sold online.

Overall FMS is developing well with help from grants and donations and is very grateful for the support of Felixstowe Town Council. We look forward to providing community services in the future.



FELIXSTOWE MEN'S SHED

Various activities inside and out of the workshop

Cleaning up the front garden of Walton Church Hall

Within the workshop

The DeWalt flip saw has become the heart of the workshop being compact and in a confined space



Wooden Toy Trains

Under construction for the Ipswich Children's Hospice

Ten locomotives and coaches take shape and ready for painting



April 2019

Outside Project

Work underway to construct a soft drink bar in the Day Room at the Firs Residential Home.

Includes redecoration of the Day Room in Art Deco style.

