

GOOD FOOD STORY

Name: Jim
Project: Men's Shed
Location: 1 Creswell Gardens, Dumfries



Describe your project

The motto of the Dumfries group is 'Camaraderie - Converse - Create' and this amazing space allows for all of these things! There is a community café where members can get access to a delicious lunch and warm drinks while they spend time with other people and get creative. As well as supplying meals for members 3 days a week, the community café is also used for events and fundraisers, a recent one being for Macmillan.

The 'Shed' has a joiners room where members make all sorts of things including planters and raised beds, an arts and crafts room, a music room and even offers free use of the Digital Lounge. Mood and moral are high priorities for the project and we welcome folk from the community to become members.

DG Community Food Network has got involved with this project as we have fundraised and already bought two big polytunnels which the members want to develop for food and biodiversity in the community. One member described this new venture as "A pollination of Ideas" and this is such a lovely place to be coming from as the food growing gets underway. The idea is that the food will supply the Men's Shed café for member lunches and be shared amongst the members, volunteers and community.



How did you get started?

Dumfries Men's Shed is part of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association whose vision is to ensure that all men in Scotland have access to opportunities for increased citizenship and community development.

The association started in 2014 and Dumfries has grown and expanded with the incredible efforts of its members and volunteers. There are now 37 member who can attend Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 10-3pm.

What does sustainability mean to you?

Growing food that is kind to the environment and encourages biodiversity through the growing of pollinating flowers is the basis for the outside element of our project.

We are really sustainable in other ways as we repair lots of old tools for reuse in the shed and use donated and recycled materials to make things in the joiners rooms for use in the community.



What are your plans for the future?

The new polytunnels and growing project is the focus going forward. Over the winter members will be making the raised beds and refurbishing our donated potting benches ready to get growing in the spring.

The space will be designed to be wheelchair friendly and we are making tables and benches so that it is accessible to everyone and can be a space to just sit and enjoy. Health and wellbeing is so important to us!

What are the challenges?

Some of the challenges are around having enough people to help out around things like admin and bookkeeping. We have a great treasurer who does this really well but it takes a lot of time.

We have some members who are really knowledgeable in growing and we are looking forward to supplying our café and community with fresh nutritious food!

What good food changes need to happen in D&G?

Encouraging people to grow their own food, even if it is just a little in small planters is key to change. If people don't have any outside space then they can come along to community growing projects like ours.

Eating socially is another issue for a lot of people living alone so combining this with the opportunity to share a meal at least once a week not only improves the physical health through nutrition but also mental health and wellbeing.

