

## Community Package – Men’s Shed



Club	Parteen St Nicholas GAA
County	Clare
Location	Parteen
Rural/ Urban	Urban
Codes	Hurling and Camogie
Membership (2016)	566

### Case study- Parteen Men’s Shed

#### Plan

Supporting Document: GAA Healthy Club Statement [INSERT HERE]

The Parteen St Nicholas Men's Shed was founded in June 2017 as part of the Healthy Club Project Team under the umbrella of social inclusion. The Healthy Club Project Team felt there was a need to

provide an outlet for men with "time on their hands" due to unemployment, ill health or retirement. They wanted to provide a space where they could meet to share experiences and work on meaningful projects at their own pace. The idea came as a result of a conversation whereby a former member of Parteen GAA acknowledged that once families grow up the older members lose their connection with the club. Aside from supporting at events or matches the role of the older member within the club is unclear. At a family fun day the Healthy Club team surveyed attendees to see if there would be an interest in developing a project such as a Men's Shed. The response was very positive and a list of names and contact numbers were drawn up. The Executive Committee were approached about the logistics of placing a Men's Shed on the grounds of Parteen GAA. The benefits to both the club and community were outlined. With executive approval the Men's Shed were offered the use of a portacabin which was being used to store gym equipment.

### 5 Step Plan to Set Up A Shed

1. Hold an information meeting
2. Form a working group
3. Visit other Sheds
4. Find a suitable premises
5. Planning & registering

### Partners

*Within the club:*

- Club Executive
- Healthy Club project team
- Club members

*Outside the Club:*

- Irish Men's Shed Association
- Clare Men's Shed
- HSE
- Limerick Sports Partnership
- Co-op store
- Limerick Paints Supplies
- Limerick Prison
- FBD insurance.
- Community Garda
- Local businesses & community groups /services
- Local media
- Clare GAA Health & Wellbeing Committee ([chair.hwc.clare@gaa.ie](mailto:chair.hwc.clare@gaa.ie))

### Activity

With executive approval the group contacted Irish Men's Shed Association to get information and support about setting up a Shed. An action plan was drawn up and the club undertook an advertising campaign to get the ball rolling and welcome men of all ages to get involved in the Men's Shed. This commenced through social media, local radio and local papers. Parish priests from 2 local parishes were contacted and announcements were made at Mass. Posters were placed in local shops, businesses, churches, community centres, GPs etc.

The first Men's Shed meeting in the local church was a success with over 20 men in attendance. The Clare Men's Shed Coordinator delivered an information session and outlined the role of Men's shed. Everyone was very positive about its formation and they set up their own executive committee to manages its affairs. Karen Williamson, the Healthy Club Officer in Parteen is the GAA liaison and sits on both executive committees.

The next step was to set a date for cleaning up the portacabin so the newly formed Men's Shed could become fully functional. The members of the Men's Shed carried out most of the work with donations and assistance from local businesses. A new laminate floor was laid, the cabin was power-hosed and painted, plumbed for water, a safety path between shed and workshop was laid, outside lighting was installed, interior fitted with presses and shelves, old table re-surfaced and painted, fridge and coffee/tea making facilities were installed. A carpentry workshop was created in the container behind the shed and tools were donated by a widow of a man who had a great interest in carpentry. Other work included the renovation of chairs / tables, development of benches from wooden pallets, painting, sign making and general maintenance / upkeep of grounds. There is a huge amount of good will in the community and a lot of stuff were donated to the Shed including mops, chairs, computer screens, mugs, fruit, tea/coffee, biscuits etc.

The portacabin was initially donated by the club and in return the men helped with the upkeep of the club grounds. However, the Shed preferred to make a more permanent agreement to ensure their stability as the Shed advanced and are now currently paying the club a small rent fee per month. The members of the Shed (Shedders) pay €10 to join and €10 every month to cover costs of insurance and training. Insurance costs for the year through FBD are €600.

A variety of activities now take place at Parteen Men's Shed including:

- Talks on home safety by local guard
- Free blood pressure monitoring
- Weekly "walk / talk and tea"
- Darts
- Music / singing / poetry recital
- Health and safety training
- Home baking

Pipeline projects include:

- Church gate collection
- Making window boxes and sell to community
- First aid training
- Computer training
- Development of an allotment/ gardening / vegetable patch

IMSA also hosts regular events which give the Shedders opportunities to network with each other and share ideas.



### **The Club**

This is a strong example of how clubs can open up their facilities to the wider “non- playing” population. They have received tremendous kudos in the community for assisting with the Men’s Shed development. There are now men of all ages in and out of the club on a regular basis and it has really given the Shedders a sense of identity, and belonging. It has brought the community closer together and changed the perception of the club in a positive way as they are seen as giving something back. There are now 25 men who regularly attend the Shed.

Karen Williamson, Healthy Club Officer in Parteen GAA advises that it is vital to have a liaison officer to feed back to both executive committees. She says that *“it is a prime example of a symbiotic relationship where both sides are benefiting”*

Men’s Shed have been invaluable in terms of organising fundraising events, such as BBQs for Parteen GAA and they are also making new wooden bins for club as part of the environmentally friendly "Go Green Parteen" week. They also look after and take care of the club grounds. Many of the men have also joined the Healthy Club Project Team and Karen states that they are “real doers” with a “can- do attitude”. They have some extra time to commit to organising events that many of the usual club volunteers don’t have, so it is a great partnership. The Healthy Club meetings which used to take place in the local pub now take place in the comfortable Men’s Shed where they enjoy green tea and fruit. They have started a Walk/ Talk and Tea group every Thursday and all the community are invited to register at the Men’s Shed for a 3/5km walk and back to the shed afterwards for a cuppa.

### **Quotes**

*" The men's shed is the best thing to happy to this community. My dad has found a new lease of life since joining"*

*" Great fun, we enjoy the chat and the cup of tea, some men like to be busy others are happy to chat. Would be lost without it".*

*"Was a bit nervous starting off, not sure if we could make this come together but with the right attitude we have achieved so much in such a short space of time "*