

SLaMS December Newsletter

As the days turn ever more cold, wet and dark, and 2017 finally draws to a close, SLaMS continues to offer you the chance to keep busy, warm and happily occupied while enjoying like-minded company.

If you haven't been to the Shed in recent weeks for one reason or another read on for news about our new Shed location, and get involved.

Burrowbridge Shed: Opening Times to 31st December

The Shed will be open for normal sessions on Tuesday 19th December (08:30 to 12:30) and again Thursday 21st December (13:30 to 16:30).

These will be the final Shed sessions for 2017. Although we opened during Christmas week in 2016, attendance was very very limited. So this year, with Boxing Day occurring on a Tuesday, there will be no Shed Sessions on 26th & 28th December.

Bridgwater Shed - Developments

As most members are already aware, the lease on our Burrowbridge Shed will expire on 28th February 2018, and won't be renewed. So we have to move or

close SLaMS down! And we don't want the latter!!

So, during the latter half of 2017 your Committee has been very busy on your behalf looking for suitable alternative premises.

Finally, after investigating a total of 14 different venues, your Committee decided to progress with a lease on the Canal Workshop, Old Taunton Road, Bridgwater TA6 3NS

Canal Workshop, Old Taunton Road



The "Canal Workshop" Shed is slightly larger than our current shed, and has the potential to house all our current tools and facilities.

The Shed has a good southerly aspect overlooking the Taunton to Bridgwater Canal, is close to public transport routes, convenience stores and has some limited adjacent parking with more available nearby.

The Committee has already done a huge amount of preparatory work, including:

- Ensuring SLaMS is financially viable for our move and necessary tenant improvements - SLaMS has won grants from the Asda/RVS Sheds Fund, Sedgemoor DC Community Fund, and The Tudor Trust. We also await the outcome of a grant application from Somerset Community Foundation.
- Ensuring SLaMS has security of tenure. We have negotiated and secured a 10 year lease (to 30 November 2027) on terms favourable to SLaMS and at an annual rent slightly less than the going commercial rate (but more than at present). 10 years is a good long lease to get - well it should be long enough for most of us!
- Ensuring SLaMS is legal. We are undertaking all the very boring, time-consuming but very necessary paperwork for Change of Use planning application, registering the lease with HM Land Registry etc etc zzzzzz snore zzzzzz.
- Ensuring the new Shed is usable, and complies with Fire, H&S regs & Disabled Access requirements. With a degree of member involvement, we have designed the internal shed layout and begun some of the "heavy work" on necessary tenant improvements

This includes removal of block and stud walls, installation of additional stud walls for a disabled access toilet, snug area, kitchen area and machine "shop", rewiring, re-plumbing, installation of secure fire exit doors, and other improvements.

John in "demolition mode"



William looking very busy (not!)



Chris, Geoff, Stuart inspect progress



Going Forward into 2018

Most of the "heavy lift" work will be completed by the end of December (well that's Colin's optimistic plan, but who knows when that will actually happen?).

However the Bridgwater Shed will not be ready to move into just then.

Which is where your Committee hopes YOU can help make YOUR contribution to YOUR future Shed.

We are looking for members who can come along for an hour or two, or possibly longer to help us get the Shed ready for occupation by the end of January 2018. That's when we start to pay real hard money for our rent (and its a whole lot more than we currently pay.)

So we need your help with jobs like:

- Repair and Make Ready - Replacing broken window panes, making good walls and plaster ready for painting, rubbing down window frames, cleaning glass and sanitary ware.
- Decorating - fitting skirting boards, painting (nearly everything!), tiling.
- Fitting out and Finishing - making seating benches, notice boards for the Snug, cupboards for the lathe room, flooring and a myriad of other small jobs.
- Moving - Making inventories and packing up tools & materials, unpacking boxes, checking stuff into and storing safely in new locations.

Don't worry if you can't do all of these jobs. We are not asking that. Instead are you willing to come along and do **what** you can, **when** you can, for **as long** and **as often** as you can? (so no pressure then?)

Whether that is 20 minutes a week or 8 hours a day, 5 days a week - its YOUR call! (But if you do 5 x 8 hour days you will be on your own as everybody else will have gone home much earlier!). The more that volunteer the quicker your new Shed will be finished. So please don't leave it all to to your hard-pressed Committee. We are retired too!

As there is a lot still to do, we are proposing that the Burrowbridge Shed sessions are suspended throughout January. (So what else are you going to do now?)

Instead the Bridgwater Shed will be open each day from 2nd January at 09:30 when SLAMS members can come along and contribute to the work. The exact schedule of tasks to be done each day will emerge as the work progresses.

So, initially, come prepared to get a bit grubby, but wear warm clothes. Your Committee will endeavour to provide the materials and tools for the jobs, or ask you to bring them if you can. We will close The Shed around 3pm each day as currently there is no heating and it begins to get too cold for work by then.

For updates call Colin on 01823 698612 or William on 01458 442212 or email info@slams.org.uk.

Meantime, SLAMS thanks you for your participation during 2017, and wishes you a Merry Christmas and shed loads of fun for 2018.