**Press Release 18th July 2025**

**The Irish Men's Sheds Association give an overview of their work to the N.I. Assembly**

The Irish Men’s Sheds Association recently had the opportunity to present a submission to the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Communities, highlighting the essential role of Men’s Sheds in local communities, our strategic priorities, and the urgent need for sustained support. This submission is grounded in our newly adopted Strategic Plan 2025–2030, *“Helping Men – Helping Communities”*, and informed by findings from our **June 2025 Northern Ireland Member Survey** and wide-ranging consultations with sheds throughout Northern Ireland.

The IMSA is the national representative body for Men’s Sheds across the island of Ireland, including Northern Ireland, where we currently support 62 affiliated sheds. Overall, Northern Ireland hosts over 120 sheds, some of which operate independently or are affiliated with the UK Men’s Shed Association. We seek to advocate for all sheds and to collaborate with stakeholders across the board to support and expand this vital grassroots movement. According to a recent survey of member sheds across Northern Ireland, there is an average of 26 members in each shed, with over half of them attending weekly. The average age of attendees is 62 years.  These figures are comparable to sheds right across the Island of Ireland although it is notable that sheds in the north have about 15% fewer members on average and the average age of membership is younger than equivalent sheds in the south.

Men’s Sheds are safe, inclusive, and welcoming spaces where men come together to connect, share skills, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Over the past 15 years, they have become an indispensable part of Northern Ireland’s community infrastructure, fostering cross-community integration and promoting social inclusion. For many men, the Shed is a “home from home”—offering friendship, purpose, and a profound sense of belonging that supports both physical and mental wellbeing.

The 2025 Northern Ireland Member Survey demonstrates a vibrant, committed Men’s Shed movement, eager to grow and serve more men across society. With appropriate recognition and investment, Men’s Sheds can make a lasting impact on men’s health, community integration, and social resilience.

The Committee have agreed to endorse our calls for:

* A £3,000 annual sustainability grant per shed
* Funding support for Sheds for Life and local staff positions
* Policy recognition of Men’s Sheds as a proven community health and wellbeing model
* Advice and guidance to help further embed sheds into community planning and development

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

The Irish Men’s Sheds Association supports Ireland’s network of 450 Men’s Sheds, with an additional 62 sheds in Northern Ireland. Details on all sheds can be found here on www.menssheds.ie.

The Irish Men’s Sheds Association was formed in 2011. However, the Men’s Shed movement originally started in Australia which inspired their Irish counterparts to begin their own movement.

The Men’s Sheds movement had its birth in Tipperary where the first Men’s Shed was formed. Following the formation of the first shed in Ireland, the shed movement began to grow rapidly, with there now being over 450 sheds registered with the Irish Men’s Sheds Association.

In 2018, the Irish Men’s Sheds Association received the European Citizen’s Award after being nominated by Irish MEPs. The IMSA was named as one of the twelve Sustainable Development Goals Champions by the Irish Government in 2019.

Over the past decade, Men’s Sheds have become a vital part of Ireland’s community infrastructure. Sheds offer men an opportunity to meet in a supportive, collaborative space, improve their health and wellbeing, and contribute to their communities.

Irish Men’s Sheds Association, Unit 6, No 12, O’Carroll St, Tullamore, County Offaly.