

REPORT OF **Head of Communities and Place**
To: **Community and Resources Committee**
Subject: **Rent Concession – Men’s Shed**
Date: **16 September 2024**

Reference:

PURPOSE OF REPORT

For Members to decide whether or not to provide a rent concession to the Men’s Shed

1. INTRODUCTION

The Men’s Shed have recently entered into a Lease with Torridge District Council in respect of Units 9 & 10, Torridge Way, Holsworthy for a sum of £4570 per annum (excluding VAT) for the period from the 1st of July 2024 up to and including the 20th June 2027.

2. REPORT

The Men’s Shed in Holsworthy was launched 6 years ago, and now has a membership of around 44 people. Unfortunately, they had to vacate their previous rental premises as it was sold and finding new premises proved difficult. Although they have found the unit with TDC the Lease has proved to be a higher financial commitment than their previous premises.

The Men’s Shed has been unable to secure any substantial funding and relies on local fund raising and donations. It helps those that may suffer with loneliness or isolation.

An extract from an organisation of the Men’s Shed has said: -

“Research shows the negative impact that loneliness and isolation can have on a person’s mental health and wellbeing, and for some men when retirement comes it can feel like their personal identity and purpose is lost, and find it difficult to build social connections. Men’s sheds can change this”.

“Men’s sheds typically attract older men, but it is not to say younger men cannot participate. The essence of a shed is connections and relationships between members, and also helps remove triggers of anxiety that can be detrimental to a person’s well-being”

“Our oldest member is 101 and comes along with his 70-year-old son!”

At the Men’s Shed the members enjoy woodworking, metal working and have the opportunity to chat, and make new friends. The Men’s Shed achieves interaction with others, making friends, and keeping active. It is a space to meet likeminded people and gives the opportunity to share skills, have a sense of purpose, and reduces the feeling of loneliness in a safe and friendly space.

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

This report complies with the Council’s resolution that any rent reductions must be presented to Committee and cannot be dealt with under officer delegations. The Men’s Shed currently



has a 3-year lease with TDC. If members approve a rent-free period/reduction in rent, then the Lease can be amended to reflect this position.

Financial Implications

If members agree to a rent free/rent reduction, then this will be a loss of income to the Council

Human Resources Implications

none.

Sustainability/Biodiversity Implications

none

Equality/Diversity

The aim of this report is to provide support to people that may be classed as vulnerable

Risk Management

n/a

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

Complies with the Council's committee resolution.

Data Protection (GDPR) Implications

Not applicable

Climate Change

Not applicable

Ward Member and Lead Member Views

Cllr Bob Hicks:-

4. CONCLUSIONS

Members need to decide whether or not charge rent to the Men's Shed or a reduction in the current rent that is being charged. If a rent reduction is recommended what is a suitable reduction.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members have three options:-

- a) To keep the rent at the current ask of £4570;
- b) To agree a reduction in rent;
- c) To charge no rent

