

Stay at Home
Repurposed Planter Challenge
Information booklet

The Challenge

The Age UK Bexley project, Men in Sheds, is challenging Bexley residents to make planters and garden decorations for their community garden by only using materials you have at home! This may include painted rocks, plant pot sticks or planters made or decorated with repurposed materials. We would also welcome any plant donations, which can be planted in your creations.

You can use any materials you have at home currently. This could be repurposing scrap wood, plastic packaging and old wooden drawers to make your creations. The possibilities are endless! On the following pages are guidelines and examples of garden items made from repurposed materials.

As well as donating to the Men in Sheds project, we want to spread joy to older and vulnerable people in isolation throughout Bexley. Please feel free to also gift your creations to older and vulnerable neighbours. This might brighten someone's day whilst in isolation!

Why are we setting this challenge?

Our Men in Sheds members had just started clearing the ground for their new community garden at the beginning of March. With the project closed for the foreseeable future, this will have a significant delay to the garden completion date when we reopen. This garden is very important to the shed as there is currently limited space for members to sit and have a chat in the sun. We are also hoping this will stop the frequent flytipping outside the shed. Your creations and donations of plants will mean we will be one step closer to setting up the garden when we reopen.

We also believe this challenge will be a great creative activity for all during this difficult time. Looking after your mental wellbeing is very important. Giving yourself a task like this will give a focus, distraction and hopefully ease some isolation boredom.

What is the Men in Sheds Project?

The Age UK Bexley project, Men in Sheds, is a community group for men to come together and make items in the project wood workshop located in Erith. With the aim to reduce social isolation and improve wellbeing, shed members have the opportunity to socialize, skill share and access peer support.

For more information, please check out their website: www.meninshedsbexley.com

About Age UK Bexley

Age UK Bexley is an independent local charity. We've been working in the local community to help older people for 30 years.

Our services include Day Care, welfare and benefit advice, befriending cafes, fitness activities and a number of community based initiatives.

To find out more please check out our website: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/bexley/>

The Golden Rules:

We are not advocating leaving your home to collect or buy materials and plants as this goes against government stay home rules. The challenge is to only use materials you have at home. Get creative with these!

Please also take extra care when making your creations. We don't want any accidents which would put a burden the NHS.

Who can get involved in the challenge?

Everyone is welcomed to get involved! No matter what your age or skill level, we want to see the whole community take up the Repurposed Planter Challenge. This activity will especially appeal to people who love crafts, woodwork and upcycling.

Here are a few ways and benefits of getting grandparents, children and the wider community involved:

For those over 70-

Like our Men in Sheds members, many people over the age of 70 have a large range of practical skills developed throughout their working lives. We are calling on these very valuable skills and that 'make do and mend' attitude to help our community project.

Age UK Bexley also understands some of the greatest challenges being stuck indoors during this time, aside from anxiety, may be boredom, disruption to daily routine and a lack focus. We hope this challenge may provide some relief from this.

A home-school project for children-

This challenge will be a great weekend or home-school project for children. Families can work together to design, build and decorate the planters or ornaments which will develop creative and gardening skills. In addition through donating their creations to others in need, it will teach children the importance of charity and community.

For Grandparents and children to work together from afar-

We have seen some great ways grandparents are staying connected with their grandchildren from video calling bedtime stories to writing letters. This challenge could be a shared task between generations. The grandparent could make the item and when families are delivering food parcels, the item could be picked up and passed onto their grandchildren to decorate.

For those with parents or relatives over 70-

Besides food shopping and physical health, we understand you may also be worried about your loved one's mental wellbeing during this time, especially if they are living alone. By providing activities like this, it will give them an achievable task and focus that uses their cognitive and motor skills.

For queries about the Repurposed Planter Challenge contact:

Emily (Project Officer)

07780655185

emily.willey@ageukbexley.org.uk

For information and advice:

Age UK Bexley on: 020 8300 0883

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/bexley/>

London Borough of Bexley Covid-19 support line on: 020 3045 5398

FAQs

What materials can I use?

Any waste you have at home that can be repurposed. This might be cans, plastic packaging, old cabinet drawers, CDs or sports equipment. Please take extra care and do not use tools or materials you are unfamiliar with. We do not want to burden the NHS more with DIY accidents.

One thing to keep in mind is the planters and decorations will most likely live outside. Don't use materials that will fall apart in the rain like paper and cardboard. The best paint to use will be Acrylic or outdoor paint. On the next page there are some images for inspiration.

I am making a planter, what size should it be?

For the planters, try and keep to small-medium sizes. We suggest maximum dimensions of- L- 1m W-40cm H-40cm. Please do not make an old ceiling high wardrobe into a planter!

Where and how do I donate my creation to Men in Sheds?

Once stay home rules have been lifted and the Men in Sheds project has reopened, the project officer will announce details on where and when to drop donations to the shed. This will be announced on the Age UK Bexley social media channels and the Men in Sheds website.

Can I give my creation to an older neighbour and relative?

Yes! As well as donating to our Men in Sheds project, we want to encourage spreading joy throughout the community.

Mental wellbeing for isolated older and vulnerable people during this time will be particularly difficult. Receiving a little gift of a homemade planter or garden ornament might brighten someone's day and let them know their community is there for them.

Please make sure when donating no physical social contact is made as this puts vulnerable people at risk. We suggest leaving creations with a note on someone's door step to ensure social distancing practices are being adhered to.

Are there any other ways we can support the Men in Sheds' garden?

We were also in the process of collecting donated gardening tools at the beginning of March. During this time, if you have a shed clear out, please keep hold of unwanted gardening tools. We will take these off your hands when we reopen. By doing this you will be helping a community project in need and saving waste from landfill. Win win!

How can we show our creations to Age UK Bexley before donating?

We would love to see your creations before donating. Please email your images to the Men in Sheds project officer, Emily, emily.willey@ageukbexley.org.uk. Please note we may share and show off all your wonderful creations on our social media and website.

If you are sharing on your own social media, please use the hashtags:

#repurposedplanterchallenge

#AgeUKBexley

Examples

Age UK Bexley does not own the following images. For image sources on pinterest and more ideas please head to the Repurposed Planter Challenge Pinterest: <https://pin.it/717mWsu>

