

**BICTON MEN'S SHED**

*Statement by Member for Bicton*

**MRS L.M. O'MALLEY (Bicton)** [12.58 pm]: The Bicton Men's Shed was established in 2011 in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Attadale and the Bicton Uniting Church, which provided rent-free premises behind the church. Bicton Men's Shed has 57 members, mostly retired men from all walks of life. The main activity is woodworking; however, the recent purchase of welding equipment through the McGowan government's Local Projects, Local Jobs grant has meant the shed now has a separate welding shop, giving additional diversity to shed activities. These activities range from all sorts of home projects to working on the steady flow of small repair and woodwork jobs requested by the public, to the building of community libraries, playground equipment for preschools and creches, as well as larger projects such as 250 bird boxes and 150 microbat boxes recently built by shed members. The Bicton Men's Shed also works with the Department of Corrective Services, taking on troubled young men doing community service. Both the members and the young men find this to be a highly rewarding experience.

Perhaps the single most important aspect of the men's shed organisation is the mateship and the concern the members have for one another. Retirement is not easy for men who have lived an active and fulfilling life, and depression is a common consequence of suddenly having no real goals or interests. The shed is often the only place where these retirees can socialise and still be actively engaged in some meaningful pursuits. But there is one dark cloud over the Bicton Men's Shed, with the church now considering the redevelopment of the site. I am a great believer in the importance of the men's shed organisation for men's mental health, overcoming social isolation and facilitating peer support. I am committed to assisting the Bicton Men's Shed to find a new home to ensure that it continues its vital work and I thank it for its contribution to the people of the Bicton electorate.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm*