

## BEST LITTLE WOODSHED COMPETITION WINNER ANNOUNCED

We had a clear winner for this year's Best Little Woodshed competition – Heidi and Ollie Whalley's purpose-built woodshed covers off all the bases for a safe, convenient and very user friendly woodshed – that looks good too!

Ollie and Heidi's shed is located at their front door, so they don't have to lug wood up the steps in the dark of winter. A solar panel charges a battery light on a motion sensor to illuminate the mid-winter darkness.

"Our goal was to fit as much wood as possible into a small space, and the resulting shed should see us able to store 2 years of wood without restocking." They clad the shed with spaced battens – keeping the rain off whilst allowing for ventilation. They also re-purposed the roof to collect rainwater. "That has proved invaluable for garden watering over the dry summer".

Second prize went to Jonathan Holland, whose shed is constructed from mainly recycled materials. "This shed is used for seasoning eucalyptus grown in a small woodlot on the property," says Jonathan. "The woodlot is coppiced every 5 years and provides most of the firewood used. Wood is rotated from this shed to a larger storage area near the home and restocked from outside stacks."

Third prize went to Nicki Johnson who built an internal storage system right next to the fire, so that her winter wood is nice and handy and dry!



## IT'S TIME TO CHECK YOUR WOODBURNER FLUE

As late summer slides into early autumn, now is a good time to go through our check list for good winter burning to make sure your home heating is as efficient and cost effective as possible.



In a month or so you may want to start lighting the fire on the first chilly nights. But before you do, it's a good idea to get your flue checked and cleaned by a professional chimney sweep. Smoke from a woodburner is made up of gas and chemicals released by the wood as it burns. Using damp wood or putting too much wood on the fire at once can mean that the fire is not burning hot enough to vapourise the residues, so they build up on the inside of the chimney. Build-up like this will narrow your flue so it doesn't draw as well, make your wood burner less efficient, and could cause a chimney fire if it does ignite. A professional chimney sweep will remove the residue safely, and check your woodburner is set up and ready to go for the winter, so you stay warm and don't waste money on firewood that's not burning well.

## HOW TO PREPARE YOUR WOODBURNER FOR WINTER.

Now is also a good time to check your woodburner is working as well as it can. There are several things you can check before the winter, to make sure you are getting the best from your woodburner.

- Things to look for are:
- Cracks or splits in the firebox
- Broken fire bricks
- Baffle plate damage
- Worn or split door seals
- Air control knobs not sliding freely
- Bird nests or other blockages in the flue

You can also do a test run – light the fire with some kindling and paper and see if you can smell smoke inside the house. If you can, then there could be a crack in the firebox or a leak in the flue. Smoke leaking into the house is unhealthy and can cause breathing difficulties. It can also be an indicator of potential fire risk.

A professional chimney sweep will be able to repair or advise on any problems you find.



## 5 EASY STEPS TO A SMOKE FREE WOODBURNER

-  Stack dry wood under shelter with plenty of good ventilation
-  Have your flue professionally cleaned and your woodburner checked
-  Use lots of newspaper and dry kindling to light the fire
-  Let the fire get going well before you add more wood
-  Check for smoke after 15 mins to make sure you are burning right