

Village Halls News and Information

Rural Action Derbyshire

formerly

**DERBYSHIRE
RURAL
COMMUNITY COUNCIL**



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Inside this issue:

Hallmark Scheme	1
'Making it Happen' Event	2
What trustees need to know about disposing of charity land	3
Charity Property Help Community Sustain able Energy Pro gramme	4
Tesco Charity Trust Community Awards Reducing Costs	5
Congratulations	6

Name Change - Since 1st October 2009, **Rural Action Derbyshire** has been the new name for Derbyshire Rural Community Council. The new name, branding and all that goes with it will be rolled out during 2010, as and when resources allow. You can read about our plans for the future by looking at our 2009-2012 business plan on our website. For the time being e-mail and website addresses remain the same.

HALLMARK* training event

Village and other charitable halls in Derbyshire can now apply for Hallmark*, the nationally recognised quality standards scheme specifically developed for village halls.



Rural Action Derbyshire was able to launch the scheme last November thanks to the support of a Firm Foundations Grant from Derbyshire Community Foundation. The scheme has got off to a good start with 6 applications already in the process of preparing for assessment. The first Hallmark* training event, held on 5th December at Ashford War Memorial Institute, enabled hall trustees to learn more about all three Hallmark standards that make up the scheme. This gave delegates more confidence to enter, especially following a comprehensive review of the standards involved for Hallmark*. At present the scheme is only available for charitable halls, but ACRE are currently looking to extend the entry eligibility in the future, to include other organisational structures, e.g. Parish Council managed halls.

Hallmark* assesses whether the hall is complying with the requirements of its charitable status

We now have four locally trained volunteer 'Visitors' who are ready to carry out hall assessments. They are all volunteers with an interest in community halls, either as management trustees or people with previous experience of working with charities. We are still keen to recruit more volunteer visitors. This will help increase our capacity to further develop the scheme and enable us to support more halls. If you want more information about becoming a 'visitor', please contact Helen on the number below.

The next Hallmark* workshop will be held on **Thursday March 11th at South Wingfield Parish Rooms between 1.00pm and 4.00pm**. This session is FREE but you will still need to reserve a place with Helen in advance.

Also, if you live in South Derbyshire, you will also have the opportunity to hear more about the Hallmark scheme at the next South Derbyshire Community Buildings Forum organised by South Derbyshire Council for Voluntary Service.

Refer to RAD website for further details or contact Helen Faraday on:
tel: 01629 821928 or email: h.faraday@derbysrcc.org.uk

RAD's website is continually being updated—check regularly for news and information

Awards for All, now easier for all

Since the 2nd November 2009, Awards for All has been made a little easier to apply for. Changes were made by Awards for All, following a recent review of the programme and how people apply.



Firstly, they have “tweaked” the application form and the guidance notes to make them clearer. Secondly, they have introduced a new guide to help groups during the application process. The guide explains what groups are required to submit to Awards for All once they have been offered a conditional grant, and should prove a useful tool for deciding whether to apply for this particular grants programme.

And the third change is the relaxation of the requirements for a referee; the application form will no longer ask for referee details to be included, even though it does not remove the requirement all together. The request for a referee will be at the discretion of Awards for All and they may subsequently ask some groups for the name of a referee once they have reviewed the application. The changes will make applying to Awards for All quicker and easier in the first instance.

For more information call 0845 4 10 20 30 or go to www.awardsforall.org.uk/england/index.html

Funding Central

This is a free website for all third sector organisations including village and community halls and community groups. It provides access to thousands of funding and finance opportunities with a comprehensive search facility that can be tailored to the specific needs of your organisation

Funded by the Office of the Third Sector and managed by the National Council for Voluntary organisations, you can register to do a search at: www.fundingcentral.org.uk

Legislative Updates:

Department for Culture, Media and Sport Consultation — simplifying the licensing Act 2003

Following the Legislative Reform of the Licensing Act 2003 last July regarding the changes to Supervision of Alcohol Sales in Church and Community Halls, the DCMS has made further proposals to simplify three items in the Act. Firstly, the revision of licensing statements; secondly, dealing with the death, incapacity or insolvency of the licence holder and thirdly, the notification of temporary events notices (TENs).

If these change are adopted, the third proposal involving the notification of TENS may bring about the most direct benefits for community building managers. Under the current legislation, application for a TEN has to be submitted within 10 working days of an event, but the new proposal would allow the police and licensing authorities the discretion to accept a TEN with a minimum notice of 3 working days. The change would allow for more flexible late planning of events where the current 10 day rule is too rigid:

- when a premises user wishes to arrange a low risk event at fewer than ten working days' notice, (e.g. due to another venue cancelling); or
- when an event that was due to be held under a TEN is cancelled because of the weather and the premises user wishes to reschedule it (perhaps for the following weekend). A firework display or a circus might be affected by the weather in this way.

The consultation period on these proposals has now closed. I shall keep you informed of any new changes to the Act following the outcome of the consultation or refer to the DCMS website yourself at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/alcohol_and_entertainment/default.aspx

Revised Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003

The s.182 Guidance has been revisited to take account of: The new provisions under section 33 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009, which commences on 29th January 2010, to enable councillors in their capacity as elected members of the relevant licensing authority, to act as 'interested parties'. The revision to the Guidance was laid before Parliament on the 28th January 2009 and comes into force immediately.

There are several other consultations open for public comment on the proposed changes to the Licensing Act 2003. For your say, please refer to the DCMS website:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/alcohol_and_entertainment/default.aspx

Rural Community Buildings in England 2009—Key Findings



ACRE recently launched the key findings from the Rural Community Buildings 2009 Survey for England, at the National Village Hall Forum's AGM on 12th November. This report provides early key findings from ACRE's third comprehensive survey of the state of rural community buildings, updating data from surveys in 1988 and 1998. As a result, it provides a useful resource to identify national trends and statistics in the provision and management of community halls. ACRE is extremely grateful to the trustees of the 2,355 halls, 24% of those contacted, who gave up their time to complete the survey.

The Rural Community Action Network is the largest network of community owned halls in England, with assets worth over £3 billion, and are only sustained due to the efforts of local volunteers. On average, volunteers contribute 18.5 hours per week to run a hall, which helps to keep operational costs down; the results show that 75% of halls cost less than £10,000 p.a. to run and 51% cost less than £5,000 p.a.

Of nearly 10,000 village halls nationally, 73% are owned freehold by local community groups and 90% are charities run by local volunteer trustees; a management style unique in Europe. Village halls often underpin rural community life and the study revealed that hall use has trebled since 1988 with 58% of halls reporting to be the only multi-purpose meeting place in their community.

The constant need for funding was also highlighted in the report, especially as it revealed that 10% of halls require urgent repairs to keep them in use. The findings showed that 60% are planning major improvements in the next 5 years, of which 35% will require grant funding of under £20,000 whilst 8% say they will require over £200,000. The increasing age of many buildings requires a high level of maintenance and repair to keep them in suitable condition. In Derbyshire, some 11% of halls were built before 1850 and 39% built between 1851 and 1914, with 9.4% being listed buildings.

The key findings provides a very interesting picture of the state of rural community buildings in England. The survey results are current and provide a useful source of statistical evidence. This could be used to support future funding bids for hall improvements. If you require data at county level, RAD has the results gathered from the 57 Derbyshire halls that participated in the national survey.

The key findings can be seen at: <http://www.derbyshirercc.org.uk/publications.htm>

Government launch new 'One-Stop Shop' website January 2010 saw the launch of this new 'one-stop shop' government website to provide the public with a source of government data. Again, you may find this useful to provide some evidence to support bids. The site contains more than 2,500 sets of data on topics such as crime, health and education. The data can also be used to create applications, and already has a number available, including 'School Finder' to help parents locate their nearest schools. View the website at: <http://www.data.gov.uk>

Public Music Licences



There tends to be a general confusion about the legal requirement to licence a community building for the playing of copyright music. There are two separate bodies that collect licence fees for music. The Performing Rights Society (PRS) collects money on behalf of composers whereas Phonographic Performance Licence (PPL) separately collects money on behalf of the record companies and artists. Even though the majority of halls will have at some time played copyrighted music, the results from the ACRE Rural Community Buildings survey 2009, found that 49% of halls held a PRS licence and only 7% a PPL.

To overcome this confusion and discrepancy in licence subscriptions, the government is considering introducing a new joint tariff for licensing under PRS and PPI. In a recent joint statement, PPL and *PRS for Music* announced their intention to develop a pilot joint licensing scheme in the Third Sector, in response to the Government's announcement. The two music licensing bodies plan to develop a scheme working with charity and community groups, building on *PRS for Music's* long experience of enabling music use in Third Sector organisations.

However, NCVO has submitted the following proposal on Number 10 E-petition (Government petition website)



"We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to Scrap the proposed changes to music licensing rules which would cost charities and community groups more than £20m a year".

If you wish to support this campaign, you can sign the petition at:
<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/dontstopthemusic/>

Warning about Fraudulent Direct Debit Payments

The Charity Commission has been made aware of a number of instances where fraudulent direct debits have been set up from charity bank accounts, resulting in the abuse of charity funds. They have put together some advice on what your organisation can do to help avoid Direct Debit Fraud—prevention, detection and redress.

http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/investigations/Fraudulent_direct_debit.asp

For more information about charity trustees' legal duties and responsibilities for ensuring strong financial controls please see the Charity Commission's guidance [CC8 Internal Financial Controls for Charities](#).

Good news for rural community buildings

The recent announcement by the Big Lottery Fund regarding the improved changes of its flagship Reaching Communities programme was welcomed by ACRE and the village halls network.

A dedicated capital funding stream is expected to be launched in the Autumn following the introduction of a simplified application and assessment process for smaller applications this spring. The Reaching Communities programme is expected to receive at least £100 million a year investment across England by BLF over each of the next five years.

The dedicated capital fund is for medium sized refurbishments, new builds or extensions to community centres, village halls or other community use buildings meeting local community needs and aspirations. Capital funding is desperately needed by community halls across the country to improve and modernise an ageing stock of buildings that provide vital services and activities in rural communities. Details of how the fund will operate are yet to be announced but it is anticipated that halls may be able to access as much as £500,000 for major capital projects.

The changes are a response to the Fund's major public **BIG Thinking** consultation last year. In addition, BLF is promising more informative feedback on all unsuccessful applications.

Greater protection for gas and electricity customers



From 18th January 2010, Ofgem the industry regulator introduced a number of new regulations to help protect the small business market (Micro Businesses).

The regulator concluded that suppliers could do more to protect small businesses and offer greater benefits to customers and it set out a number of proposals aimed at providing a fairer deal for the small business market. Under the new regulations, the majority of village halls now have 'micro-business' status.

Micro-businesses can now avoid having their contracts automatically being rolled over and the changes will help to overcome situations where customers are trapped into further fixed-term contracts. A range of new obligations means that suppliers are now required to give customers more information about the options available to them, before entering into new contracts.

If your hall's gas or electric contract is coming to an end soon, it is worth familiarising yourself with these changes; we are aware of some suppliers who have not implemented the new regulations and have sought to roll halls onto new 3 years contracts. Customers who wish to avoid being rolled over automatically for a further fixed term period can now prevent this from happening by writing to their supplier at any point from when they agreed a fixed term contract until the end of the termination window.

The new terms will apply going forward and so customers on existing agreements will need to wait until their current deal ends before the changes take effect. Many halls are currently paying default standard tariffs at much higher rates than they need.

For further details and definition of a micro-business or to download the Ofgem factsheet, look at: <http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/Consumers/Pages/Bc.aspx>

For business utility price comparisons, 'Make it Cheaper' operate a referral scheme through us at RAD - see our website or for further details, refer to <http://www.makeitcheaper.com/>

In addition, www.villagehallenergy.co.uk has launched this year to help halls secure the best deals and advice when it comes to utilities, using the leading voluntary sector brokers LSI.

Charities and Elections—Guidance Update January 2010

This guidance is for use by charities during the period between the announcement of an election, and the date on which an election is held. It applies to both national and local elections.

- Some charities (e.g. some schools) may be required by electoral law to make their premises available to candidates to hold public meetings free of charge.
- Where this is not the case, but a candidate wishes to use facilities within a charity's premises (e.g. a village hall or community centre) for a public meeting, then it should be treated as a normal commercial hire, and charged for at a rate decided by the trustees. There are no restrictions on what this rate may be, but it should be both reasonable and applied equally to bookings by all candidates.
- It is open to a charity to refuse to hire facilities to a candidate, party or other group if the charity trustees have good reason to believe that to hire the facilities would alienate the charity's beneficiaries, users or supporters, or are advised by the police that to do so would create a risk of public disorder. [Speaking Out: Guidance on campaigning and political activities by charities \(CC9\)](#)

Further details at: <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/supportingcharities/elect.asp>

Derbyshire Venues Directory

Please can you help us improve the information available to community groups in Derbyshire about venues they could use? Links (Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire CVS) is putting together a directory of venues available in the whole of Derbyshire and we are keen that as many village halls as possible are included on that directory.

The Directory is available via the Links website (www.linkscvs.org.uk). Access to the information is by a Derbyshire map, and at the click of a button people will be able to see all the relevant meeting spaces in the chosen area. If you have a website there will be a link to it, if this is not possible the details can be accessed directly on the Links web site.

To look at the directory please go to
<http://www.linkscvs.org.uk/venues.htm>

Of course any directory is only as good as the information that is put into it, so please help make this directory a success and at the same time publicise your hall to potential users by completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire. The information you provide about your venue can go on the website but, if you prefer, a hyperlink to the relevant information on your own website can be inserted.

Thank you in advance for your help and should you have any questions, comments or advice or would prefer to receive this information electronically please do not hesitate to contact Links, Ground Floor, Blenheim Court, 17 Newbold Road, Chesterfield, S41 7PG, Tel/Fax 01246 274844, Email: linkscvs@btconnect.com www.linkscvs.org.uk

2010/2011 Village Halls Advisory Service Annual Subscriptions will be due soon

Annual Subscription Rate £15

Membership includes:-

- * Free Village Hall Information Sheets
- * One visit per year from the Village Halls Adviser
- * Four newsletters a year
- * 20% discount on fees for training events
- * RAD Annual Review

Halls which do not subscribe to the service will receive one newsletter a year. They will receive advice on the receipt of an initial query and will be invited to subscribe to the service for any further advice, ACRE Information Sheets, etc.

Congratulations!

Weston-on-Trent Village Hall - Recently awarded a lottery grant of £10,000 to install a new central heating system. The hall hosts meetings of community groups, plus a sewing circle and pilates classes. Vanessa Hurt Chair of the hall management committee said "It's something we desperately needed. We had a meeting the other day and for the first time people weren't shivering in their coats. The hall is centre of the community".

Doveridge Village Hall - Recently celebrated the completion of phase 2 of an extensive improvements programme of the hall. An air-to-air source heat pump system has just been installed, following the insulation of the roof and cavity walls and purchase of new upholstered chairs in phase 1.

Contact details of Community Buildings

RAD aims to provide a proactive and responsive information and advisory service to village and community halls. To help us in the delivery of this service we need to reach all of our members and ensure that the information is being directed to the right people. In order to keep our records updated, it would help us enormously if you can tell us when the secretary/main contact changes.

In addition, we can currently contact some 40% of members via email; ideally we would like this to be 100%. This enables us to disseminate news and information immediately to our target audience and we can be confident that halls are aware of current issues. Can you please contact us when the following applies: 1) Change in main contact details 2) email contact per. Hall 3) Web-address (if applicable).

Future Dates for Your Diary:

Hallmark Workshop - Thursday 11th March at South Wingfield Parish Rooms between 1.00 pm - 4.00 pm

Community Climate Change Conference - organised by Derbyshire County Council—Saturday 13th March between 9.15am and 4.00pm in the Members' Room at County Hall, Matlock

Play Area Inspection & Routine Maintenance Training - Thursday 10th June, at Carr Vale Park, Bolsover

Successful.



Insurance: from trustee indemnity to the horticultural show

Aon has been successfully creating insurance solutions for thousands of village halls around the country for over forty years. With the help of our extensive experience and unrivalled knowledge, our dedicated team will treat you like number one.

Whether you require cover for accidental damage and public liability, Indemnity Insurance for hires, loss of revenue cover or insurance for special events, we will provide just the policy you need.

For more information call the Aon Village Hall Team on **0845 600 1682**

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