



VOLUNTARY
ACTION
CUMBRIA

Village Hall Update

~ April 2005 ~



A note from the Editor .

I am pleased to announce that on Monday 28th February, Voluntary Action Cumbria received confirmation from DEFRA that funding has been granted to support the post of Village Halls Adviser for the next two years!

This excellent news means that the Village Hall Advice Service will continue to operate two days a week offering support and guidance to Village Hall Management Committees through:

- The Telephone Advice Service available every Tuesday on 01768 869525
- Access to relevant information and literature upon request
- Personal visits to Hall Committees, if needed

Another recent announcement that will be of benefit to Village Halls is the launch of the Cumbria Rural Infrastructure Support Programme or CRISP. This programme will help communities establish, re-introduce or maintain services. A clear description of what services actually are is also detailed inside.

As always, your feedback on this newsletter is important and welcome. If there are things you like or dislike about it, or if you want to use it to contact other Halls, then please let me know.

Have you ever wondered why we send out two copies of the Village Hall Update? It's so that both Village Hall Management Committees and the numerous groups that use Village Halls can benefit from it. So please remember to keep one copy for yourselves and display the other copy in the Hall where everyone can access it.

Thank you.

Carl Glynn

The Village Hall Update is the newsletter of Cumbria's Village Hall Advice Service. It is produced by Voluntary Action Cumbria for the benefit of all Management Committees of Village Halls and Community Buildings across Cumbria.



Village Halls and services

What are services?

The words “services” and “service provider” are being used more and more often in relation to Village Halls, but what does this exactly mean?

The Concise Oxford Dictionary definition of service is

service /'s3:vis/ *n. & v.* *n.* **1** the act of helping or doing work for another or for a community etc. **2** work done in this way. **3** assistance or benefit given to someone. **4** the provision or system of supplying a public need.

It is clear then that the terms are not being used inappropriately when they are applied to Village Halls, as it's basically their reason for existence.

How is a Village Hall a service provider?

Services come in all number of ways, shape or form in connection with Village Halls. Some of the most regular and common bookings in Halls are services –

- ◆ Mother & Toddler groups,
- ◆ older persons' luncheon or social groups,
- ◆ pre-school and after-school groups,
- ◆ youth clubs,
- ◆ regular activities by constituted groups such as bowling or badminton.

This is by no means a definitive list, but it gives an idea of activities that are in fact services. If there are groups that are along similar lines to the ones mentioned above using your Hall, then they too will be services.

Village Halls can also provide services in a different way. They can be used by GP's to hold check up surgeries or routine inoculation jabs, Connexions Outreach Support Workers can hold regular sessions with the 13-19 year olds in the community, the Police and Fire Services can hold advice sessions on crime and fire prevention and safety.

There is also the possibility of safeguarding or reintroducing some of the more traditionally recognised services such as Post Offices, shops, libraries or nurseries by housing them in the Village Hall.

Cumbria Rural Infrastructure Support Programme (CRISP)

Cumbria County Council and Rural Regeneration Cumbria have jointly funded the CRISP programme, with the aim

“to support innovative and creative ways of retaining existing services that are under threat, and to support the introduction of flexible, creative and diverse ranges of approaches that can be used to deliver new and economically viable services.

What does that mean?

Put simply, it means thinking differently and working together to maintain, reintroduce or create services.

So what s funded then?

Revenue costs

The programme will fund full time or part time jobs in the provision of services, either by assisting in creating them or sustaining existing ones.

Capital costs

If it isn't possible for a community to support services that operate from a number of buildings in the community, the most sensible option is to consolidate them under one roof.

As Village Halls are already in existence as a physical building, CRISP can be used to help Halls house additional services, such as the relocation of the nursery or shop into the Village Hall.

If alterations are taking place, then it's also an excellent opportunity to identify and address issues such as insulation and energy efficiency, which can make the Hall more profitable by costing less to heat, being generally more inviting and being available to use throughout the cold winter months.

Certain conditions have to be met on this issue, such as the space to be used being surplus to requirements, but if this is planned by way of an extension then that requirement is happily met.

The programme will also fund the provision of equipment such as computers and TV's and DVD players.

Further information about CRISP can be obtained from Cumbria County Council by contacting Paul Dodson on 01228 606753 or by visiting their website www.cumbriacc.gov.uk



In the mood for a spring clean?

Is your Hall in need of a spring clean? Are the walls looking tired and in need of a lick of paint? Is the cost the only thing that's holding you back?

Then look no further!

Community Re > Paint is open to **all** Village Halls in Cumbria, providing **free** paint!

The scheme is sponsored by Dulux and Biffa and allows surplus and unwanted paint to be used by community groups rather than it being disposed of in landfill sites.

To find out more, contact Peter Harding on 01697 343625 or Cath & Dennis Graham on 01697 344919

Training Opportunities

The Cumbria Association Of Councils for Voluntary Service (CACVS) operates the County Training Unit which runs training courses at venues across the county.

Courses vary in length cost and subject but are all centred around helping you manage your Village Hall or community group to their best potential.

There are also training bursaries available to help with some of the costs.

For more information on courses available, contact Mark Payne on 01768 242128 or visit their website at www.cumbrialearninglinks.org.uk

Neighbourhood Forums

Neighbourhood Forums are informal meetings for you to get together with neighbours and local people to meet with your local councillors.

The local county councillor usually chairs these informal meetings and ensures that vital matters are reported back to Local Committees, or the District Council so that the necessary actions can be taken. This is also a source of small scale grants for any Village Hall or constituted community group.

Contact your local office and ask to speak to the Neighbourhood Development Officer to discuss your project.

Carlisle	01228 606315
Eden	01434 382128
Barrow	01229 894312
Allerdale	01900 325011
South Lakeland	01539 773180 or 01229 894103
Copeland	01946 855020

Website:

www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/neighbourhoodforums

West Cumbria Funding Fair

Thursday 9th June 2005
Oval Centre, Salterbeck

Don't miss the chance to sit down face to face and talk your ideas through with funders.

There will also be workshops that will help you through each stage of your fundraising strategy.

Please note that the Funding Fair is open to people from **all districts** in Cumbria.

Contact: Debbie Young at West Cumbria CVS on 01900 819191



~ New sport sweeping the nation ~

Are you looking for a new activity for your Hall that can include people of all ages and ability? One that is easy to learn, and is quick and easy to set up and dismantle? Then look no further New Age Kurling has arrived!

New Age Kurling is similar to the traditional sport of curling, but it doesn't require ice! Instead, the curling stones run on ball bearings, so the only requirement is a relatively smooth surface.

Bampton Memorial Hall have purchased a full set of the equipment, from the curling stones to special launch ramps which allow the game to be played from a sitting position. The set has proved popular with everyone in the community, so popular that they are keen to introduce it to more Village Halls and possibly set up a league.

Colin Barber is willing to visit other Halls, or have other Halls visit to provide a demonstration and hopefully develop a passion for the game. He can be contacted on 01931 713314. For more details, visit The World Kurling Club website www.worldkurlingclub.com

A Registered Charity - To be or not be? It really isn't a question!

Is your Village Hall a registered charity?

There seems to be some confusion over whether or not Village Halls should be a registered charity. It is a requirement by law for all Village Halls to be a registered charity, regardless of their income.

This is because they have both charitable status, **and** the use or occupation of land and buildings.

As defined by the Charity Commission, purposes which benefit the community and are considered to be charitable include:

- the relief of old age, sickness or disability, where there is no financial need;
- promoting racial harmony;
- the resettlement and rehabilitation of offenders and drug abusers;
- providing help for victims of natural or civil disasters;
- promoting human rights;
- the provision of recreational facilities which are open to everyone (for example, a sports centre) or which are for particular beneficiary groups such as people with disabilities or the elderly;
- urban and rural regeneration and community capacity building; and
- promotion of health (e.g. through education, access to medical facilities or the pursuit of healthy recreation through sport).

As can be seen, Village Hall Trusts are certainly charitable.

The minimum requirements for registration are that a charity must have **one or more** of the following:

- an income of more than £1,000 a year; or
- the use or occupation of any land or buildings; or
- assets which constitute permanent endowment (i.e. where there is a restriction on the expenditure of the capital and (normally) only the income can be spent on the charity's purposes).

Clearly every Village Hall fits into the second criteria, as there is the use and occupation of land and buildings, which therefore means that all Village Halls must be a registered charity.

There are proposed changes to these requirements in the new Charities Bill, **however**, this bill has not been passed and is not law, so it is still currently a requirement for Village Halls to be a registered charity. Being a registered charity has many advantages, most notably increased accessibility to funding as many grant giving trusts will only fund registered charities.

If you need any assistance with the application process, the Rural Development Officer for your area will be able to help.

Application packs can be obtained from the Charity Commission on 0870 333 0123, or can be downloaded from their website www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Village Hall Forum

Village Hall Surgeries

It has become apparent that Village Hall Surgeries have now become obsolete. This is due to the extremely successful take up of the telephone advice service, which operates every Tuesday. It seems self explanatory really, why wait and save up your enquiries for the next scheduled surgery when you can call the Village Halls Adviser each Tuesday and talk each query through as and when it arises?

Training Events

The training events programme that was detailed in the Directory of Training Events October 2004 – April 2005 was very under subscribed to, leaving a number of events cancelled. The training topics were chosen for their relevance to issues currently prominent to Halls.

The Village Halls Forum

It's clear then that something new needs to be done. One of the most common questions Hall Committee members ask is "We know that there will be Hall Committee members out there who have been in this situation, and it would be nice to be able to ask them how they managed. How can we do this?"

Based on the concept of the successful Cumbria Rural Forum, which brings people together to share ideas, influence opinion and learn about new initiatives, Voluntary Action Cumbria would like to suggest the idea of a Village Halls Forum. The Forum would meet 2 – 3 times a year on days and times decided by yourselves and provide the opportunity to meet and talk with people in similar situations, sharing knowledge, experience and handy tips. Advice and support on legislation changes would also be available.

Please complete and return the enclosed flyer.

A message from the Funding Advice Service

Help for Hall user groups as well!

Hopefully, you already know about the Funding Advice Service here at Voluntary Action Cumbria. We work closely with the Village Halls Adviser and other members of the Rural Development Team, and you may have already been in touch with us about funds for your Hall. If not, we'll be pleased to hear from you.

Did you know that we can also offer advice and support to the community groups and organisations who use your hall? We know that many Hall Committees are faced with the dilemma of needing to charge a realistic amount of hire charge to cover the running costs of the Hall, whilst wanting to support local groups by keeping the charges as low as possible.

If you put your hire charges up to cover your ever increasing costs, there is a danger that the groups you aim to serve will not be able to afford them; but if you don't, then you won't be able to maintain the Hall in a reasonable and

comfortable condition. It's catch 22, and there is no easy answer to this problem.

If you know that some of your groups are struggling to make ends meet (and to pay you the amount you need to cover your costs) then do please tell them about the Funding Advice Service!

It is certainly difficult for groups to find grants to cover basics like the rent. It might be possible for us to point them in the right direction and give them the support they need to make a successful application for other costs and equipment.

By helping them with their financial situation, it will enable them to use some of their other money (e.g. from fundraising events and subscriptions) to cover the rent and heating etc.

Everybody is better off, and the activities that are taking place in your Hall, and which are so important to your local community will be able to carry on.

You can contact us on 01768 869526 (the office is open 9.00 – 1.00, Monday to Thursday) or by email to angelawalton@ruralcumbria.org.uk

Village Halls Advice Service

The Village Halls Advice Service exists to help keep Village Hall Management Committee members up to date and well informed of any changes relating to Village Halls, and to feed back at regional and national level the needs and concerns of Halls as a collective voice.

The Village Halls Advice Service operates 2 days a week within the Voluntary Action Cumbria Rural Development Team. The other elements of the team are the Rural Development Officers and the Funding Advice Service.

Who s Who? The Rural Development Team

Here's your quick guide to all the members of the team:

Village Halls Adviser

Carl Glynn
carllynn@ruralcumbria.org.uk 01768-869525

Rural Development Officers

Anna Scamans Carlisle & Eden
annascamans@ruralcumbria.org.uk 01768-869529

Sarah Mitchell Copeland & Allerdale
sarahmitchell@ruralcumbria.org.uk 01768-869520

Julia Wilson South Lakeland & Furness
juliawilson@ruralcumbria.org.uk 01768-869524
(Julia's maternity leave will be covered by Gail Knöpfel)

Funding Advice Service (available Mon - Thurs 9am 1pm)

Caroline Addison
carolineaddison@ruralcumbria.org.uk 01768-869526

Mary Christian
marychristian@ruralcumbria.org.uk 01768-869526

Angela Walton
angelawalton@ruralcumbria.org.uk 01768-869526

Team Leader

Lorraine Smyth
lorrainesmyth@ruralcumbria.org.uk 01768-869522



And finally

Although I'm the Editor, this is **YOUR** newsletter, so if you feel that there are topics you'd like covering please let me know by 17th June 2005. Carl Glynn

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Don't Forget!

Display a Copy!

Please put one of the copies of this newsletter in your Hall, where everyone who uses it can see it, so that everyone in your community can benefit from the information.