



V O L U N T A R Y  
**A C T I O N**  
C U M B R I A

# Village Hall Update

## ~ December 2005 ~



### *A note from the Editor....*

Welcome to the December 2005 edition of the Village Halls Update. As well as the usual features, this issue includes:

- **Village Halls Explained (Part Two) - The responsibilities of Trustees and Trustee Liability**~ helping committee members old and new unlock the intricacies of what Village Halls are and how they are managed.
- **Putting your Hall on the map** ~ Has your Hall got a Post Code?
- **The Marketplace** ~ an opportunity for Halls to exchange goods and services with one another.
- **Access - Engagement - Equality** ~ a message and invitation from the Centre for Local Policy Studies

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 Village Hall Management Committees across Cumbria.



## Village Halls Explained (Part two)

### The responsibilities of Trustees and Trustee liability

In the previous issue of the Village Hall Update I explained the need for Trustees of Village Halls, why there are two sets with very differing roles and responsibilities and how the Management Committee are the Managing Trustees. From this point onwards the use of Trustee refers to Managing Trustee.

Many Trustees are uncertain of their full responsibilities in the role, which can lead to assumptions, misunderstandings and misconceptions.

#### **The Trust Deed**

Although Village Hall Trust Deeds differ in the way that they are worded, some very clearly, others in a more obscure way, they all state the same things:

- why the Trusts exists – its **Objects**
- who it aims to serve – its **Beneficiaries**
- where it operates – its **Area of Benefit**.

Further provisions are laid down on how the Trustees should manage themselves in the running of the Village Hall Trust, from the number of members on the committee, how often the committee should meet, and the minimum number of Trustees attending a meeting to form a quorum and be able to make and execute decisions.

It is important that the Trust Deed is adhered to at all times, and that any activities carried out, and decisions made by Trustees, are allowed within the provisions, which is why it's extremely important that Trustees are familiar with their Trust Deed.

Trustees have the responsibility to always act in the best interests of the Village Hall Trust, according to the provisions laid down in its Governing Document or Trust Deed, first and foremost, which means that user group representatives have to put the interests of the Hall before the interest of their members.

#### **Trustee liability**

The topic of Trustee liability is that is becoming more and more worrisome to Village Hall Committees, to a result that it can be increasingly difficult to retain serving Trustees or recruit new ones.

This worry centres on the fact that Trustees are personally responsible for any liabilities by, or on behalf of, the Village Hall Trust.

Whilst it is true to state that Trustee liability is indeed real, it is also very important to state that personal liability only occurs when a breach of trust has been made. If Trustees always act within the provisions of their Trust Deed, and always act with the best interests of the Village Hall Trust then a breach of trust is unlikely to occur.

#### **Breach of Trust**

A breach of Trust occurs when Trustees make decisions that are outside of the provisions laid down in their Trust Deed, or act outside of the best interests of the Village Hall Trust or act in a way that is wilfully negligent or reckless.

It is also very important to state here that all decisions and actions made should be made as a Committee as a whole, and that Trustees also have a responsibility to ensure that no Trustee on their own makes, or acts on decisions, without the backing of the whole Committee. As I'm sure you will appreciate, instances such as this are thankfully very rare.

However, if something unforeseen happens, and for whatever reason a liability does occur, if Trustees can show that they were acting in good faith, and that they had shown due diligence, the courts will absolve Trustees of personal liability.

There is also the possibility for Trustees to obtain Trustee Indemnity insurance. The major drawback at the moment to this is that, unless it is allowed in the provisions of the Trust Deed, Trustees cannot purchase this out of the Trusts funds, it has to be purchased privately from the Trustees own personal resources.

## Prevention is better than cure

The best way for Trustees to protect themselves from liability is to fully understand what is legally required for them to manage and operate a Village Hall. The easiest way to do this is to seek advice from myself as Village Halls Adviser.

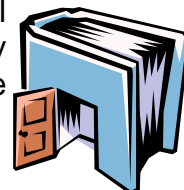
At this point I would like to draw your attention to the Village Hall Management Healthcheck workshops in the Dates for your diary section.

The Village Hall Management Healthcheck is

issued by ACRE, and is a checklist of all the legislation applicable to Village Halls.

By conforming to this checklist, Trustees can prove due diligence, and operate in a way that a breach of trust is unlikely to occur.

If you would like to discuss any of the points raised in this article, please feel free to contact me on the Tuesday Village Halls Telephone Advice Service on 01768 869525.



## Access - Engagement - Equality Village Halls in Cumbria - Have your say

Living in a rural area such as Cumbria creates specific problems and issues for citizens who, for a variety of reasons including age, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality and disability have difficulty in engaging with and access to a wide range of organisations including Village Halls.

The objective of this initiative is to raise awareness of these issues within Village Halls and the Voluntary and Community Sector and to assist groups to become self critical in relation to their engagement with and delivery to the community, to encourage wider participation and engagement from the community.

The project is seeking the views from a wide range of organisations such as Village Halls, about:

What equality means to their groups, and communities;

What is your experience of equality and diversity?

What support you as trustees, volunteers and staff, need to deliver equality.

You have a number of opportunities to contribute, which include a series of focus groups listed below, alternatively please contact me:

**By email to [equality@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:equality@edgehill.ac.uk)**

**Mohammed Dhalech**

**Partnership Associate**

**Centre for Local Policy Studies**

**Edge Hill College**

**St Helens Road**

**Ormskirk**

**Lancs L39 4QP**

### Focus Groups

**Wednesday 11th January**

**10:00am - 1:00pm**

**Lantern House, Ulverston**

**Thursday 12th January**

**10:00am - 1:00pm**

**Penrith Methodist Church**

**Monday 16th January**

**12:30pm - 3:30pm**

**Maryport West Cumbria CVS**

To attend a focus group, please book a place; by sending your details, and any requirements (dietary or access), to the contact details above.

Centre for Local Policy Studies, Edge Hill College, are undertaking this work for CACVS.



## The Funding Advice Service



The Funding Advice Service is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and helps a wide variety of voluntary and community groups throughout rural Cumbria access funding in order to successfully run projects. The Funding Adviser post is shared between Caroline Addison and Mary Christian. Angela Walton is the Project Support Officer and works part time.

If you require any further information or advice on funding please do not hesitate to contact the **Funding Advice Service** at VAC on **01768 869526**. The office is normally open Monday to Thursday 9.00am – 1.00pm. Please note that during school holiday periods they operate a reduced service. If there is no one available to take your call, or the line is engaged, you will be connected to an answering service.

The Funding Advice Service is provided free of charge to community groups and organisations and can help by:

- Researching sources of funding for projects and running costs.
- Offering support in completing application forms.
- Providing guidance on funding application forms and letters.
- Helping you to develop a fundraising strategy for your organisation.
- Deliver or direct you to training courses to develop your fundraising skills.
- Producing a monthly newsletter which provides an update on funding news (MFU).

## Dates for your diary

Please make a note in your diary of the following events.



### January 2006

#### Village Hall Management Healthcheck workshops

The Village Hall Management Healthcheck, produced by ACRE, is a checklist of all the legal requirements for the management of Village Halls or similar volunteer managed community buildings. The workshops will guide you through the Healthcheck, and help signpost you to the relevant sources of advice. Please contact me on 01768 869525 or [carllynn@ruralcumbria.org.uk](mailto:carllynn@ruralcumbria.org.uk) to book a place on one of the following dates:

<b>10th January 2006</b>	Thornthwaite-cum-Braithwaite Hall	7:00pm - 9:30pm
<b>12th January 2006</b>	Low Hesket Village Hall	7:00pm - 9:30pm
<b>17th January 2006</b>	Preston Patrick Memorial Hall	7:00pm - 9:30pm

#### Carlisle Funding Fair

26th January 2006 Solway Business Centre, Carlisle 9:30am - 2:45pm

Meet and discuss your ideas with a wide range of funding bodies, as well as the opportunity to attend presentations, discussion groups and workshops to help with your fundraising activities. To book a place at this fair, please contact Sylvia Hayhoe at Carlisle CVS on 01228 512513 or [sylviah@carlislecvs.org.uk](mailto:sylviah@carlislecvs.org.uk)

### March 2006

#### Barrow & South Lakeland Funding Fair

29th March 2006 Lantern House, Ulverston 9:30am - 2:45pm

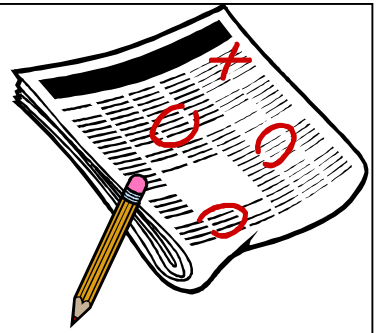
The Barrow & South Lakeland Funding Fair, on a similar model to the Carlisle fair. To book a place or to find out further details, please contact Jane Johnson on 01539 742627 or [info@slcvs.org](mailto:info@slcvs.org) or Oliver Flitcroft on 01229 823144 or [training@bcvs.demon.co.uk](mailto:training@bcvs.demon.co.uk)

There is also the opportunity for me to run courses to obtain the BIIAB Level 2 National Certificate for Personal Licence Holders, which is required if your Hall is applying for the provision of alcohol in its Premises Licence. Please contact me directly to enquire about running a course in your area, or for further details.

## The Marketplace

This new section is a chance to offer an exchange between Village Halls, from finding new homes for unwanted items such as tables and chairs, to letting other Halls know that they can hire equipment you've got, such as plastic ducks for a duck race!

Please forward any contributions for The Marketplace to myself by 25th February 2006, contact details on the back page. Thank you.



### Have it

Casterton Village Hall are generously donating their surplus crockery items free to any good homes. The list of available items are:

70 tea cups  
150 saucers  
160 small plates  
20 medium plates  
and a variety of jugs of differing sizes.

For full details contact Ken Humphris on 01524 271983



## Is your Hall on the map?

### One possible way of making your Hall known to the world.

A common question that I am being asked is "How can we get our Hall well known and hopefully get more bookings?"

One way to do this is for your Hall to get a Post Code. This might sound a little strange at first, until you realise the many different ways in which Post Codes are being used.

The vast majority of internet route finders e.g. Multimap, GIS (Geographical Information Software) and in car Sat Nav (Satellite Navigation) systems all use Post Codes to plot and pinpoint locations. If a property or place doesn't have a Post Code, then it isn't listed as a location and no result is generated.

Most Village Halls don't currently have Post Codes, as it was never seen as necessary or applicable. However, times have changed, and the growing popularity of the systems mentioned earlier mean that for Village Halls with a Post Code there could be an increase in

bookings, either from individuals or from organisations and businesses who want to hold an event in a Village Hall. I have also had several enquiries from Village Halls asking for alternatives to road signs, which are very expensive to install, and some Halls have had difficulty in getting the appropriate permissions to have them erected. Having a Post Code could possibly serve as an alternative.

So how does a Hall get a Post Code then? Actually the registration process is quite simple, and best of all free!

Your Hall must be registered with the department responsible for street naming and numbering within your District or Borough Council.

The only requirement on the side of your Hall is that there is a secure letterbox at the premises, which doesn't necessarily mean a letterbox opening in the door as in a domestic property. It can be a stand alone box fitted onto the building, the only requirement is that it is securely fixed and can't be opened without a key.

Once your local council is satisfied that there is a letterbox at the Hall, it will register it as an address and issue it with a Post Code. Then that's it! Your Hall will be well and truly on the map!

This might not be as beneficial to each and every Village Hall, so it is worth taking the time to think about this as a Committee. If it is something you would like to progress with, contact your local council or myself to discuss further.

## Village Halls Advice Service

You may have read in the newspaper, heard on the radio or seen on television that Voluntary Action Cumbria is losing some posts. I would like to reassure all Village Hall Management Committees that the Village Halls Adviser is not one of those posts affected, and the Village Halls Advice Service will be continuing as it currently does.

The Village Halls Advice Service operates 2 days (15 hours) a week within Voluntary Action Cumbria's Rural Development Team. The Telephone Advice Service is available every Tuesday.

### Who's who in the Rural Development Team

Here's your quick guide:                      area covered

#### Rural Development Officers

**Julia Wilson**                      **South Cumbria & Furness**                      **01768-869524**  
juliawilson@ruralcumbria.org.uk

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

**Sarah Mitchell**                      **West Cumbria**                      **01768-869520**  
sarahmitchell@ruralcumbria.org.uk

#### Rural Support Officer

**Carl Glynn**                      **Carlisle (supported by L Smyth)**                      **01768-869525**  
carllynn@ruralcumbria.org.uk

#### Village Halls Adviser

**Carl Glynn**                      **(Available every Tuesday)**                      **01768-869525**  
carllynn@ruralcumbria.org.uk

**Funding Advice**                      **(Available Mon - Thurs 9am - 1pm)**                      **01768-869526**

**Mary Christian**                      **Funding Adviser**                      **01768-869526**  
marychristian@ruralcumbria.org.uk

**Caroline Addison**                      **Funding Adviser**                      **01768-869526**  
carolineaddison@ruralcumbria.org.uk

**Angela Walton**                      **Project Support Officer**                      **01768-869526**  
angelawalton@ruralcumbria.org.uk

#### Team Manager

**Lorraine Smyth**                      **01768-869522**  
lorrainnesmyth@ruralcumbria.org.uk

#### Contacting Us:-

We know it can be hard to get hold of us. Some of the team are only in the office part-time, and we are often out at meetings. To help you, we try to leave details of when you can catch us in the office on our voicemail messages.



### 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 25<sup>th</sup> February 2006. Carl Glynn

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[www.ruralcumbria.org.uk](http://www.ruralcumbria.org.uk)

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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.

This newsletter can also be downloaded from the VAC website:  
[www.ruralcumbria.org.uk/villagehalls](http://www.ruralcumbria.org.uk/villagehalls)