



Village Hall Update

~ July 2009 ~



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Digital switchover – help us to reach everyone who needs help

On the 22nd of July anyone in Cumbria who has not already gone digital will not be able to get ANY television signal. Research has shown that the very people who rely on their TV the most are the least likely to be able to manage the switchover themselves.

Do you know someone who may need help to switchover?

Thousands of Cumbrians who are eligible for help still haven't asked for it. The BBC runs the Switchover Help Scheme and they need your help to find those people before the switchover happens.

I am contacting people like you, who are involved in running your local village hall, which is at the centre of your community, to try and make sure that everyone who is eligible for help gets it.

If you know of someone who may be eligible for help I would be very grateful if you would pass on the information they need to get that help and keep them watching TV after switchover.

Who is eligible?

People are eligible for the Switchover Help Scheme if:

- They are aged 75 or over OR
- They have lived in a care home for six months or more OR
- They get (or could get) disability living allowance, attendance allowance, constant attendance allowance or mobility allowance OR
- They are registered blind or partially sighted

What is on offer?

For a one off payment of £40 eligible people will be offered easy-to-use equipment to convert one TV set, installation of that equipment, a demonstration of how it works and someone to call for help while they are getting used to it.

The service is FREE for eligible people who ALSO receive pension credit, income support or job seekers allowance. You can help us to reach these people by ensuring that those you

come into contact with receive information about the Help Scheme and know where to go for help.

If you want to find out more about how you can help, we would be grateful if you could contact your regional Switchover Help Scheme representative, **Susie Moss on 07800 529328** or susie.moss@tiscali.co.uk Or for more information, please log onto www.helpscheme.co.uk

National Charity pledges to give 500 TVs and Radios in the Northwest.

With the digital switchover happening in the region, a national charity is hoping that more people will be able to benefit from their scheme to receive a new TV or radio and has pledged to give 500 sets away by the end of the year.

W4B – The TV and Radio Charity looks to support those who find themselves housebound for reasons associated with age, illness or disability and who are in receipt of pension credit or incapacity benefit. Those who they help can choose from a range of TV's including a 19" digital ready flatscreen TV, as well as a range of radio's including a radio cassette CD player.

Those who have benefited in the past have come from a range of backgrounds, ages and situations. They charity has given to younger people who have lost mobility after an accident, those with neurological conditions, or those who find themselves limited mobility due to age related conditions.

The radio cassette CD player has been extremely useful for those who enjoy audio books whilst the smaller TV has been used as a main TV in the home, with some people benefitting from its ease of use with just one remote control. It has also been used in a bedroom for those with poorer health.

The charity is keen to hear from individuals who think that they or someone would know would benefit from their work. They would also be delighted to hear from members of organisations who feel that they would be able to refer their beneficiaries to the scheme.

More information and application form can be found at www.w4b.org.uk or by calling 0800 0182137. Emma Greenhalgh, the North West contact for the charity can be contacted on 0161 408 0162 or by emailing emma@w4b.org.uk



The Our Green Space project is funded by the Heritage Lottery over three years finishing in December 2010 and managed by the Friends of the Lake District in partnership with Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT).

The project focuses on the restoration, enhancement and development of Village Greens and open green spaces in villages and hamlets across the county. An often neglected, though vital part of our culture and heritage, they are places we often take for granted, and are used for recreation, relaxation, picnics and fetes. They are also spaces we share with local fauna and flora and these spaces intrinsic to the development of communities need to be actively preserved.

The project is now at the half way mark and is supporting five communities to develop their green spaces through a combination of physical ground works and historical research into their Greens.

Burgh-by-Sands has a large community owned open green space with plans for walks, recreation area and a pond and wetland meadow. They are looking at the possibility of registering their space as a village green in the future. The project ties in with their community plan and will link the vital amenities in the village through usage and by physical access leading across the green space.

Newbiggin (Dacre Parish) near Penrith has two beautiful wells on natural limestone springs in need of restoration. They want to make the village green and springs a focal point for the village again, creating an accessible village green for festivals and seasonal events. They have recently received Lottery Funding to restore their Village Hall and are thinking about creating a community orchard as an addition to the project.

Wasdale is looking at the drainage and access issues on their registered village green at Wasdale Head, a site well used by tourists which has been awarded the 'best view in Britain'. They

hold an annual May Festival with maypole dancing in the village of Nether Wasdale. Their listed maypole has recently been restored with funding from the project.

The community in **Barrow** have created an urban community garden on a disused industrial rail site, called Green Heart Den after the three local schools that have been involved in the project. They have ambitious plans to convert old railway arches into useable community spaces and have already acquired another plot of council owned land to add to the original plot. The community is in the process of transforming and redefining a neighbourhood which is undergoing major regeneration.

The community of **Great Asby** near Appleby have six registered village greens running the length of the village, along the edges of the beck. Their project is research based, and is looking at the heritage of well dressing, both in the area and further afield. They are also creating a photo documentary of the houses that stand around the green, and the history and professions of those who lived in them. The community has employed a local felt maker to run workshops creating felt pew runners for the local church, with inspiration taken from the flora, fauna and history of the greens.

Each of the projects are involving volunteers of all ages, with special focus on local schools.

There will be an education pack to accompany the Our Green Space project, and all the learning will be embodied in case studies.

The project is also offering an extensive training programme, including a valuable session on the legalities and management of Open Green Space. This will be offered to Parishes countywide, starting the autumn of 2009.

In the meantime, you can access the very useful Legalities, Management and Wildlife Open Spaces Guides which can answer a host of questions you may have about your green spaces from the Our Green Spaces Website. www.ourgreenspace.org.uk, find them under Resources – Village Greens.

Do you need advice on managing your green space or village green? Visit the website or contact Project Officer Roe Baker roe-baker@fld.org.uk



Biodiversity at Community Buildings



The Biodiversity at Community Buildings project has now been running for 14 months and good progress has been made. 18 projects are currently under development and involve a mixture of community centres/village halls (9), schools (3) village greens (4) and sports clubs (2).

Case study

Petteril Bank Community Centre have an area of land adjacent to the building that has been partly developed for growing fruit and vegetables, but feedback from the community indicated strong support for a sensory garden as well. With the primary school, nursery and community centre all housed in the same building, there was a real demand for a good quality outside space that could be used by all age groups.

A plan of how the site could look was drawn up to help local people visualize it, and was on display at Neighbourhood Forum meetings and the local Tenants and Residents Group meeting.

An initial site visit identified that the raised vegetable beds were occupying more space than they needed to. In order to free up more of the site, the beds were relocated and are now in a self-contained formation. The Probation Service provided the extra pairs of hands needed to move the beds, and ISS Waterers kindly supplied the bark chippings for the newly laid paths around the beds.

The final stage will be the planting of a hedge to demarcate the vegetable garden and to provide a wind-break. This will also add a valuable habitat to the site and in future years will be home to nesting birds.

Access to the site is currently up a steep bank or steps. As some of the main users of the area are likely to be mums with pushchairs, an access for all path needed to be created. The access to the site has been reviewed and it is proposed to close off the original access steps and replace them with some wider steps dug into the slope and to have an access for all path put in.

A very sterile area of paving slabs has been identified as the site of the proposed sensory garden. Plans for this have now been drawn up, incorporating plants beneficial to wildlife and new

wildlife habitats. A water feature, including a pond, a climber covered walkway, a dry-stone wall enclosed seat and discovery trails through grasses and bamboos are all part of the plans for the garden. These will not only create a pleasant area for people to relax but will also provide food and shelter for a wealth of wildlife, bringing new opportunities to educate local people about the natural world.

The next stage of the project is to apply for funding and the Biodiversity Officer is helping the Community Centre through the process of completing and submitting funding applications.

Your turn!

If you have a space near your village hall, community centre or sports centre then you could do more to provide homes for wildlife.

Potential benefits:

Environmental:

- Enhance and protect habitats attracting greater diversity of species;
- Contribution to reduce impact on climate change;
- Heritage value.

Community:

- Involvement through volunteering;
- Increased environmental awareness;
- Education.

Economic:

- Enhanced appearance may lead to more income through building usage/hiring

Help is available to:

- Identify potential to create/improve wildlife habitats;
- Create opportunities to encourage local volunteer involvement;
- Train volunteers eg drystone walling, tree planting, pond creation etc;
- Source funding for proposed projects;

Many projects can be very effective and often for little or no initial cost. Typical work may include tree/hedge planting, herb garden, stone wall repair, wildlife pond, bug/mammal homes, wildflower areas and bird/bat boxes.

For more information please contact:

Helen Knowles,

Project Officer

Wildlife at Community Buildings

Tel: 01768 869537

helenknowles@cumbriaaction.org.uk



Energy Monitors

ACT has four plug in mains power energy monitors available for Halls to borrow and see how much energy plug in appliances are using.

Simply plug these monitors into the socket, then plug the appliance into the monitor and you can

monitor the energy used by each appliance over any given amount of time.

ACT has trialled these, both in the office, and at our homes with some eye-opening results. You'd be surprised at which appliances turn out to most energy demanding, and those that turn out to be relatively innocent.

If you'd like to borrow one of these monitors for your Hall, contact me and I'll send one out.

The Marketplace

This section of the Village Halls Update offers the opportunity for Village Halls to exchange unwanted items, or send out a plea for help tracking down that much needed item or service.

Have it

Do you have any items for the Marketplace? If so, please let me know and you can advertise them here.

For sale

Five steel roof trusses 29' 7" span, (approx 9m) for sale. Could be suitable for agricultural building, shed, etc.. Available from June 2009. Offers.

To view contact Alan Rich, 01768483910.

For sale

Suitable for village hall functions, outdoor events, etc:-

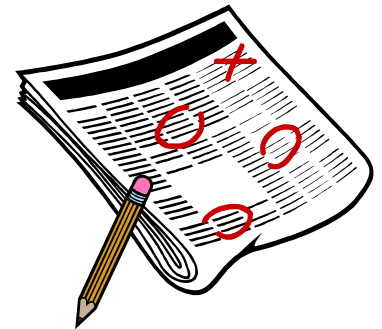
24 wood-top, metal frame stacking tables. W73", D25", H32" £30 each

12 wood-top, metal frame stacking tables. W36", D25", H32". £20 each.

23 stacking chairs. Wood seat and back, tubular metal frame. £10 each.

3 Gopak folding nursery tables. W48", D24", H20" £15 each.

Contact Julia Cash, 017684 80035



“Thank you”

Claire Hudson from ACT wishes to give a big “Thank you” to those Village Hall committee representatives who completed and returned the recent questionnaire about your “advice and service needs”.

We had an excellent response rate of 46%!

In response to the feedback, ACT along with similar organisations, are in the process of developing “tools” to help organisations like yours who want to be better informed and equipped for a sustainable future.

The main areas of need identified for Village Hall's are around the following topics:

- Legal Structures
- AGM guidelines
- Licensing Laws
- Strategic Planning
- Employing someone
- Funding/Fundraising
- Financial Planning
- Governance Training
- Health and Safety

We do already offer comprehensive information about some of these topics.

If you are interested to find out more about what we have available to you, please contact Carl on 01768 869525.

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.

ACT is the Rural Community Council (RCC) for Cumbria, and works with the people and communities of Cumbria to realise their potential.

ACT provides:

- Advice
- Support
- Understanding
- Advocacy

to communities in Cumbria.

The Village Halls Advice Service is your one stop shop for help and support with all aspects of running a Village Hall, and provides help and assistance of keeping up to date with:

- Charity law
- Legislation (environmental health, licensing, fire safety, employment law etc.)
- Grant aid and assistance

It also provides the following:

- Promotion of building condition surveys and energy audits
- Fund-raising and managing finances
- Annual Village Halls training events
- Regular Village Halls newsletter and information
- Project planning; from refurbishment to repaint
- Site visits to talk through the query with the Committee as a whole
- Access to a legal professional, a specialist in Charity Law

If you have a query or concern on any matter relating to Village Halls, community buildings or a similar organisation or group, please contact:

Carl Glynn Village Halls Adviser

Tel: 01768 869525

email: carlglynn@cumbriaaction.org.uk

Please note that the Village Halls Adviser is a part time role worked on flexible hours, therefore it may not be possible to respond to your query immediately. Please leave a clear message with your name, contact details, and a brief outline of your query, and Carl will endeavour to answer as quickly as possible.

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 25th September 2009. Carl Glynn

Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT)

The Old Stables

Redhills

Penrith

CA11 0DT

www.cumbriaaction.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, and previous issues, can also be downloaded from the Community Buildings section of the ACT website:
www.cumbriaaction.org.uk