



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

## ~ June 2002 ~

### *Inside...*

With summer (hopefully) drawing on, more groups will be looking to book the hall for overnight stays. Whether they are a bunch of excited youngsters or a team of mud-covered conservationists, their needs and the potential pitfalls are the same. Check inside for the definitive guide to **Overnight Accommodation** in Village Halls and be prepared.

The search for **Funding** we know is never ending. We have a few more potential sources of grant aid for you inside. There is also a look at the **Status of Funding** for Village Halls nationally.

HM Customs and Excise have provided new advice on the VAT rating of **New Annexes** for charitable purpose.

Do you fancy entering for **Village of the Year**? Perhaps there's been a local IT project, or a youth project, or perhaps some tree planting? Why not have a look inside and have a go. What have you got to lose?

If you're planning to introduce a new service into your Village Hall, you might want to look at the **Community Service Grant**, part of the Countryside Agency's *Vital Villages* scheme.

We take a quick look at **UKVillages.com**, a great new website.

### *And More....*





## Sleeping Over?

ACRE have recently issued a new information sheet on Overnight Accommodation in Village Halls.

Some halls will already have been used as a base for Guides and Scouts, or similar Youth organisations, or perhaps as a base for volunteers working in the countryside for the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, for example. Others might be considering allowing their hall to be hired for overnight accommodation for the first time.

As long as overnight bookings are occasional, and do not interfere with bookings by local people or organisations, it should not interfere with charitable status or rate relief on the hall.

You must, however, make sure you contact your local Fire Prevention Officer to check if any additional arrangements will need to be made to satisfy Fire Regulations for overnight accommodation. You need to do this even if you already have an Annual Licence for Public Entertainment.

It's also a good idea to consult the local Environmental Health Officer from the District Council to discuss food hygiene and sanitary arrangements. If you feel that they have asked for more than you can reasonably do, ACRE suggest that this is best sorted out on a personal basis. A compromise can usually be reached, or grant aid obtained to carry out the work.

Do be clear to the hirers about their responsibilities to safety (clear space for waking between beds, keeping fire exits clear, where the fire equipment is etc.). It is a good idea to have a written safety checklist for them to refer to.

In terms of your insurance, it is unlikely that occasional overnight use would invalidate your policy, but we would advise informing your insurers of any change of use.

ACRE strongly recommend (and so do we!) that you use a written hire agreement whenever the hall is let. There is a model hire agreement available from VAC.

You should also think about:-

- Information – Make sure hirers are aware of the facilities that exist
- Cleaning and Care – Groups should have clear instructions on the care and cleaning of the hall. Bear in mind conservation volunteers will need somewhere to put muddy and wet clothing and boots
- Noisy Nights:- Village Hall Committees should satisfy themselves that there will be no late night disturbance to neighbours!
- Lease/Freehold:- Check for covenants prohibiting the use of the hall for overnight stays
- Planning:- You should check that you are not in breach of any planning requirements because of overnight stays.

*(From ACRE Information Sheet No. 21)*



## **Parish Mags in North Allerdale.....**

Do you know the editor of your local Parish Magazine? The North Allerdale Partnership are trying to get in contact with local editors so that they can let people in rural areas know what the Partnership is working on. If you do, please contact Debbie Steele here at VAC.

### **Status of Funding**

As many of you will no doubt be aware the unhappy fact is funding for Village Halls is becoming harder and harder to access. Applications to the National Lottery's Community Fund are now unlikely to be successful unless they meet their strategic priorities. The priorities for this year in the North West concentrate on projects involving asylum seekers, projects involving ethnic minorities and projects aimed at elderly people and their carers. This doesn't mean you *can't* apply, but we do advise that applications to the Community Fund for village halls work at the moment are *unlikely* to be successful.

This prioritisation and the general difficulty of finding money for repairs and alterations is recognised and is causing concern nationally. ACRE are working hard to raise awareness of the problems associated with securing funding for capital works for rural village halls and highlighting the importance of such facilities in rural communities. In the long run it is hoped that funders will acknowledge the importance of easy access to capital funds for Village Halls.

Rest assured we will continue to advise you on the management and care of your hall, and we will strive to keep you aware of the latest developments in the national funding scene.

*(taken in part from "A Round Table Discussion on the Status of Funding for Village Halls," from ACRE.)*

### **New Annexes**

As of the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, HM Customs and Excise have brought new measures for annexes into affect. The measure will allow the construction of a new annex to be apportioned so that the zero rate for VAT purposes can be applied to a discreet part of the annex that is to be used for a relevant charitable purpose. As a result, annexes will be treated in the same way as new buildings.

For more details call the National Advice Service on 0845 010 9000.



### **Allerdale Access Adaption Fund Proposal**

Allerdale Borough Council are working on a new scheme to help community halls in the District meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1985. If the project goes ahead, Hall management committees in Allerdale would be able to apply for assistance to bring their Hall up to non-discriminatory standards.

We have to stress that this project is currently only a proposal. We'll keep you informed. Let's hope it comes to pass!



## £ £ £ Funding Information £ £ £

### **Carnegie UK Trust Programme.**

The Carnegie UK Trust is focusing on supporting village and rural community development. This includes widening the use of village halls as service centres for the community. The programme is running from now until 2006.

**Contact:** Carnegie United Kingdom Trust on 01383 721445.

### **Cumbria Local Network Fund.**

Cumbria Local Network Fund can help local community groups that support children and young people in the area. New or existing locally managed voluntary groups can apply, however all projects should be new. The projects must fit one of the four following themes:

- Aspiration and experiences
- Economic and disadvantage
- Isolation and access
- Children's voices

**Contact:** The National Centre on 0845 113 0161.

### **The Countryside Trust.**

The Countryside Trust awards small grants (normally between £1500-£2000) to organisations which run fund raising events which highlight to people the importance of protection of the countryside.

**Contact:** The Countryside Trust on 1242 533 338.

### **Coalfields Regeneration Grants.**

The CRT is offering funding opportunities for voluntary and community groups across the UK. The fast track grants programme, *Bridging the Gap*, offers grants between £500-£10,000 for new and ongoing projects.

**Contact:** 01709 760272.

### **Local Heritage Initiative (LHI).**

The LHI initiative aims to increase local community groups awareness of their heritage, and make it accessible to the public. Projects can receive 95% funding (£3000-£25000) providing that this can be matched with 5% volunteer time or help-in-kind. The Nationwide Building Society is offering awards of up to £5000 to some projects who are experiencing difficulty raising the match funding.

**Contact:** Susannah England on 01768 865752.

## **! Dates for your Diary !**

### **North West Funding Roadshow - Newton Rigg, Penrith – Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July**

A unique opportunity to attend an extremely beneficial day in fundraising training. This event was held in St Bees in April and was wildly successful with more than 80 people attending! Workshops on Charitable Trusts/Community Fund/Company Giving/Funding Applications and more. Stalls from local funders and the Charity Commission. To book a place call Diane Jackson, Eden CVS 01768 242138.

**\*\*\* This is a Free Event \*\*\***



# CUMBRIAN CELEBRATION 2002



## *Village of the Year*

Do you think it's about time your small community got some recognition for all the good work it does? Now's your chance! *Everyone* who enters the Cumbrian Village of the Year Celebration will be included in a Celebration Record. Then ten will be chosen to be part of a celebration display of Cumbrian village life at Voluntary Action Cumbria's Annual General Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2002. Then all the participants will be considered and one chosen to represent Cumbria in the Calor Gas National Village of the Year competition, which takes place in October 2002.

We know there are some wonderful things happening out there – let's spread the word! Talk to your Parish Council about entering projects such as community based projects, business or IT activities, projects relating to the natural or built environment. Remember, this isn't just about well-trimmed verges and pretty flowers, but about how a community cares for its people and takes action to improve all aspects of community life.

For further details and an application form contact Voluntary Action Cumbria on 01768 242130 or visit our website [www.ruralcumbria.org.uk](http://www.ruralcumbria.org.uk).

*Sponsored by Calor Gas and supported by the Countryside Agency.*

## **New Services in Village Halls?**

Have you ever thought about using your Hall for something new? Perhaps the local village shop is closing and you want to find a new home for that essential service. Maybe it's the Post Office that needs a new place to operate from.

The Countryside Agency's Vital Villages programme includes the Community Services Grant, aimed at, that's right, you guessed it:- Helping small rural communities get access to the services they need for their community.

In Durweston, Dorset, £18,500 was awarded to allow the applicant to provide a wide variety of formal and informal computer training in a new room. Leek Wootton, Warwickshire, received £4,100 to pay for the necessary alterations when the local pre-school group needed to find a new home in the Village Hall.

The Community Services Grant can award between £500 and £25,000 and the Countryside Agency will provide up to 75% of the costs for a voluntary or community group.

An application *must* focus on the services to be introduced or improved, with any capital works to be grant-aided having a clear link to the community service. It's also important that you clearly demonstrate both community *need* and community *support*.

## UKVillages.co.uk

Looking for a way to publicise your village and share information? Look no further.

UKVillages.co.uk provides a free home page to every community in the country. Easy to access, free to use, the website provides a link to every one of the 27,532 villages and towns across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Any group, society or business can promote their activities – they just have to post a notice. The process is simple, you don't have to be able to make your computer sit up and beg – just follow the simple steps.

UKVillages also runs a small "Community Kitty" which awards grants of £50 - £500, given twice a year to projects suggested via the site.

For more information, visit the webpage – [www.ukvillages.co.uk](http://www.ukvillages.co.uk)  
(From *The Vital Villages Update, Spring 2002, The Countryside Agency*)

### Comings and Goings – Your Rural Community Officer

Ever get confused about who is in the Rural Community Officer Team? We know it seems to chop and change a lot, so here is a quick guide to who's who:



<b>Gail Knöpfel</b>	-	<b>South Lakeland</b>
<b>Anna Scamans</b>	-	<b>Copeland</b>
<b>Debbie Steele</b>	-	<b>Allerdale</b>
<b>Jennie Wilkinson</b>	-	<b>Carlisle</b>
<b>Julia Wilson</b>	-	<b>Eden</b>

We'd like to welcome **Julia Wilson** who will be joining us to look after **Eden** at the end of July! We also, sadly, have to wave goodbye to **Ann Bilbrough** and **Ruth Parker** who have done such good work in the same District.

### And finally.....

If you have any information to share or success stories to shout about, please contact either Anna Scamans or Cathie Fleming at:

**Voluntary Action Cumbria**  
**The Old Stables**  
**Redhills**  
**Penrith**  
**CA11 0DT**

*Thank You!*

### Don't Forget!

**We have enclosed a copy of the Advice Request Form. Please, please, please use these as your way of getting in contact with us. It helps us meet your needs in the most efficient and appropriate way. Once the forms are received back in the office the right Officer for your area will get back to you within 10 working days whenever possible. and**