

# PUBLIC NEW ATTION

There are over 10,000 village halls in England, each one providing vital services to the community. Managing a village hall is a balancing act and the volunteers that run them are finding it ever more difficult to justify giving their time for free. The support that was available has been reduced just when it's most needed and at a time when grant funding is declining. The village hall advisers from the [Rural Community Action Network](#) are facing a reduction in hours but demand for their skills and knowledge is increasing.

ACRE is producing a publication that will highlight what we could lose if we don't address the support needs NOW. Intelligent investment of resources will ensure we enable communities to support themselves and have a vibrant future.

To register your interest please email [villagehalls@acre.org.uk](mailto:villagehalls@acre.org.uk)



## Myth

'Those which own assets are often totally reliant on public subsidy. Typical examples are village halls and community centres where a community organisation exists to operate the asset, and all or most of the costs are covered by annual grants from the local authority.'

*Finance and business models for supporting community asset ownership and control  
JRF briefing paper, SQW, May 2011*

## Fact

'Only 3% of [village] halls receive regular local authority funding.'

*ACRE National Village Hall Survey 2009-2011*

## Myth

'More community organisations, whether asset owning or not, could move towards an enterprise model, diversifying their sources of income and activities.'

*Finance and business models for supporting community asset ownership and control  
JRF briefing paper, SQW, May 2011*

## Facts

'Use of village halls has trebled since 1988.'

*ACRE, National Village Hall Survey 2009 - 2011*

'Strategies to ensure financial sustainability led to a conflict between commercial and community needs.... Progression from stewardship to enterprise model should not be assumed'. The JRF Report identified stewardship halls as valuable for the public good.  
*Community Organisations Controlling Assets: A Better Understanding - Joseph Rowntree Foundation June 2011*

'Context is important. Being active in just one or two categories might mean that the hall is performing a vital function, in local terms, and thus continued support is justifiable.'

*The Role of the Community Building, Christopher Ray, University of Newcastle upon Tyne - August 2003*

## Myth

'Many rural areas are suffering decline as vital services like village halls are lost.'

*A funder's marketing material*

## Fact

'Whilst 15% of respondents reported that a local building or facility had closed in the last ten years, 14% responded that a facility had opened in the last ten years and a further 2% had more than one new facility.'

*ACRE, National Village Hall Survey 2009 - 2011*

