

Staffordshire Village Halls Advisory Service



Village Halls Newsletter



IS YOUR HALL HOLDING ITS OWN?

Are you confused about the difference between holding/custodian trustees and charity trustees?

- Do you struggle to make sense of your governing document?
- Is your hall under used? Would you like more bookings?
- Do you struggle to make enough income to cover the running expenses?
- Do you find it difficult to get new people on the management committee?
- Do you worry about whether you are complying with current legislation?
- Is your hall cold, draughty and/or unwelcoming?
- Is there no money in the kitty for much needed improvements?

If you have answered “yes” to any of these questions, why not ask for a FREE Village Hall Health Check.

Back in June, we offered 5 FREE health checks on a first come first served basis. These were snapped up very quickly. So we are now offering a further 5. However, this time, we want to make sure that the halls that we feel would benefit the most from a little extra support receive the free health checks. A health check normally costs £175.

The health check takes the form of a visit to your hall to have a look around and a chat about operating procedures and discuss any concerns the committee may have. An assessment is made on whether your building is fit for purpose, your management arrangements are robust and whether you have the necessary documents and licences in place. It takes a couple of hours and a report containing our recommendations will follow.

Where it is noted that the committee would benefit from in-depth support, you may be offered a free package of support tailored to your needs, worth up to £1,200. It is envisaged that this support package would mainly consist of “one-to-one” support from the Village Halls Adviser, but it could include a small amount of financial aid towards costs associated with helping a hall to become better managed and/or more self-reliant. Such funding could be used, for example, for promotional materials, an energy audit, training, visits to other halls, etc.

If you feel that your committee could benefit from a health check, please call me, [Cathy Russell](mailto:Cathy.Russell@staffshire.gov.uk) on 01785 242525 Ext 206 to register your interest.

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The Hallmaster online bookings system is:

- internet based, with NO software to download or updates to apply
- can easily integrate with existing websites
- reduces workload
- allows for multiple users to have access to the hall bookings
- automated emails for confirmations and messages
- additional Invoicing & payment tracking module converts bookings into invoices
- support via telephone and email
- annual price covers unlimited bookings and upgrades

A 90 day free trial is available, but when you sign up for a full Annual Licence, if your hall is a member of the Village Halls Advisory Service, you will receive a £10 discount. Website: www.hallmaster.co.uk.

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FUNDING NEWS

New Guidance for Awards for All (England)

The Big Lottery Fund has simplified the Awards for All guidance notes, including fewer restrictions and new priorities.

The Big Lottery Fund offers grants of between £300 and £10,000 to voluntary and community organisations, schools and statutory bodies in order to help improve local communities and the lives of people most in need. Projects must now meet at least one of the following three priorities:

- Bring people together and build strong relationships in and across communities.
- Improve the places and spaces that matter to communities.
- Enable more people to fulfil their potential by working to address issues at the earliest possible stage. Communities should be involved in the design, development and delivery of projects.

Applications may be submitted at any time. The new application process will be looking to see that the project is:

- People led – this means the people you'll be working with will be meaningfully involved in the development, design and delivery of your project.
- Strengths based – they want to support people and communities to build on the knowledge, skills, and experience they already have to make the changes they want.

Awards for All is also moving to a scoring system. When reviewing grant applications, things that will be considered are:

- How much income does the project have? They are trying to ensure that the programme primarily benefits smaller groups.
- Have you had funding from them before? If you have never had funding from the A4A programme, you'll score higher
- Is the project people led and strength based? (see note above)
- Is the project from a local priority area?

For more information visit:

www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/england/awards-for-all-england

Idox Funding Search Tool

There is a comprehensive funding search tool available on South Staffordshire Council's website: www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/sstaffs.

You just need to register on the website to access funding searches.

GLL Community Foundation

Spacehive has officially partnered with GLL, the UK's largest charitable social enterprise to launch the GLL Community Foundation.

The Foundation has been set up to provide both grant funding and practical 'in kind' support with a value of up to £5,000 to community projects across the UK. Projects could include creating or renovating public spaces such as parks or gardens, running sports tournaments or supporting cultural or community events.

Along with financial support, GLL staff are also offering practical support and consultancy to projects, while Spacehive provides a platform for local schemes to build support and fundraise from within their own community.

For more information visit:

www.gll.org/b2b/pages/community-foundation

One Stop Carriers for Causes

Not for profit organisations, including schools that are located within 2 miles of a One Stop shop can apply for grants of up to £1,000 for projects that benefit their local community.

The grants are available for a wide range of activities and the funding will cover the direct costs needed to deliver the project.

Applications are shortlisted on a quarterly basis for panel decision which will take place every three months. Applicants will generally know the outcome of their application within 16 weeks of applying.

For more information visit: www.groundwork.org.uk/Pages/Category/carriers-for-causes-uk



Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) is the national voice for the 38 rural community councils who make up the country's largest rural network. ACRE is pleased to be working with [The Phone Co-op](http://www.phonecoop.co.uk) to help increase the number of village halls and similar rural community buildings with a connection to broadband. The Phone Co-op can provide a start-up grant of £250.00 and there will also be an opportunity for rural community buildings already connected to compare costs with their current provider.

To find out more and take advantage of this new initiative contact: Cathy Russell, Village Halls Adviser or The Phone Co-op on [01608 434000](tel:01608434000).

Funding for First World War projects available now

Is your community interested in activities and events to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War on 11 November 2018?

Did you know that grants of £3,000 and upwards are available now from the Heritage Lottery Fund?

Find out about the funding available to help your community explore and remember the First World War. Book on to the *Staffordshire in the Great War* conference and event on Saturday 21 October 10:30am-3:30pm at the King Street Studios, Newcastle under Lyme.

- Be inspired by the work other Staffordshire community groups are already doing
- Find out if something is already planned for your area and how you can get involved
- Get one to one support on applying for National Lottery funding for your community group

For more information visit: www.hlf.org.uk/FirstWorldWar

or contact Newcastle Development Officer, Elise Turner: elise.turner@hlf.org.uk / 07970663830.

To book your place at the event email your details to susan.dalloe@staffordshire.gov.uk



First World War event in Newcastle supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund (© Moseley Railway Trust)

SOUTH STAFFS COMMUNITY LOTTERY

South Staffordshire Council has recently launched a Staffordshire Community Lottery. Set up to support community projects in the area, the South Staffordshire Community Lottery operates on the principle of raising money within the community for the community. It empowers local good causes to raise money in a fun and effective way.

In a time of shrinking budgets and increased community need, South Staffordshire Community Lottery enables people to support the causes they care most about, helping good causes to connect with their supporters.

A ticket for the South Staffordshire Community Lottery costs £1 per week and 60p will go directly to good causes!

Good causes in the area can register for a page on the site

and will receive 30% of the sale price of all lottery tickets bought through their page. For further information visits:

<https://www.southstaffslottery.co.uk/good-causes>

LYME LOTTERY

Lyme Lottery is a weekly online lottery created to support local causes in Newcastle-Under-Lyme. Tickets are only £1 per week! With 60% going to local good causes and prizes up to £25,000!

Charities and not-for-profit organisations can sign-up for a page on the site and will receive 50% of the sale price of any lottery tickets bought through their page.

For more information visit: <https://www.lymelottery.co.uk/good-causes>

CROWDFUND STAFFORDSHIRE

People interested in raising money to help their local community are being invited to use a brand new fundraising platform.

Crowdfund Staffordshire, housed on Crowdfunder.co.uk, will give people in the county a way to showcase their project to the thousands of people who regularly donate to good causes online.

Any local charity, business, social enterprise or individual can use Crowdfund Staffordshire to raise funds from its supporters. The new online platform also includes free advice, coaching, webinars and workshops to help people with simple and practical advice to make sure their fundraising campaign is a success.

Staffordshire County Council has also set aside a £50,000 'Children and Families Fund'. Any project that helps to support the health and wellbeing of vulnerable children and families may be eligible for up to £5,000 from the fund, if it has support from the community.

Organisations can start crowdfunding today and can also pre-register for the 'Children and Families Fund' at: www.crowdfunder.co.uk/funds/crowdfund-staffordshire

Save Your Energy - serving households in Staffordshire and beyond

Take a look at the 'Save Your Energy' website. It is packed with practical advice and information about how to save energy in your home or business and how to generate your own heat or electricity using renewable energy sources.

The website, now in its 10th year, is run by local community group Sustainability Matters as a non-profit venture, with support from Stafford Borough Council. It currently gets over 150,000 unique visits a year.

To find out how to reduce your energy bills, see what grants and discounts might be available, check out links to expert advice and discover how government schemes might benefit your home visit: www.staffordarea.saveyourenergy.org.uk/

or contact: Rob Hine on 01785 603387

Congratulations to Shenstone Village Hall Committee on achieving Hallmark 1

The Community Council held its Annual General Meeting on 3 October at Walton Village Hall. Following the formal business of the meeting and a presentation by Paul Higgitt, Engaging Communities Officer for Healthwatch, Mr Roger Gardner was presented with a Hallmark 1 certificate by Steve Hopkins, Chairman of the Community Council of Staffordshire.

Shenstone Village Hall Management Committee is to be commended for running the hall to a very high standard. The hall provides excellent facilities for its users, is financially sound and is being modernised, where possible by the committee.

Hallmark is a quality standard scheme designed specifically for charitable village halls and community centres. The main benefits of the scheme are:

- it provides funders and other organisations interested in village halls with a benchmark for well managed community facilities
- it gives village hall volunteers confidence that they are running their hall in the correct way.

There are three parts to the Hallmark Awards:

[Hallmark 1](#) focuses on the management and administration of the charity.

[Hallmark 2](#) focuses on health, safety, security and licences.

[Hallmark 3](#) focuses on community and social awareness, communications, forward planning and development.

The scheme aims to:

- ensure committees are operating in accordance with their governing document and charity law.
- ensure committees are complying with any legislation that affects the running of their hall.
- encourage the establishment of policies and procedures or to improve established procedures
- recognise and reward good practice

Norris & Fisher (Insurance Brokers) Ltd and Allied Westminster (Insurance Services) Ltd offer a discount for village halls participating in the Hallmark Scheme.



If you are interested in any of the following:

Being a volunteer visitor

Participating in Hallmark

Training for Hallmark

A buddy scheme - teaming up with another hall to undertake Hallmark

Call: Cathy on 01785 242525

Ext 206

DATA PROTECTION

Here are the ICO's top five data protection tips for small and medium sized charities and third sector organisations:

- Tell people what you are doing with their data People should know what you are doing with their information and who it will be shared with. This is a legal requirement (as well as established best practice) so it is important you are open and honest with people about how their data will be used.
- Make sure your staff are adequately trained New employees must receive data protection training to explain how they should store and handle personal information. Refresher training should be provided at regular intervals for existing staff.
- Use strong passwords There is no point protecting the personal information you hold with a password if that password is easy to guess. All passwords should contain upper and lower case letters, a number and ideally a symbol. This will help to keep your information secure from would-be thieves.
- Encrypt all portable devices Make sure all portable devices – such as memory sticks and laptops – used to store personal information are encrypted.
- Only keep people's information for as long as necessary Make sure your organisation has established retention periods in place and set up a process for deleting personal information once it is no longer required.

Taken from <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/charity/>

For more information on the Data Protection Reform coming in May 2018 <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-reform/>

Ten Do's and Don'ts for funding applications

DO:

1. Confine your application to the information required
2. Show evidence of need for the project
3. Describe the project in a way that meets the funder's priorities
4. Make sure your objectives are clear and measurable
5. Describe how the project will be managed and monitored
6. Make a request for a specific sum of money
7. Ensure the figures in the budget add up!!
8. Make sure the budget is realistic
9. Make it clear where any other money is coming from
10. Describe your "exit strategy" (how you intend to carry on after the grant)

DON'T:

1. Rush to get an application in for an unrealistic deadline
2. Make spelling mistakes or use abbreviations and jargon
3. Make vague statements about what you want to do
4. Present a huge list of things you want to do
5. Forget to include all expenditure items and overheads in the costs
6. Forget about inflation and VAT where applicable
7. Rely on one person to put in the application
8. Send in lots of other information unless it is requested by the funder
9. Forget to send in anything else the funder has requested
10. Forget to compare supporting information and the application

If you need help with a funding application, talk to:

Cathy Russell on 01785 242525 Ext 206

Charity Commission Annual Return

All charities have a legal responsibility to prepare and send an annual return to the Charity Commission.

What you need to submit depends on your annual income. If your charity's income is:

- under £10,000, then you just need to submit your charity's income and expenditure figures - the easiest way to do this is through the annual return service
- between £10,001 and £25,000, you need to complete an annual return form
- more than £25,000, you must submit an annual return form with a set of annual accounts as well as an independent examiners' or audit report and a trustees' annual report.

There will be a high demand for this online service and the Charity Commission advises using it outside peak hours (10am to 3pm) to avoid any problems logging in.

Charity Commission Consultation on Annual Returns

The Charity Commission has recently launched a consultation on its plans to change the information required as part of Annual Returns. Whilst the Charity Commission states that one of its aims is to reduce the amount of work for smaller charities (those with an income under £10,000pa), for those charities with an income over £10,000, there are many proposed additional questions included in the new return. If you would like to see a copy of the new questions or would like the opportunity to comment, please visit the website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/annual-return-for-2018-information-collected-from-charities>.

The logo for the Charity Commission, featuring the words "CHARITY COMMISSION" in white capital letters on a green rectangular background.

UPDATED INFORMATION SHEETS

VHIS 5 - Village halls, children and young people

A hall committee has a duty of care to all users of the charity's premises. This information sheet provides guidance on processes, policies and procedures for protecting vulnerable users but in particular children and young people. It covers safeguarding, developing a vulnerable users policy, day care in village halls, employing children, bouncy castles, residential activities, stage performances and young people's parties and clubs.

ACRE produces a range of information sheets relating to the operation and management of community buildings. These information sheets are available free of charge through the Community Council, if you are a member of the Village Halls Advisory Service.

Other titles include:

VHIS 3 - Services in Village Halls - provides guidance on the practical considerations for village hall management committees where the community needs a venue from which to operate services outside the traditional role of the village hall.

VHIS 8 - Storage - provides guidance to village hall charity trustees on storage matters within village or community halls. It includes advice on health & safety matters and working with user groups.

VHIS 23 - Planning an extension, refurbishment or new build village hall - Attracting funding for an extension, refurbishment, new build or similar project is challenging. This information sheet provides guidance based on the experience of the ACRE Network.

If you would like to request a copy of any of these documents, please contact: [Cathy Russell](mailto:Cathy.Russell@staffordshirecc.org) on 01785 242525 Ext 206

PAT SERVICE



Portable Appliance Testing Charges:

Within 5 miles of Stafford, up to 20 items	£55
5-10 miles of Stafford, up to 20 items	£65
10-15 miles of Stafford, up to 20 items	£75
15-20 miles of Stafford, up to 20 items	£85

And so on

Additional items (above 20) will be charged at:

Members - £1.50 per item

Non-members - £2.50 per item

If you would like to arrange for your portable electrical equipment to be tested, please call Cathy on:

[01785 242525 Ext 206](tel:01785242525).

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