

# Staffordshire Village Halls Advisory Service



## Village Halls Newsletter



### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

During the past five years or so, a number of factors including loss of core and project funding and issues relating to succession planning have impacted on the Community Council's sustainability.

Consequently, after careful consideration of various options, the respective Boards of Trustees of the Community Council of Staffordshire and Support Staffordshire have decided to unite the two charities to create a countywide voluntary and community sector support organisation for Staffordshire which will represent urban and rural communities.

It is anticipated that formal unification will take place at the end of August this year.

Both charities fully recognise the importance of maintaining and enhancing the services enjoyed by our members and I have no hesitation in assuring you that this will continue. Support Staffordshire has confirmed that it is willing and eager to continue providing an advisory service for village halls.

Members of the Village Halls Advisory Service will be kept fully informed at each stage of the process but, in the meantime, if you would like more information please do not hesitate to contact the Community Council of Staffordshire on [01785 242525](tel:01785 242525).

### NEW DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a new EU law that will come into effect on 25 May 2018 to replace the current Data Protection Act. It's the biggest overhaul of data protection legislation for over 25 years, and will introduce new requirements for how organisations process personal data. The Information Commissioner's Office has produced guidance for organisations about what they will need to do, which can be downloaded from its website: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>

Our national association, ACRE, has also produced an information sheet, which sets out the requirements in a concise and easy to understand way and includes a model data protection policy. A copy of the guidance is available free of charge to members of the Village Halls Advisory Service or at a cost of £10 to non-members. Please call [01785 242525](tel:01785 242525) to request a copy.

### APRIL 2018

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- internet based, with NO software to download or updates to apply
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Website: [www.hallmaster.co.uk](http://www.hallmaster.co.uk)

Published by:

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ST16 2BX

## FUNDING NEWS

### The Garfield Weston Foundation

In celebration of its 60th anniversary, The Garfield Weston Foundation has launched a new one-off fund of £5 million to support **Capital projects to provide new or improved facilities for local communities across the UK**. The fund is only open for a limited period and will close for applications on 30th June 2018.

#### Main points:

- One-off grants scheme in 2018 to support Capital projects to benefit local communities across the UK.
- Open to UK registered charities, places of worship and state schools only.
- Grants range from £30,000-£150,000.
- Simple online application process.
- Applications are now open and close on 30th June 2018.
- You can still apply to the Fund even if your organisation is currently in receipt of a grant from, or has been rejected by, the Garfield Weston Foundation within the past 12 months.
- One application only accepted to the Weston Anniversary Fund per organisation.
- If relevant, planning permission must be secured prior to our closing date of the 30th June 2018.
- Grants must be spent and projects completed by 31st December 2020.

Further information can be found on the anniversary website where there is a specific section on the fund -

<https://anniversary.garfieldweston.org>

## PAT SERVICE - NEW CHARGES

We have a new engineer carrying out the inspection and testing of portable appliances on our behalf. As he is based in Burntwood, we have changed our pricing structure to reflect this. Please see below.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) involves a combination of visual checks and using test apparatus. Although not compulsory, it is recommended that portable appliances are tested annually as a means of ensuring compliance with both the Electricity at Work Regulations and the Health and Safety at Work Act.



#### Portable Appliance Testing Charges:

Within 5 miles of Burntwood, up to 20 items	£55
5-10 miles of Burntwood, up to 20 items	£65
10-15 miles of Burntwood, up to 20 items	£75
15-20 miles of Burntwood, 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).

## INTRODUCING KYM JONES, COMMUNITY BANKER



Natwest has introduced Community Bankers to work in local communities recently affected by bank closures. As part of their role they will provide personal customers with assistance with accessing the right banking options for their needs.

Kym Jones, is one of the Community Bankers appointed for Staffordshire. Her role is not just about supporting

her customers, but to also to help communities cope with new technology in banking. She will be hosting regular events in local community venues to help educate people on being financially fit, training them on different ways to bank in the digital world and how they can protect themselves for fraudsters.

Kym has already been out an about giving talks to many community groups across Staffordshire. She is offering free

presentations on a number of subjects including ;

- Scam Awareness
- Ways to Bank
- Online Safety
- Changes in the Digital World

Scam Awareness sessions are designed to raise awareness of the fastest growing crime in the UK. Kym educates and empowers people by discussing different types of scams and what to be wary of. As part of this project she works closely with Staffordshire Police and also Staffordshire's Crime Prevention officers.

If you or your group would like to invite Kym along to one of your meetings to hear more about her role and give advice on the topics above, please contact:

[Kym Jones - Community Banker](mailto:kimberley.jones@Natwest.com)

[07711763150](tel:07711763150)

[kimberley.jones@Natwest.com](mailto:kimberley.jones@Natwest.com)

## BROADBAND AND WIFI IN VILLAGE HALLS

Increasingly village halls and community buildings are looking to install and offer broadband and WiFi access to their users. There are a number of issues that should be considered when planning this, including costs, security and WiFi coverage:

### Initial Connection

Many halls do not have an official post office address. This can cause problems as some ISP's may not accept orders for a new service without an address. If this is the case:

- Request an official address from the Post Office. When this is done then most ISP's will accept an order.
- Find an ISP who will accept an order for an "unserved" building. There may be a requirement for an initial survey before an order is confirmed.
- Place an order for a new telephone line with BT.com then upgrade to broadband. This could mean that you have to agree to a minimum contract term on the new service.

### Costs

Potential costs and issues:

- Installation, connection, on-going charges.
- Village halls need a business contract (not residential) – shop around for best deals on price comparison websites.
- Consider how the on-going costs will be met. Review the standard hire charges for the hall.

When shopping around for best deals and prices, you need to balance cost with reliability and service support. Try a few price comparison websites for deals and make sure you check any contract Terms and Conditions. Many comparison sites have reviews and ratings for ISPs listed on their site.

### Security

End user access to Wifi needs to be managed. If the hall management committee decides to offer unmanaged and unfiltered access, there is a risk that people use the broadband service to download/upload content that is illegal, criminal, copyrighted or pirated. This could lead to a degree of liability for those providing the Wifi. In addition, there has been a growing incidence of broadband routers being hacked, allowing hackers access to any device using the router. This could result in a virus being loaded onto the router to support DDOS attacks, then devices which connect via the router (e.g. PC's, Tablets and webcams) could become infected or internet access could be blocked.

There are a number of simple actions that can be taken to minimise risk:

1. Make sure that the router is in a secure area with physical access for authorised users only. Allowing anyone to log into a router directly using an Ethernet cable is a risk, as they can make unauthorised changes.
2. Change/Update the administration ID and passwords for the router: (N.B. This is not the public Wifi access password).

Any configuration/password changes are made by logging into the router. Connect to router and enter the IP address (usually on the back of the router or instruction booklet e.g.192.168.1.1) into the search field of your internet browser. This allows access to router management. Change the router admin User ID and password to prevent unauthorised changes to router configurations and make hacking the router more difficult. Some ISP's recommend this when first setting up.

- ✓ Go into "Security" and change the user ID and Password. Choose a unique ID and Password. This only needs to be done once (unless the Admin ID and password are given to an unauthorised user). Keep the ID and password in a secure place.
3. Change the public Wifi access password (current one is usually on the back of the router) on a regular basis.
- ✓ Login to router using the same process as above and change the Wifi password. The public access code should be changed regularly (at least monthly) to prevent unauthorised access. You should consider changing the code for any commercial hall booking.
4. Most routers now include a Firewall which is usually switched to the lowest security setting. Make sure the "parental control" setting is switched on to prevent access to unsuitable websites. Use any Firewall settings on the router to set the level of restriction (see the router instruction manual for specific routers).
5. Include the use of Wifi in your hiring agreement for those using the hall. A model hiring agreement is available from the Community Council of Staffordshire priced at £35. Members of the Village Halls Advisory Service receive a 20% discount.

### WiFi Coverage

Wifi coverage from the router across the building may be fine, but signal strength reduces as you move away from the router and may not cover all of the building.

- Using Wifi hotspots can improve coverage in any open areas, particularly for multiple users. These don't have to be expensive and are easy to set up and move about. Signal strength across different areas can be simply tested using a PC or Tablet.
- Wifi hotspots use the existing electrical circuitry in the property to rebroadcast the broadband signal around the hall. There are many types and brands available from BT, Amazon, PC World and other suppliers, shop around and chose one you're happy with.

**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**

#### UPDATED INFORMATION SHEETS

**VHIS 42 - Equality** - provides guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and how it affects village halls. Whilst providing recommendations for further sources of information, it also considers some of the questions that your village hall management committee might have with regard the practical application of the Act.

**VHIS 27- Village Halls and Social Clubs** - looks at the relationship between a village hall and a social club, governance structures and how the sale and supply of alcohol is managed in halls where there is a social club.

**VHIS25 - Making your Hall Accessible** - provides guidance on a range of practical and best practice solutions which are needed to enable people with a wide range of disabilities and constraints to access the facilities and services that are available. It summarises the legislation and standards relevant to village halls that cover the accessibility of public buildings. In terms of the Equality Act 2010, it gives guidance on the 'Duty to make reasonable adjustments' and the practical implications of this requirement for village.

If you would like any of these publications, contact Cathy Russell on [01785 242525](tel:01785242525)

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