

Staffordshire Village Halls Advisory Service



Village Halls Newsletter



TRAINING

The Community Council of Staffordshire (CCS) has been considering ways to develop and improve the service offered by the Village Halls Advisory Service and, in particular, the provision of conferences, workshops and networking events.

Up until 2003, the Village Halls Advisory Service organised an annual village hall conference, but that year it had to be cancelled due to the lack of bookings and the decision was made to abandon having an annual conference. However, since then, two conferences have been held; one in March 2008 at Acton Trussell Village Hall and one in Codsall Village Hall in May 2010.

Standalone workshops on specific subjects have also been organised at the request of individual hall committees. e.g., a workshop on governance structures for the Steering Group of the new Madeley Centre and a workshop on Business Planning for Marchington Village Hall in November 2011.

We have not organised any workshops or training in recent years, apart from workshops for those halls applying for a grant from the SCC Capital Grants Scheme, up until its closure in April 2016. We are now looking to see if there is sufficient interest amongst village hall management committees for us to organise training events on a more regular basis and we are seeking your input on the training needs of your committee.

Two training needs surveys were carried out; one in 2004 and the other in 2012. However, the response rate was very poor and it was difficult to draw any conclusions about what was wanted in the way of training. So we hope you will take the time to complete the enclosed survey and return it to the Community Council by 24 December 2016. We would be grateful, if you could return the form, even if you do not require any training at this time.

Survey to assess the cost of the IPT increase

One of the headline announcements in the Autumn Statement was that the standard rate of Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) will rise to 12% from 1 June 2017 (it is currently 10%). IPT is a tax on insurers and so any impact on premiums depends on insurers' commercial decisions, although providers usually pass on these costs. Charities (including village halls) do not benefit from an exemption so will be impacted.

A sample of 30 charities in 2010/11 for the Charity Tax Map project found the total cost of IPT (then at a rate of 5%) was £591,000.

CTG is working to collect updated information on the expected cost of Insurance Premium Tax to charity members, following the most recent increase"

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2BGWJF7>

DECEMBER 2016

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NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE

The national minimum wage increased on 1 October 2016.

Failing to comply with the correct minimum wage can result in fines of up to £20,000 per employee, so it's crucial to get it right. The following rates now apply:

- Workers aged 21 - 24 years old: £6.95 p/h
- Workers aged 18 - 20: £5.55 p/h
- Workers over compulsory school age, but not yet 18: £4.00 p/h
- Apprentices under the age of 19, or over 19 and in the first year of apprenticeship: £3.40 p/h

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FUNDING

Just Act Community Fund

Crowdfunder has launched the Just Act Community Fund for volunteer-led community projects seeking to raise funds through the "Crowdfunder" website. Projects must:

- Benefit at least 20 people
- Clearly demonstrate it has a positive impact on the community
- Be led and/or delivered by volunteers
- Be delivered by an organisation with an annual income of less than £50,000

Crowdfunder will fund up to 50% of the Crowdfunder project target to a maximum of £1,000 for projects that achieve 100% of their project target. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Further information:

<http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/plus/just-act/community-fund>

Greggs – Local Community Project Fund

Grants are available for not-for-profit organisations based in local communities to deliver projects or provide equipment to people in need at the heart of their local communities, such as isolated older people. The funding is for projects that improve resilience within a community of interest. This can include new equipment for activities at your hall. The Foundation is interested in new and sustainable approaches and innovative ideas. Priority will be given to organisations that have Greggs shops or premises nearby.

<https://www.greggsfoundation.org.uk/grants>

British Heart Foundation – grant for community defibrillators

Applications opened again on Friday 11th November with further funding £1m being awarded to BHF from the Department of Health to make public access defibrillators and CPR training more widely available in communities across England. Please note that this will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

There are three packages available:

1. A free public access defibrillator, CPR training kit and a cabinet
2. A free public access defibrillator, CPR training kit
3. A cabinet to improve accessibility to a current defibrillator

Further information can be found on website <https://www.bhf.org.uk/>

Screwfix Foundation – Deadline: Rolling

The Screwfix Foundation is a registered charity set up in 2013 to support projects that will fix, repair, maintain and improve properties and community facilities for those in need throughout the UK. The Foundation supports causes that will change people's lives. The Foundation works with both national and local charities, donating much needed funds to help all sorts of projects, from repairing building and improving facilities in deprived areas, to decorating the homes of people living with sickness and disabilities. Applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis.

<http://www.screwfix.com/help/screwfixfoundation/>

CONSULTATION

Overhaul for charity governance code

A consultation opened on 7 November on a new version of the charity sector governance code.

The code, a tool to help charities strengthen and develop their governance, was originally created in 2005.

This major overhaul sees new and more detailed guidance included in the code, with an enhanced focus on delivering organisational purpose and direction.

Those with an interest in charity governance are being asked to feed back their views on the code by Friday 3 February 2017.

<http://www.governancecode.org/consultation/>

ACRE'S New Legal Service Providers

ACRE has entered into an agreement with legal firm, Bates Wells and Braithwaite (BWB), as the network's new legal advisers, following the recent retirement of Jonathan Dawson after 20 years of service to village halls. The service provided will be similar to the current service. Initial pro-bono responses can be provided to general queries with any subsequent work undertaken by them being charged for at a reduced rate. ACRE has advised that these rates will not be as competitive as those village halls have enjoyed with Jonathan and VAT will also be payable. If you have any legal queries, please send them to me, together with any relevant documentation and I will then forward them to ACRE who will contact BWB on your behalf.

Free Legal Advice and Support for Not-for-Profit Organisations

Small not for profit organisations are able to access free legal advice from The LawWorks Not-For-Profits Programme. The LawWorks are able to provide one off legal advice by matching up organisations with a volunteer lawyer that can advise on subjects including:

- Property
- Contracts
- Tax
- Insurance
- Insolvency
- Data protection
- Defamation
- Company Law
- Intellectual property

For more information: <https://www.lawworks.org.uk/legal-advice-not-profits/free-legal-assistance>

Recommend a Professional

We receive many enquiries from people who are looking for a good electrician, plumber, roofer, kitchen fitter, etc. for their community hall. If you have recently engaged any kind of professional with regard to your hall and received a good service, then please pass their details on to me.



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 .

For more information visit: www.hallmaster.co.uk.



Small Charities Programme aims to provide practical training and resources to smaller organisations across England and Wales, to support them with managing their finances.

The programme is delivering affordable, relevant, useful financial training and free downloadable resources, aimed at supporting small charities in many different locations.

A small charity for this programme is defined as a charity whose annual income is £1million or less.

Another vital aspect of the programme is to support financial infrastructure services across England and Wales. The programme will work to strengthen networks and signpost small charities and funders to existing, good quality services.

The following courses are available in Stoke-on-Trent (other courses are available in other areas):

Gift Aid and how to claim it, Trading & VAT - 24th January 2017

Bank Accounts, Outsourcing, Accounting Principles & Managing Risk - 21st February 2017

Budgets, Management Accounts & Cash - 21st March 2017

<http://www.cfg.org.uk/resources/resources-for-small-charities.aspx>

It's Smart to Get a Meter

The Community Council of Staffordshire has joined with ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) and Smart Energy GB to help communities in rural areas learn more about the roll out of smart meters and the benefits of having one fitted .

Smart meters will replace the traditional meters we currently have in our homes. They will provide consumers with accurate bills, near real time information on energy usage in pounds and pence, and greater control over their gas and electricity. The smart meter rollout is an essential technology upgrade, unprecedented in its scale, to improve Great Britain's energy infrastructure with every home in Great Britain being offered a smart meter, at no additional cost, by 2020.

The Community Council's role in this partnership is primarily about promoting the benefits and availability of smart meters to individual households and in particular those who are not currently on gas and we would urge our network of village hall committees to raise awareness of this promotional work with their users and others in their community that may be interested in smart meters.

We have enclosed with this edition of the newsletter a small poster that you can display on your notice board as a simple way of spreading the word.

For further information please go to the Smart Energy GB web site . <https://www.smartenergygb.org/en> or contact Andy Halden on [01785 242525 Ext 203](tel:01785242525)

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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