

Staffordshire Village Halls Advisory Service



Village Halls Newsletter



NEW LOOK VILLAGE HALLS ADVISORY SERVICE

Over the past few months, the Community Council of Staffordshire has been considering ways to expand the current Village Halls Advisory Service.

With the decreasing availability of grant funding, the aim was to develop an approach which would help village halls and other community buildings become more self-reliant in order to ensure their continued viability.

The basic service will remain the same. As a member of the Village Halls Advisory Service you will still benefit from:

- access to free advice and support on any issue relating to your community building and its management.
- copies of the Village Halls Newsletter
- access to free information sheets (max. 10 per annum) on a wide range of topics relevant to village halls and community buildings
- discount on ACRE publications and model documents
- free enrolment to Hallmark; a quality standard scheme specifically designed for charitable village halls and community centres.
- the right to nominate a representative for election to the Community Council's Board and vote at our Annual General Meeting.
- access to our PAT service

VILLAGE HALL HEALTH CHECKS

From June 2017, we will be offering village hall health checks. The main aim of the health checks will be to identify areas of concern, which the committee needs to address.

During the visit to your hall, an assessment will be 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 will take 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 to help them become more self-reliant, you may be offered a free package of support tailored to your needs, worth up to £1,200.

A health check costs £175, but as an introductory offer, we will be providing a FREE health check to the first 5 halls to register their interest.

Continued overleaf

June 2017

CONTENTS

	Page
New Look Village Halls Advisory Service	1
Free Buildings Valuation Report	2
The Village Hall Wedding Company	1
Free Buildings Valuation	2
Good Practice	2
Hallmark	3
Charity Commission News	3

ENCLOSURES: Officer Update Form



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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Suite1A/1B, The Whitehouse,
3A Chapel Street, Stafford
ST16 2BX

FREE TAILORED SUPPORT PACKAGE

In order for halls to become more self-reliant, committees may need help with, amongst other things, recruiting volunteer committee members, reducing running costs, realising more bookings, generating greater income.

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 more self-reliant. Such funding could be used, for example, for promotional materials, an energy audit, training, visits to other halls.

For further information, please contact: Cathy Russell on 01785 242525 Ext 206.

PROACTIVE APPROACH

As part of this new improved service, we will be taking a more proactive approach and will be contacting halls that we haven't heard from for a long time to see if there is anything that they need help with. All too often committees ignore problems until they reach crisis point, when they are more difficult and time consuming to sort out. So if your hall is experiencing difficulties, please let us know and we would be happy to help.

THE VILLAGE HALL WEDDING COMPANY

The Village Hall Wedding Company is developing a directory of village halls around the UK available for hire as wedding celebration venues. Free to register, the service donates 10% of the advertising revenue to hall funds.

Visit: www.villagehallweddingcompany.co.uk

FREE BUILDINGS VALUATION REPORT

Did you know that 90% of community halls are underinsured? Setting the buildings sum insured under a village hall insurance policy is one of the most important tasks undertaken by a committee. This can sometimes prove difficult, but it is imperative that it is done correctly.

Norris and Fisher has secured the services of Internet Surveys Ltd (ISL) and are now delighted to be able to offer you a free buildings valuation for your property.

This offer is open to their current clients; if you are not currently insured with Norris & Fisher then they are able to offer this service at a cost of £200. If you later take out insurance through their village hall scheme then they will discount this cost from your first premium.

If you go ahead with the findings of the valuation, Ansvr Insurance will guarantee the adequacy of the buildings sum insured for a three-year period and the sum insured will be index-linked in the usual way.

Internet Surveys are an independent company with many years experience in this field. Norris & Fisher do not share your contact information or provide them with your current sums insured to ensure a fair and independent valuation.

Using the latest digital mapping software, with an extensive database of rebuilding costs for every type of property construction in the UK, this survey is underpinned by the UK's most reputable data providers such as Ordnance Survey & Land Registry and the valuations are proven to provide an accurate assessment of the rebuilding cost.

You are under no obligation to amend your cover based on their advice but you may find it useful to obtain this free independent valuation. If the valuation report causes any concerns, or if you wish to clarify any of its findings, then the surveyors are always happy to discuss these matters.

If you would like to take advantage of this offer, please complete the online form: www.villagehallinsurance.co.uk



GOOD PRACTICE - YOUR HALL'S FINANCES

The management committee members (charity trustees) are collectively accountable for the charity's finances. Therefore, the finances of charity should be a regular item on the agenda for committee meetings. The treasurer's report should be in sufficient detail for every trustee to have a clear picture of the current state of the accounts in relation to the previously agreed budget for the year. The report should be written with a copy for every trustee.

At the minimum the report should state:

- list of payments made since last report
- list of receipts since last report
- bank balances – all accounts
- movements between bank accounts
- summary account compared with budget for year with variations indicated
- list of any amounts outstanding to creditors and from debtors
- ideally the format of the monthly report should follow that of the annual account in terms of categories of income and expenditure.

Sample layouts and further information can be found in VHIS41 - Accounting and Village Halls. If you would like a copy, please contact Cathy Russell on [01785 242525 Ext 206](tel:01785242525).

Village Hall Information Sheets Cost £10 each, but are available free of charge for members of the Village Halls Advisory Service.

GOOD PRACTICE - ANNUAL REPORT

All charities must produce a Trustees' Annual Report about the charity's activities for the public benefit. There is a statutory format for this report (CC TAR) which can be downloaded from the Charity Commission website. ACRE has a template annual report for a typical village hall, if you would like a copy, please contact: Cathy Russell on 01785 242525

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.

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

If your committee is interested in participating in the Hallmark Scheme, please contact Cathy Russell on 01785 242525 Ext 206. for further information.

Norris & Fisher (Insurance Brokers) Ltd, Allied Westminster (Insurance Services) Ltd and Aon Risk Services all 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

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.

CHARITY COMMISSION NEWS

What's your induction process and policy for new trustees?

A proper induction ensures that trustees can become valuable and effective members of the board as quickly as possible. As a minimum we recommend that new recruits to charity boards should be given key documents about the charity, including:

- the charity's governing document
- the charity's latest annual report and accounts
- minutes of recent trustee meetings
- the charity's policy on dealing with conflicts of interest
- any other key documents which trustees will need, for example, the charity's strategic plan and its vision and values or mission statement

New trustees should meet with other trustees and key people within the charity to get a better understanding of its work and any challenges. They should also read our guidance: [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do \(CC3\)](#).

We advise charities to invest in the training, support and development of their trustees, as well as members of staff, to increase the contribution that the board can make to the

charity's management. More information is available in the [Finding new trustees \(CC30\)](#) guidance.

Making the right decision for your charity

Charity boards have to make difficult decisions on a regular basis. The Commission's [It's your decision guidance](#) offers advice for trustees about how to approach decision making, and key things to consider. As a reminder, when making decisions trustees have a legal duty to:

- act within their powers
- act in good faith and only in the interests of the charity
- make sure they are sufficiently informed
- take account of all relevant factors
- ignore any irrelevant factors
- manage [conflicts of interest](#)
- make decisions that are within the range of decisions that a reasonable trustee body could make

**CHARITY
COMMISSION**

(extracts from Issue No57)

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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