

Village Halls News and Information



Issue 40

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If you would like to feature an article on your hall or a recent project in future editions, please email me at RAD.

RAD Initiatives to Help Reduce Energy Costs

1) Oil Buying Scheme - In October, Rural Action Derbyshire launched a community based county-wide oil buying syndicate to help reduce the cost of heating oil for individuals, businesses, charities and other types of organisations.

The scheme uses the model of a local buying syndicate for domestic heating oil for the whole of Derby and Derbyshire. RAD believes there will be great strength in harnessing the purchasing power of the many rural communities who are without mains gas so that together, oil-buyers will be able to make significant savings. Having already submitted the first two monthly orders but with the scheme still in its infancy, experience has shown that it's possible to get a discount of around £50 on a single order. Community buildings, churches, schools and local businesses could all benefit and are being encouraged to join the scheme. For example -

The member price for November was £55.50 + VAT. This was the most competitive price available at that time with the average supplier price quoted being £61.50 and the highest price £66.95. Therefore, savings for a 500 litre order against the average quoted price was £30. A considerable savings for one order!

RAD is keen to emphasise the environmental benefits too. Delivery tankers guzzle a lot of fuel and the more deliveries they can make in one place, the less fuel they use. And the fewer tankers there are on Derbyshire's small country roads, the better.

The scheme is seeking local people who will be willing to collate the syndicate members' oil orders once a month and pass the information on to the project coordinator; and who will then let the local members know the cost per litre and the delivery date. That's pretty much it. For doing this, they will get free membership of the scheme – an annual saving of £20. Scheme members will be able to order as many times as they like during the year, and the price will be negotiated centrally. Annual membership for community halls is £30.

For further details refer to [RAD website](#) or email Claire Thornber, the Project Coordinator oil@ruralactionderbyshire.org.uk or telephone 01629 824797.

2) Make it Cheaper

Rural Action Derbyshire has teamed up with 'Make it Cheaper' to help its members benefit from the best available energy prices on the market. Energy has never been so expensive, with all six energy providers announcing steep price hikes over the last couple of months. With the looming threat of a double dip recession, we can no longer afford to ignore the substantial savings that we could be making by switching provider. →

**RAD's website is continually being updated—check regularly for news and information
www.ruralactionderbyshire.org.uk**

Make it cheaper are working with Doug Richard from Dragon's Den on a nationwide campaign to remove the red tape surrounding energy switching, to help businesses and organisations make substantial savings on their energy. Let's face we are all pretty bad at keeping an eye on their bills, which is where 'Make It Cheaper' can help by offering a free quote and an impartial service used by over 2000 businesses a week.



Unlike household utilities, businesses are not free to switch suppliers at any time. In fact most businesses are in a contract which lasts an average of 1-5 years. If a business does not serve notice on its supplier within the specified four week window it will be automatically rolled onto a new contract, with much higher rates for another 1-2 years.

A current rule of thumb is that - if you are paying anything over 10p/unit for electricity or over 4p/unit for gas - it would be worth taking some form of action.

Make It Cheaper provide a free and impartial service that will safely guide you through this process and save your business an average of 30% on your utilities. If you are interested in seeing how much your premises could save then email your contact details to partnerships@makeitcheaper.com, making sure to reference Rural Action Derbyshire. Or download a Letter of Authority [here](#) from the Rural Action Derbyshire website, fill it in, attach a recent bill and fax it back to 'Make It Cheaper' on 0845 833 2714.

Finally - because most village halls have charity status - they qualify for a reduced VAT rate of 5% and exception from Climate Change Levy. Make it Cheaper research shows that a third of the charities don't know about this and are not only paying too much for their energy as a result, but also unaware they could claim a rebate of up to three years. Make It Cheaper has published a VAT advisory guide for energy bill payers which includes details of qualifying organisations, a standard 5% VAT Declaration form and contact details for all the major energy suppliers. See www.makeitcheaper.com/charityVAT for more details.

Grand Ideas Fund offers support to groups helping within their local community

Community Groups are set to benefit from brand new funding from Sanctuary Housing. The Grand Ideas Fund will offer up to £1,000 to groups in need of financial support to help deliver activities within their local community. With a total of £60,000 for projects across the UK, the scheme is now open to charities, resident groups and voluntary organisations.

Designed to support a range of projects, applicants need to ensure they fall in line with priorities of Sanctuary's community investment programme which include financial and economic inclusion, youth activities, community facilities, e.g. investing in new equipment or training for new activities or projects that generate new income or encourage more people to use community facilities, care and support and improving physical and emotional wellbeing. The fund runs throughout the financial year and applicants can apply as many times as they wish.

For more information, please visit the [Sanctuary Group website](#).

Computers for Rural People

The Arthur Rank Centre is offering to supply people that live or work in a rural area with a fully functioning computer for as little as £171. The scheme sees internet ready laptops and desktops with pre-installed Microsoft software, with free UK mainland delivery, being made available to individuals, schools, businesses, communities, and others who live or work in a rural area.

Arthur Rank Centre started Computers for Rural People to provide rural communities, individuals and groups with high quality, fully-refurbished second hand computers at very low cost to encourage people to take the first step. For more information, please visit the [Arthur Rank Centre website](#)

In preparation for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Proposed relaxation of licensing hours for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee



Earlier in the year, the Home Office announced plans for a special four-day Queen's Jubilee weekend to allow communities the time to come together to celebrate and commemorate the events of the last 60 years. The late May Bank Holiday has been put back to Monday 4 June and there will be an additional Jubilee Bank Holiday on Tuesday 5 June. The government **proposes** that all licensed premises in England and Wales should be open for the sale of alcohol for consumption on the premises and the provision of regulated entertainment and late night refreshment to 1am on the nights of Friday 1 and Saturday 2 June 2012.

The Home Office consultation on these proposals closed on 1st December and the results will be announced in early 2012. I shall notify halls when of the final arrangement are known.

The Queens Diamond Jubilee Beacons

Local communities are being encouraged to join in with the national and global celebration for The Queens Diamond Jubilee this summer, by hosting a beacon bonfire on 4 June.

Town and Parish Councils across Derbyshire have been invited to organise the lighting of a beacon. In 2002, over 1,800 beacons were lit to mark The Queen's Golden Jubilee. Communities across the UK and around the globe, as far flung as Antarctica, came together to light a beacon and celebrate this very special occasion.

In 2012, the plan is to have even more with 2,012 being lit, with Her Majesty lighting the National Beacon on Monday 4th June. Contact your local authority for further details and how to register your beacon. For examples of registered events and a copy of 'The Guide to Taking Part' click [here](#).

Diamond Jubilee guidance issued

People hoping to name community events, buildings or projects in honour of The Queen's Diamond Jubilee can now apply for permission. Applications have opened for the commemorative use of Royal names and titles for the event, which takes place in 2012.

There will be a blanket approval for the phrases "Diamond Jubilee" and "Jubilee" providing they are used for non-commercial purposes. However phrases such as "Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee" or "The Queen's Diamond Jubilee" will need permission. The rules for the use of Royal names and titles were also relaxed prior to the Golden Jubilee in 2002.

More information about the Diamond Jubilee and how to apply to use Royal names and titles can be found on the [Directgov website](#).

Street Parties and fetes

Street parties and fetes are a good way to get to know your neighbours and can bring people of all ages together for this joint celebration. If you want to arrange your own Diamond Jubilee street party, official government guidance is available [here](#) to help make this a smooth process.

If you want to have a small street party or fete, you will need to tell your local council's events or communities team. They will need to know about your event four to 12 weeks ahead of time. They will ask you some questions about your plans or send you a simple application form.

You can also get information about street parties from the [Big Lunch website](#).

Advice Derbyshire - 'heating or eating'

As fuel bills rise and household incomes fall, it's a sad fact that some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in Derbyshire will be facing the choice of 'heating or eating' this winter. As part of a campaign that seeks to tackle the impact of fuel poverty, Advice Derbyshire have developed an online database of food banks and schemes operating across Derbyshire.

The resource allows users, and in particular front line workers, to search for their nearest scheme by postcode, which will provide a detailed map and information about any available services. In the New Year Advice Derbyshire will extend this work to include the collection and distribution of food donations, and are eager to work with partners to identify and address any gaps in provision. To access the resource [click here](#), and please do let others know it is there.

For further information about the campaign contact Kris Ambler at: kris.ambler@advisederbyshire.org

Charities Act 2011

The Charities Bill received Royal Assent on 14 December, becoming the Charities Act 2011. It consolidates existing charities legislation into a single Act of Parliament. The Charities Act 2011 brings together provisions of the Recreational Charities Act 1958, the Charities Act 1993 and much of the Charities Act 2006, all since amended by other legislation. The Act updates the text and simplifies the structure of the existing legislation, but it does not change the existing law or introduce new policy.

For more information, please visit the [Cabinet Office website](#)

Derbyshire County Council - Sports Action Grant

Derbyshire County Council's new £180,000 Sports Action Grant fund to encourage clubs and community groups to promote healthy and active lifestyles is now open for applications. Sports clubs and local community groups can apply for grants of up to £1,000 to help them provide activities that:

- encourage more people to take part in sport and physical activity
- promote healthy and active lifestyles
- encourage volunteering within sport
- improve performance in sport

Successful bids could include the development of existing local sports initiatives or new projects which support the council's priority to promote healthy and rewarding lifestyles.

Application forms and further information on [DCC website](#) or contact Cath Walker on 01629 538359.

Derbyshire Trusted Trader

Derbyshire Trusted Trader can help you find honest and reliable traders who commit to doing a good job for a fair price. You'll find plumbers, builders, roofers, decorators, joiners, electricians, gardeners, retailers and many more. Businesses can use these pages to find out more about the benefits of being a Derbyshire Trusted Trader and learn how to sign up.

To search for your [Derbyshire Trusted Trader](#), you need to enter the type of business you are looking for (for example a plumber), type in your full postcode and choose a distance from your postcode using the drop down box (within 20 mile radius of your post code). When all three boxes have been filled in, click on the 'Find a business' button.



Legislation

Performing Right Society (PRS) and Phonographic Performance Licence (PPL)

Over the past couple of years, ACRE and Community Matters have kept their respective members up to date with changes to the law that will allow PPL UK to collect licence fees from charities and others for playing recorded music from January 2012. Negotiations with the music licensing bodies took place and disappointment that PPL only made what was considered modest concessions was expressed.

ACRE and RAD are encouraging hall committees to raise awareness with their MPs of the current situation and in particular that for small halls the tariff is unaffordable including the fact that the VAT is irrecoverable, that the licence fees are collected jointly but there are still two tariffs and that in many cases the tariff is not proportionate to the amount of music played in the hall.

Click here for the full [ACRE Briefing](#)

The First Aid Box

The new British Standard (BS-8599-1) for first aid box contents came into effect on 30 June 2011, and organisations are required to update contents to reflect these changes by 31 December 2011. All community buildings should have a first aid kit that is easily accessible and someone should be appointed to regularly check the contents and ensure that it is



The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standard for first aid boxes states that they should be green with a white cross, which is instantly recognisable to anyone requiring first aid. As a minimum, managers of community buildings are advised to purchase a first aid box for up to ten persons (low risk) either via a chemist shop or specialist retailer online. If purchasing online, ensure that the first aid kit is for the UK market as other countries have different content requirements. Also, check that it is suitable for the workplace and not designed for the 'home' market.

The full updated list of content requirements can be found in either ACRE Village Hall Information Sheet 15 - Health and Safety legislation and village halls and VHIS 20 - Health and hygiene in village halls. See revised ACRE VHIS section on page 7.

Government confirms VAT exemption on VCS shared services

As part of the Chancellor's autumn statement, the government has confirmed it will introduce a VAT exemption for VCS organisations that wish to share back-office services, removing the additional VAT charge that can arise when some organisations collaborate.

The exemption will apply to services shared between VAT exempt bodies, including charities and universities. A requirement that charities who want to share services must set up a separate legal entity to do so was opposed by the sector but has been retained in the government proposal.

The government has also confirmed that people who donate gifts pre-eminent works of art or historical objects to the nation can receive a reduction in their income tax or capital gains tax liabilities, of up to £30million a year overall.

In addition, the Chancellor launched a call for evidence on the effectiveness of the TUPE regulations protecting employees' rights and smoothing the process of business restructuring. It said it would formally consult on any changes proposed to the current regulations during 2012

For further details refer to [One East Midlands website](#).

Call for clampdown on metal theft

Rural businesses have thrown their weight behind a parliamentary bid to thwart the sale of stolen metal. Soaring prices have seen the theft of metal from farms and rural firms grow to epidemic proportions over recent months. Overhead cables, copper and even barbed wire and other fencing have been stripped from villages and rural areas for the value of the scrap. In a bid to thwart the thieves, Lancashire MP Graham Jones brought his Metal Theft (Protection) Bill before the House of Commons last month. It is due to have its second reading on 20 January 2012.

For more information, please visit the [Rural Services Network website](#).

Consultations

Consultation on Feed-in Tariffs for solar PV

The Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has released a consultation on the Comprehensive Review Phase 1 of the Feed-in Tariffs scheme, focusing on Solar PV. The consultation sets out the proposals on the level of support for solar PV installations and on energy efficiency, and invites comments on them. The consultation will run until Friday 23 December 2011. You will need to be quick!

To view the consultation document, please visit the [DECC website](#).

Food Standards Agency



Following the publication of the UK Government's response to the hospitality theme of the Red Tape Challenge, the Food Standards Agency has recently launched a two month initial consultation into how food law applies to community halls (such as village or church halls) that are used for the preparation, sale or supply of food. Responses are requested by 6 February 2012.

To view the consultation document, please visit the [Food Standards Agency website](#):

Derbyshire Broadband Surveys

The 'Derbyshire Broadband Surveys are designed to give everyone living and working in Derbyshire a chance to share their internet experience. Across Derbyshire there are people who can not receive a broadband service or if they can the service is patchy. In order to help Derbyshire County Council identify where the telecommunications provision is weakest, it is undertaking two important surveys to gauge local demand and clarify where internet services are currently slow or even unacceptable.

It is important that the County Council hear from both residents and businesses and they would appreciate you spending five minutes to complete either the [residents \(opens in a new window\)](#) or [business \(opens in a new window\)](#) survey. Community halls need to complete the business survey. Halls can also help by promoting this campaign to their user groups and the wider community to encourage local residents to complete the residents survey. The survey closes on 30 April 2012.

When you complete the survey you have the option to be included in a prize draw for a chance to win one of five £50 high street vouchers (see the [prize draw terms and conditions](#)).

Information gathered will be collated to help assess the extent of the problem across the county and to show the aggregated demand for broadband provision in any particular area. This will assist in planning for the future roll out of broadband in Derbyshire.

ACRE Updates - The State, Management and Use of Rural Community Buildings Report

ACRE has released the final two reports in a series of six which analyse data collected from 2,355 rural community buildings across England. The complete set provides a valuable insight into the role of volunteers and the buildings that they manage; covering issues from their economic impact on rural communities to their multi-purpose use for social activity, arts and sports, education, health and retail services. The reports are a culmination of two years work in analysing and comparing the data with that collected in 1988 and 1998.

The state and management of rural community buildings in England examines the responsibility that volunteer trustees undertake in managing buildings and makes recommendations that could ease the financial and legislative burden. The changing use of rural community buildings, the second of the two reports released, provides an insight into the health of rural community life and the way in which rural communities are responding to challenges such as an ageing population and the loss of services such as buses, shops and pubs.

To view all of the reports in the series, please visit the [ACRE website](http://www.acre.org.uk)



Revised ACRE Village Hall Information Sheets

These are available free of charge to members of the Village Hall Advisory Service:

15	Health & Safety Legislation and village halls	(First Aid Kits new legislation)
20	Health & Hygiene in Village Halls	(First Aid Kits new legislation)
42	Equality in Village Halls (July 2011)	(New addition)
18	Village Halls and VAT on building work and other purchases	(updated since Jan 2011)
11	The Charities Act 1992, 1993 & 2006	(updated since Jan 2011)
22	Managing Employees and Volunteers	(Updated to reflect equality law and NMW rates)

Conferences & Training

Financial Inclusion Derbyshire Future Needs 2012 Conferences - 20 & 26 January 2012

Financial Inclusion Derbyshire is hosting [two events](#) to celebrate the work that has been done already, and to provide an opportunity to identify key financial exclusion needs/issues in Derbyshire, for 2012 onwards, and plan future priorities. This will lead to a new financial inclusion strategy. The Financial Inclusion Derbyshire Partnership has been working over the last couple of years to address issues of financial exclusion in the county including: access to affordable credit; banking and savings; debt and income maximisation advice; financial capability/education. The two events are being held on Friday, 20 January near Matlock and Thursday, 26 January in Ripley.



Rural Network East Midlands Conference – Thursday March 22nd 2012 at Carriage Court, Welbeck Estates, Worksop, Nottinghamshire

A whole new labyrinth of structures, policies and organisations has emerged over the last 2 years. Come along to the Rural Network East Midlands Conference and explore how new policies and initiatives provide opportunities and challenges for rural communities and how Rural Network East Midlands intends to support future rural growth.

For further details and a booking form please contact Lynn Hage on 01623 727600 or email lhage@rcan.org.uk

FREE Funding Workshop – ‘Reaching Communities’

As well as Awards for All, the BIG Lottery Fund also offers a larger grants programme called 'Reaching Communities'. This offers grants of £10,001 - £500,000 for revenue projects and up to £50,000 for capital projects to community organisations and groups for projects that help people and communities who are 'most in need'.

Derbyshire Dales CVS is joining forces with High Peak CVS to offer a FREE workshop on the 'Reaching Communities' programme for groups and organisations who are going to apply or are considering applying. The workshop will be lead by Matthew Rowe, BIG Lottery Development Officer, and will be very much an information-based workshop, focusing on the main points of the programme including how to describe and evidence the need and the outcomes of your proposed project.

DATE: 31st January 2012
TIME: 10.15am – 1.00pm
WHERE: Buxton, venue to be confirmed

Application to this funding programme is via a two-stage process and is highly competitive. If you are thinking of bidding to it, this workshop is highly recommended!

To book your place on this workshop please contact Derbyshire Dales on 01629 812154 or email sarah@ddcvs.org.uk with your name, the name of your group or organisation and a daytime phone number

Publications

CLG update their “plain English guide to the Localism Act”

Following the Localism Bill's Royal Assent on 15 November to become the Localism Act, the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) has updated their *Plain English guide to the Localism Act*. The document describes the main measures of the Localism Act, under four headings which are new freedoms and flexibilities for local government, new rights and powers for communities and individuals, reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective, and reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally.

To view the guide, please visit the [CLG website](#).

Good Governance - A Code for the Voluntary and Community Sector

A Steering Group consisting of ACEVO, NCVO, Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators and the Small Charities Coalition has produced *Good Governance - A Code for the Voluntary and Community Sector*, which is aimed at anyone interested in or responsible for governance. The Code publishes six principles which include understanding the board's role, doing what the organisation was set up to do, working effectively, control, behaving with integrity and openness and accountability. The document outlines why each principle is important and also outlines examples of what they mean in practice.

To view the updated publication, as well as previous version please visit the [Good Governance Code website](#).

CPRE and NALC produce Planning Application advice publication

Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) have produced a new publication entitled 'How to Respond to Planning Applications', which gives an eight step guide to help people through the planning application process.

To view the document, please visit the [CPRE website](#).

Village & Community Halls Membership Service

Thank you to all those that have subscribed to the Village & Community Halls Advisory Service for 2011/2012 membership. Your support is very much appreciated and this has helped RAD to be able to continue providing this service during these difficult financial times. Community buildings and the volunteers that manage them are often the life-blood of rural communities and we aim to continue to support the vital work that you do.

The service now provides more benefits to members. As you are aware, since April 2011 the new "Village Halls Members Only" area on our website provides subscribers with instance access to relevant news and information. In particular, the 41 ACRE Village Hall Information Sheets are readily available free of charge and these are proving to be an especially valuable resource for members.

Development of this dedicated area is on-going and more relevant information will be added over the coming weeks. To find out more about the benefits and to access an application form, go to:

HALLMARK



The Hallmark quality standards scheme is steadily attracting interest in the county but we would like to encourage even more charitable halls to enter this nationally recognised ACRE scheme. However, please be aware that the scheme is only available to Charitable village and community halls. This includes organisations that are managed as Charitable Trusts and where Parish Councils are Sole Trustee of a charitable hall. This excludes community buildings that are managed by Parish Councils in their statutory capacity and Church Halls.

For further details about eligibility and the standards refer [RAD website](#).

Are you interested in becoming a Hallmark Visitor?

The scheme relies upon our volunteer 'Visitors' to carry out Hallmark assessments to whom we are very grateful for their enthusiastic support. They are all volunteers with an interest in community halls, either as management trustees or people with previous experience of working with charities. As the scheme continues to grow, we are keen to recruit more volunteer visitors to help increase our capacity and enable us to support more halls.

If you can spare an occasional half day (e.g. every 6-8 weeks) and would enjoy meeting hall trustees in other parts of Derbyshire please get in touch and we will provide you with further details. There is no need to worry about undertaking this role as training is provided and all visits are carried out in pairs, one of whom would be an experienced assessor. Travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Successful.



Insurance: from trustee indemnity to the horticultural show

Aon has been successfully creating insurance solutions for thousands of village halls around the country for over forty years. With the help of our extensive experience and unrivalled knowledge, our dedicated team will treat you like number one.

Whether you require cover for accidental damage and public liability, Indemnity insurance for fairs, loss of revenue cover or insurance for special events, we will provide just the policy you need.

For more information call the Aon Village Hall Team on **0845 600 1682**

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Congratulations to

**Great Longstone
Village Hall**

**on becoming the latest hall
to achieve Hallmark 1 status.**

Well done !

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