

ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATES

From 1 October 2008, buildings occupied or part occupied by a public authority that provides a public service, i.e. visited by the public, with a total useful floor area greater than 1000m² are required to display a Display Energy Certificate (DEC) showing the actual energy usage of the building. A DEC is accompanied by an Advisory Report which lists cost effective measures to improve the energy rating of the building. The DEC has to be updated each year, but the report is valid for 7 years. Store rooms and other rooms not used by the public do not count in calculating the floor area.

An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is required when a building, or part of a building, is built, sold or rented. Exemptions apply to places of worship temporary buildings for use of less than 2 years with a floor area of less than 50m², but not for community buildings.

The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has confirmed that the requirement for a DEC is only likely to apply to those halls run by parish or town councils which exceed the 1000m² area. Those run by charities are not affected as they do not fall within the definition of “public authority” or “an institution”.

An EPC needs to be provided to a community organisation purchasing or leasing a building for use as community building. If an organisation running a community building lets out offices or rooms to other organisations under a new lease it would have to provide an EPC. An EPC is not required where accommodation is let out under a non-exclusive occupation licence or where a lease is being renewed.

Serving all Cheshire communities

NEW PROJECT

BASIS 2 'Strengthening Rural Services in Cheshire and Warrington'.



Cheshire Community Action is the lead body on the new BASIS 2 project 'Strengthening Rural Services in Cheshire and Warrington'.

Cheshire Community Action, Chester Voluntary Action and Macclesfield & District CVS have achieved BIG Lottery BASIS 2 funding to increase support for rural voluntary, community and faith groups across Cheshire & Warrington. Rural groups will have access to the BASIS 2 team for increased information and networking, one to one support, signposting for training, identifying and assistance with funding applications and for advice and support to set up and develop new groups.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new additional Village Halls Adviser at Cheshire Community Action. I will be working alongside Jim Bradley in delivering the Village Halls Advisory Service across Cheshire and Warrington.

As the new Village Halls Adviser I am keen to get out into the community and see what work is being undertaken by village hall management committees and the problems which you may face.

It is possible for me to come out and meet yourself and your Village Hall Committee in person, whether it is for a general chat or to discuss any issues for which you require assistance.

If you are a village hall or community building group, please feel free to contact either **James Cartledge** or **Jim Bradley** on 01606 881760 or email james.cartledge@cheshireaction.org.uk or jim.bradley@cheshireaction.org.uk

AREA MEETINGS

To improve the communications between individual village halls, and to improve the knowledge that the Village Halls Advisers have for the concerns affecting Village Hall Committees, we are arranging a series of Local Area Meetings.

At each meeting a couple of committee members from village halls within a local, specific, geographical area will meet at a hall within that area.

The meetings are not to replace the quarterly Forum Meetings, but to provide a basis for dialogue between the committees attending the meetings to allow the Village Halls Advisers to address the issues that affect hall committees.

There are many things we can consider, examples include;

- more proficient use of computers,
- improving the response of local volunteers,
- providing secretariat services and help to treasurers,
- assistance with booking,
- preparing for using the internet.

We think that we can all benefit from finding practices that work the best and then provide the basis for developing these practices across a wider range of halls.

If you want to take part in this or to make your hall available, day or evening subject to local requirement, then please contact either Village Halls Adviser.

These are **YOUR** meetings, the Village Halls Advisers will just bring together your best ideas so that all halls in Cheshire can move to sounder foundations and prosper.

VILLAGE HALLS ADVISER'S CASEBOOK



What are the new regulations for Vulnerable people and Children?

The Children Act 1989 brought together previously framed legislation, some of which has been significantly amended. Its main purpose is to promote and safeguard the welfare of children. It balances the rights of children and parents, and the responsibilities of families and professionals. More recently, The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and The Childcare Act 2006 will be of interest to village hall management committees; in particular those who provide a venue for childcare.

Village halls throughout the country provide the premises for day care and other child based activities. The Village Hall Management Committee has a duty to ensure that there are no risks to the health and safety of users, that fire precautions are maintained and good practice in all other aspects of the management of the hall are carried out.

Your Village Halls Advisers have an Information Sheet covering all aspects of the changes.

Safeguarding vulnerable users

Trustees and management committees are responsible for ensuring that all those benefiting from, or using a community building, are not at risk of harm in any way. They have a legal duty to act prudently and to take reasonable steps to ensure that no-one

comes to harm. Children are an especially vulnerable group and therefore trustees and management committees must be aware of having proper safeguards in place. Even if a committee does not work directly with children or vulnerable adults, it is responsible for the contracts that it makes with hirers, and will be expected to find out what the relevant law is, how it applies to their building and to comply with it where appropriate.

The Vetting and Barring Scheme

The new Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) was set up as a result of the Bichard Enquiry, which followed the Soham Murders. The VBS is a partnership of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) (a new non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Home Office) and the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The VBS is supported by the legal framework provided for in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

The ISA will be responsible for maintaining two barred lists and making decisions regarding them both:

people barred from working with children, and

people barred from working with vulnerable adults.

The VBS, launched on 12 October 2009, is meant to ensure that anyone who presents a known risk to vulnerable groups is prevented from working with them. From October 2009 onwards, employers, social services and professional regulators will have a duty to refer to the ISA any information about individuals who may pose a risk to vulnerable people. There will be criminal penalties for barred individuals who seek work with vulnerable groups and also employers who knowingly take them on (this will also apply to trustees of charities). The information will be stored for employers and voluntary organisations to use when they are recruiting.

The scope of activities covered by the VBS will be broad and will be based on the specified nature of the activity (e.g. teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, treatment or transport) or the specified place the activity is carried out (e.g. schools, children's homes and hospitals, juvenile detention facilities, adult care homes) and will be based on the frequency of the activity (i.e. more than once a month, 3 or more occasions in 30 days and/or overnight. This is called 'Regulated Activity'.

The ISA scheme is being phased in gradually, but once it is fully operational, anyone who wants to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults in a 'regulated' activity will have to be registered by the ISA and it will be unlawful for an organisation who recruits someone in regulated activity to do so without checking their ISA registration status. Being ISA registered will mean that no information is held that demonstrates the person concerned poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults. Once checked and registered with the ISA, they will be continuously monitored and their status will be reassessed against any new information which may come to light. If new information comes to light, then the ISA will be proactive in keeping employers/trustees informed.

The Scheme is being rolled out over a 5 year period, starting from October 2009. Initially registration will only apply to new workers but, over time, existing workers will have to register too. This applies to volunteers equally as it does to employees. Individuals in paid employment will have to pay a £64 registration fee which will cover both ISA registration and a CRB check. Those involved only in unpaid voluntary activity will pay no application fee (only an administration fee). Only an individual can register with the scheme, an employer cannot make the application on the individual's behalf. The ISA registration is transferable between

jobs and voluntary roles.

Implications of the ISA scheme for village halls

Village hall committees should check that any organisations hiring out the hall that are undertaking 'regulated activities', have the necessary checks and registrations in place. 'Regulated activities' are those activities which involve contact with children or vulnerable adults, on a frequent and/or overnight basis. These could be paid or voluntary activities and will include all childcare providers, youth groups etc.

When hiring out the hall to organisations working with children, village hall management committees should: ensure that the hirer/ daycare provider has the relevant policies and procedures and checks in place for keeping children safe; and make sure that this forms part of the hiring agreement Anyone having unsupervised contact with children should have had the appropriate checks i.e. an enhanced CRB check and from November 2010, ISA registration status for all new employees.

If the village hall has

- employees, such as a caretaker or cleaner who are likely to have unsupervised contact with children
- committee members who may have unsupervised contact with children

the Village Hall Management Committee are advised to:

- undertake an enhanced CRB check on these staff or committee members
- from November 2010, ensure that ISA registration status is checked on all new employees or committee members that are likely to have unsupervised access to children

- before July 2015, ensure existing staff or trustees have ISA registration status if appropriate.

Implications of the ISA scheme for hirers.

Hirers need to be made aware that other persons may be on the premises, for example a caretaker, and that children should never be left alone or in that person's care unless appropriate checks have been carried out. If your hall has employees, perhaps a caretaker or cleaner, who are likely to be in unsupervised contact with the groups hiring the hall, then you are strongly advised to undertake an enhanced CRB check and from 2010 ensure that these employees are ISA-registered in line with the phasing in scheme. It will also be appropriate for village hall management committee members to have these checks if they are likely to be in unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults in the hall. Guidance on how to apply for CRB checks is available from the Criminal Record Bureau website: <http://www.crb.gov.uk/> or telephone, 0870 9090822

E.ON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FUND

E.ON have developed the E.ON Sustainable Energy Fund to support community energy projects which either result in the production of energy from a sustainable source or which reduce the amount of energy used by a community organisation.

E.ON have secured funding in 2010 and are therefore welcoming new applications. The deadlines in 2010 to receive new applications are:

April 2nd

October 8th

The fund is available to community groups, charities and not for profit organisations across England, Scotland and Wales. Grant

applications can be for up to £20,000. Examples of the types of organisations that have been granted funds in the past include schools, local and national charities and special education colleges. The fund does not support residential or commercial projects.

Applications are welcome from organisations that can demonstrate clear community benefits, and are committed to introducing sustainable energy projects.

Projects that would be considered include:

- The purchase and installation of one or more renewable energy technologies (e.g. wind, solar thermal, PV, wood etc)
- The renovation of existing facilities to incorporate micro-generation technology (e.g. the reinstatement of a watermill and the purchase of a turbine to produce hydro-electricity)
- An energy efficiency makeover for your building that could demonstrate significant energy savings and also behavioural change amongst users
- The use of new or innovative technology to deliver either energy savings or micro-generation capacity
- A project which can demonstrate the intelligent use of waste energy (e.g. a district heating system that uses waste heat from one building to heat or power another)

These are just a few examples, it is always fascinating to see the breadth of applications received. The application must clearly demonstrate community benefits, the types of groups that will benefit, and the environmental benefits of the project.

If you are unsure as to whether your project might be eligible for a grant from the E.ON Sustainable Energy Fund, take a look at the funding criteria and the FAQ section on their website <http://eon-uk.com/about/sustainableenergyfund.aspx>

LICENSING ACT 2003

The department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) have published a consultation about proposals to amend the licensing Act 2003.

The Government proposes to simplify three things: the revision of licensing statements; dealing with the death, incapacity or insolvency of the licence holder; and the notification of temporary event notices (TENs) where an event has to be cancelled or the venue moved (e.g. heavy rain cancels fireworks). The proposal would allow police and licensing authorities discretion to accept a TEN with a minimum of 3 working days. The closing date for responses is Feb 9th. The link can be found at http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6498.aspx.

ACRE will be responding to the consultations. If you have comments that you would like included in their responses, contact your Village Halls Adviser before the end of January.

NATIONAL LOTTERY AWARDS

The National Lottery Awards are an annual search to find the UK's favourite Lottery-funded projects. Since The National Lottery began in 1994, over 380,000 grants have been given out across the arts, sport, heritage, charities, health, education and the environment. The awards recognise the difference these projects have made to people, places and communities across the country and celebrate the talent, hard work and dedication of those involved in their running.

Reflecting the different types of projects that benefit from Lottery funding, awards are made under the following categories:

- Best Environment Project.

- Best Education Project.
- Best Arts Project.
- Best Heritage Project.
- Best Sports Project.
- The Woman Award for Best Charity/Voluntary Project.
- Best Health Project.

Winners will receive a cash prize of £2,000 and will be determined by a public vote featured in a special BBC1 television show in the autumn. In addition, projects reaching the short-list stage will be showcased in local and national media, enabling them to share their success with people across the UK.

The awards are open to anyone, individually or as part of a group, who has successfully been awarded and used Lottery funding for any type and size of project, which has benefited UK residents.

Entries to the 2010 round of awards can be submitted from 11 January 2010. Details can be found at <http://www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/awards/>

CLOSURE OF CENTRAL CHEQUE CLEARING

In December 2009, the Payments Council Board agreed to set a target date of 31st October 2018 to close the central cheque clearing. Cheque use is in long-term, terminal decline. The Payments Council was faced with the choice of either managing the decline to ensure that personal and business cheque users have alternatives easily available to them; or to stand back and let the decline take its course. It has decided that its active involvement can help prevent confusion and deliver cheque alternatives that are acceptable to cheque users.

The Payments Council wants to ensure that consumers and

businesses are not left high and dry when the closure of the clearing occurs.

Over the next nine years the Payments Council will seek to promote and explain existing alternatives; and where innovation and new options are required to ensure that they are put in place. Although cheque use has been in decline since 1990, and has fallen by 40% over the last five years, there are still plenty of situations where cheques are used extensively. These include payments between individuals, and payments to sole traders, small businesses, clubs, charities and schools.

The payments industry has to rise to the challenge of finding easy-to-use efficient alternatives for these payments and to ensure that they are easily accessible and well understood by cheque users. The goal is to ensure that by 2018 there is no scenario where customers, individuals or businesses, still need to use a cheque. The Board will be especially concerned that the needs of elderly and vulnerable people are met. The next step is to identify targets which the Council can measure progress against. It will undertake a full review in 2016 before any final decision is taken.

We will continue to keep you informed as information becomes available on this major change

CHESHIRE VILLAGE HALLS FORUM

Macclesfield [Morton Hall] Community Centre

Wednesday 17 February 2009

7:30 pm

Macclesfield [Morton Hall] Community Centre is a community building that was taken into community ownership some 4 years ago. This has

saved a community building that may well have closed. We will hear how this transformation took place.

The Regulatory Reform (*Fire Safety*) Order 2005 (FSO) came into effect in October 2006 and changed the way management committees look after fire safety for the hall and the people who use it. This forum is to ensure that we are up to date with the requirements of the order.

If you have any ideas of topics for future meetings or if your hall is willing to host one of the future Forum meeting please ring Cheshire Community Action (01606) 881760

Invitations with map will be sent out separately to every hall in Cheshire. This letter will include the reply coupon so that we can advise the hall of the numbers attending. If you want any further details contact your Village Halls Advisers, Jim Bradley or James Cartledge on 01606 881760 or email

jim.bradley@cheshireaction.org.uk. We look forward to seeing you at Macclesfield [Morton Hall] Community Centre.

SPORTSMATCH

Sport England's Sportsmatch programme makes awards to not-for-profit organisations running projects at a community level which meet one or both of Sport England's objectives of Grow or Sustain. This is done through matching eligible sponsorship pound for pound, up to a maximum value of £100,000.

Sportsmatch opened for applications from 21st December 2009 for projects that will be delivered in the 2010/11 financial year.

Sportsmatch often receive more funding applications than they have budget to support so it is recommended that you read all the information available on their website <http://www.sportengland.org/>

funding/sportsmatch.aspx to give your application the greatest chance of success.

How does it work?

Sportsmatch supports formally constituted not-for-profit organisations and statutory bodies. This might include sports clubs, voluntary organisations, local authorities, schools, universities or national governing bodies of sport.

If a sponsor gives £10,000 to its local rugby club to organise new coaching opportunities in the community, we could match that with a grant of £10,000 - thereby doubling the amount of money available to the club. We can match sponsorship which has been given by an eligible company, trust, charity, or private individual. Sponsorship contributions can be either cash or in-kind, but in-kind sponsorship cannot consist of more than 50% of your total sponsorship amount. Projects can be supported by a maximum of five sponsors. If you need any further advice please phone the Funding Helpline on 08458 508 508

National Village Halls Survey 2009

The National Village Halls Survey 2009 is the third comprehensive survey of rural community buildings undertaken by ACRE. There have been 2 previous surveys carried out in 1988 and 1998. The forms for the 2009 survey were posted out to around 9,800 community buildings in England, 425 of which are in Cheshire giving 32 responses resulting in a 7.5% return in completed surveys to ACRE.

Community Buildings have always been traditionally owned and managed by the rural communities in which they serve. These buildings have been a hub of rural community life often providing a key facilities, activities and services which would otherwise not be

provided.

Rural Community buildings are an important focal point for local communities, but running them can be a challenge. Most of the community buildings in Cheshire are sustainably run by volunteer committees. 65% of community buildings in Cheshire are owned freehold by local community groups and 88% are registered charities.

Some of the key findings from the report highlight the dependence on fundraising and grant support.

59% of village halls are the only existing community building in that settlement and 97% of which are run by representatives of the user groups that use the village halls.

Only 3% of the village halls in Cheshire are run by the Parish Councils in which they are situated. However this could increase as 90% of village hall management committees are struggling to recruit new members.

88% of the village halls in Cheshire are currently registered charities

Problem areas include.

23% of village halls rely on fundraising and grants to cover the running costs of the building.

75% of halls struggle to raise the necessary funds in order to carry out improvements to the building.

90% of village halls in Cheshire have indicated that there is a lack of financial support available.

Village halls do impact on the rural economy of Cheshire by employing a variety of part-time staff at the hall. Jobs include caretakers, booking secretary, administration staff and treasurers. On average each village hall provides the foundations for 7 further jobs such as nursery nurses, sports/fitness coaches.

Successful.



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

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VILLAGE HALL ADVISERS

With the commencement of the 'Strengthening Rural Services in Cheshire and Warrington' project funded by the Big Lottery Fund you now have a choice of 2 advisers to contact.



james.cartledge@cheshireaction.org.uk

or

jim.bradley@cheshireaction.org.uk



If your hall has not received a membership renewal form with this newsletter, please contact an adviser and we will email a copy

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

"Life is what happens to you when you are busy making other plans."

John Lennon