

This is a Newsletter for members of Community Hall Committees. We would be grateful if Hall Secretaries could endeavour to circulate the Newsletter to their fellow Committee Members. You may like to use the circulation box provided.

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Scottish and Southern Energy

The Resilient Communities Fund was established as a two year programme to support communities to prepare for future emergency weather events. The fund was focused on projects which help vulnerable or isolated people living in the Scottish and Southern Electricity network area.

SSE recognises the success of the fund and are reviewing if there will be any legacy funding to support communities with resilience. Oxfordshire was awarded funding for a great many projects e.g. installation of defibrillators, flood defences and generators, further information on this will be available in early 2017 so keep checking website for updates <https://www.ssepd.co.uk/Resiliencefund/>

Community Business Bright Ideas Fund

The Community Business Bright Ideas Fund aims to give your community group the support and tools to start setting up your community business. It will also give your group the early stage finance that enable you to carry out consultation with local people and feasibility studies to develop a community business idea the community wants and needs.

A programme of support and grants of up to £20,000 is available to develop your community business idea.

For further information about the fund criteria, application process and FAQs, visit <http://www.thepowertochange.org.uk/funding/grants/community-business-bright-ideas/>

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/>

Free Posters - Taking Action to Increase Energy Efficiency

TOE2 has now provided grants to over 130 community buildings to carry out an energy audit as part of the ENRICH (Energy Reduction in Community Halls) programme. We are now in the final year of this programme, and want to celebrate what has been achieved and inspire more people to consider improving energy efficiency in their own homes. TOE2 is very grateful to the Patsy Wood Trust for supporting this programme for the last four years. Through EIE's bespoke energy audits and TOE2 grants to support energy efficient solutions, significant steps have been taken to improve the energy efficiency of the county's community buildings. As this programme of work comes to an end we want to celebrate the achievements made by management committees across the county, making your community building more energy efficient, more welcoming to your users and cheaper to run. You will no doubt be pleased with the energy efficiency measures you have carried out and we would like to celebrate what you have achieved and help you to share good energy practice with your local community.

We are offering an eye-catching full colour poster to display in your community building, **free of charge** and unique to your own building, to let your community know about the ways you have improved energy performance. We know that the energy audit helped you to implement a range of actions to increase your hall's energy efficiency, and the poster will highlight the actions you have taken. The poster will be a laminated A3 size and landscape.

This offer is available for a limited time and on a first come first served basis. If you would like to celebrate and share your actions with your community please contact Admin@trustforoxfordshire.org.uk or 01865 407003.

Britain on Film on Tour

Britain on Film on Tour is a brand new series of archive film programmes. Working with the British Film Institute, they are now able to make available extraordinary treasures from film archives across the UK, available to the British public for the first time. After one of the largest pieces of film preservation and restoration ever undertaken, Britain on Film on Tour reveals new and unseen stories from as early as 1897. Screenings are aimed predominantly at community and voluntary groups where audiences of all ages will have the opportunity to enjoy the films together. In this context, village halls and other community venues are being encouraged to book one or all of the six films for a substantially reduced fee, less than a quarter of the commercial rate. See the link below for full details: <http://www.independentcinemaoffice.org.uk/films/britainonfilm>

National Minimum Wage

National Minimum Wage rates changed on 1st October in line with recommendations from the Low Pay Commission.

For workers who are aged at least 21 years but under 25 increases from £6.70 to **£6.95** an hour.

For workers who are at least 18 years but under 21 increases from £5.30 to **£5.55** an hour.

16 and 17 year olds will see their hourly rate increase from £3.87 to **£4.00** whilst apprentices on registered apprenticeships will earn at least **£3.40** an hour, up from £3.30.

The National Living Wage which is the minimum wage rate for workers over the age of 25 years, will be unaffected by the changes this month and will remain at its initial rate of **£7.20** an hour.

Age range	New £ rate per hour
25 and over	£7.20
21 to under 25 years	£6.95
18 to under 21 years	£5.55
16 and 17	£4.00
Apprentices	£3.40

The rates will be reviewed again in April 2017 and thereafter every April to bring Minimum Wage rate changes in line with other statutory payment rates.

PAT Testing Workshop

Due to the success of three Portable Appliance Testing workshops led by [Quick Test](#), additional dates are being organised to carry further workshops next year.

If you would be interested in attending or require any further information, please contact [Lynne](#). The cost to attend the workshop is £65.00 + VAT for members of CFO and £85.00 + VAT for non-members.

CFO have bought a PAT Testing microPAT Package which can be hired out for £20.00/week + VAT for those who have attended the course.

Local Area Meetings

Many thanks to all those who attended the four local area meetings held during October, one in each district council, held at Finstock, Warborough, Bucknell and Little Coxwell.

All meetings led to useful discussions covering many topics and gave the opportunity for anyone involved in their local community building to come together to look around other halls, exchange thoughts and ideas and take away some useful tips and information sheets.

During the evening hand-outs were distributed on:-

- Insurance – Why choose Insure your Village Hall?
- Top tips for running an effective management committee
- Getting more people involved
- Sample poster to encourage more people to join hall committee

Please contact [Lynne](#) if you wish to receive a copy of any of the above.

CONGRATULATIONS to Letcombe Regis Village Hall

Saturday 15 October 2016 saw the official opening of the new Village Hall in Letcombe Regis. Once the design had been agreed a full planning application was submitted. The final design was put out to tender in 2013 and Pinelog was chosen as contractor to carry out the complete project once all funding was secure. Renewable technologies were installed where possible including, a 10KW solar panel, air source heat pumps, hot water and underfloor heating.

Further details about the project can be found [Letcombe Regis Case Study](#)

Rural Community Buildings Loan Fund

If you are considering undertaking a project, just starting work or halfway through and you need a little more funding then it would be worth considering a loan from the Rural Community Buildings Loan Fund. There is an easy to complete application form, low interest rate and a flexible repayment programme. For further information, contact [Lynne](#).

Recommend a professional

CFO receives 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 [Lynne](#).

Utility Aid

CFO are working in partnership with the energy switching company Utility Aid, to offer premises owned, managed by charities or not for profit organisations, the opportunity to achieve significant savings on your existing energy tariff.

In order to take advantage of this opportunity, all you have to do is fill in the Letter of Authority (attached with this newsletter) and return it to [Lynne](#) at CFO.

This letter of authority allows UA to check the tariff your hall is on, check your energy use and make recommendations *all free of charge, confidential and with no obligation to switch*.

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 probono 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, such as those related to governing documents, land registration and transfer, charitable status, holding trustees etc. please send them to me, together with any relevant documentation. I will then forward these to ACRE who will contact BWB on your behalf.

Insurance – Underinsurance a growing concern

Enclosed is the latest insurance article about underinsurance produced by 'Insure Your Village Hall' which you might find of interest.

Wanted

Piddington Village Hall are looking for any surplus chairs anyone might have with arms, please contact Chris Weavers specman53@yahoo.com if you can assist.

Email Addresses

If you are no longer the contact for your hall, please inform [Lynne](#) in order that CFO database can be amended to the correct contact person. We encourage the contact person to circulate these mailings to all other committee members.

Now's the time to say goodbye.....

You may already be aware that I will be retiring from CFO on 23 December, after working for the organisation for 13 years.

I have really enjoyed working with you all. I have made many friends across the county and shall miss our conversations, passing on advice, meeting many of you on site visits, training events or at the network meetings.

My successor is Tessa Hall, who I know you will all welcome and she will continue the role of Community Halls Adviser. Thank you all for all your hard work, to provide and manage your hall for the benefit of your community.

I wish you and your fellow committee members the very best of luck for the future, and may even see some of you again when attending events at local community halls around Oxfordshire, or even at my leaving party at Freeland Village Hall on 8 December. Please contact [Sue Hunt](#) if you require further details.

Lynne Newin
Community Halls Adviser
November 2016

CFO's Community Buildings Adviser, Lynne Newin,
advises and supports village halls throughout the county.
01865 883488 lynne.newin@communityfirstoxon.org

CFO's Community Halls Advisory Service is supported by your hall being a member of our organisation, a grant from Cherwell District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council.

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