

**The Government has launched a £3 million fund to improve Village halls and help connect rural communities across the UK.**

The long-awaited funding that was announced in the Autumn budget 2018 is here.

Speaking at the launch, Hosted by Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire, Minister for Rural Affairs Lord Gardiner said:

“Village Halls are the cornerstone of our rural communities. They provide vital spaces and facilities for people across the country-from fitness and social activity through to healthcare and education. I am delighted to launch officially this £3 million grant scheme for village halls, supporting these important hubs for our local communities.”

The grant fund is being managed by ACRE on behalf of Defra with support from the ACRE Network. The grant aims to help fund the updating and refurbishment of village halls so that they are fit for purpose and provide activities which seek to achieve one or more of the following outcomes for their communities:

•Improved health and wellbeing/reduction in loneliness

•Demonstrates a positive impact on the environment

•Supports the local rural economy

There will be greater emphasis given to applications who have already secured most of the funding.

There is 3M available nationally. The grant will find up to 20% of eligible costs, with a minimum grant of £10,000 and a maximum of £75,000 payable.

 There is a two-stage process to the funding. To begin with you need to complete an online application form on the ACRE Website which can be found at www.acre.org.uk. The second stage is the submission of a full application at any time before March 31st, 2020 or until it is announced that the Fund is fully committed.

**The following organisations can apply:**

Registered Charities • Charitable Trusts • Charitable Incorporated Organisations • Community Associations which are registered Charities • Multi-purpose Church Halls and Scout and Guide buildings are also eligible where they are open for the whole community, there is no alternative village hall in situ, they are not single use and they are clearly advertised as multi- purpose • Charitable Companies

Please click on the link below for more information. Please note that a greater emphasis will be given to applicants who have already secured most of their funding.

<http://acre.org.uk/our-work/village-hall-improvement-grant%20fund>

Tessa Hall April 2019