

Strategy for Supporting Community Buildings

Rural Access Partnership

2010-2015



Sustainable Communities Directorate
Herefordshire Council

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1.0 Introduction

Within Herefordshire, there are at least 150 community buildings in current use, as well as other buildings which may be available for community use, such as churches, chapels and other faith buildings, serving a population of 178,400¹. These community buildings provide an essential life-line to people living in isolated rural areas, particularly those who are isolated and most disadvantaged by not having access to services. Not only do they provide a base for social, cultural and recreational activity but increasingly they are used to accommodate essential rural services such as, the village shop or post office, as well as outposts for the delivery of public services. There is a similar diversity in the range of activities provided within them. There are many benefits that accrue from these activities, such as improved community cohesion, delivery of services, promotion of health and welfare, education and training and reduction in anti-social behaviour. They are often the last remaining community facility left in these areas. However, it must be recognised that the suitability of these buildings to be used by the community varies greatly, and in some cases requires capital investment to make them suitable for community use.

Primarily, the facilities are owned, managed and maintained by volunteer management committees, although some employ managers where this is needed and can be afforded. Statutory service providers own very few such facilities, especially in rural areas. Whilst, there are examples where buildings are leased from the Council, (either as stand alone community facilities or attached/incorporated within Council facilities, such as schools), the focus of its support for community buildings is through its role as enabler (grant funding for capital works, advice provision – either directly or through funding of advice provision and promotion) as well as a user of such facilities. In the main, community buildings are independent of public service providers and any engagement (now and in the future) is undertaken through partnership working.

In order to achieve clarity about the scope and purpose of this strategy, community buildings will be defined as any building which is managed by a voluntary management committee, run for public benefit, open to the wider community and where community led activities for community benefit take place. It includes almost all village and community halls, community centres, church halls and other faith-based buildings open to the wider community, but excludes specialist facilities such as leisure centres and uniformed group halls.

¹ Source – State of Herefordshire Report 2009

2.0 Vision

The vision statement for the Strategy is:-

To direct resources and shape policy to support community buildings in Herefordshire so they are fit for purpose, economically, socially and environmentally sustainable and able to adapt to the needs of the communities they serve.

To meet this vision we will:

- Identify and prioritise support for those communities facing the biggest challenge in maintaining their buildings and offering generic services either because of the size of the communities or the condition of their buildings;
- Create and improve suitable multi-use space in community facilities in those areas identified as gap areas in terms of local delivery of central services and in light of service development priorities identified through the community led planning process;
- Encourage and facilitate community building committees in diversifying income generation through the range of functions hosted within their buildings to include activities that will underpin the economic health of their communities e.g. post offices, shops, local markets, business start up units;
- Encourage, support and advise, on a proactive basis, hall committees seeking to enhance the social, economic and environmental sustainability of their buildings.
- Encourage and support networking within and between communities which lead to the sharing of skills and expertise and the growth of self reliance.

The outcomes to be achieved will be:-

1. Co-ordinated support for sustainable community buildings
2. Effective management of community buildings, with well informed management committees
3. Community buildings supported to fulfil a greater role in the delivery of services and activities which reflect the needs of the communities they serve
4. Greater awareness and increased usage by partners of community buildings for the delivery of services and activities.

3.0 Purpose

The Rural Access Partnership² recognises that community buildings have the scope to deliver on a number of levels in rural communities: community engagement and empowerment, building social capital and community cohesion, and the delivery of services provided by the public, private or voluntary and community sectors. This Strategy captures the current state and use of community buildings, as well as the potential for the future, and what issues need

² Purpose - To provide a co-ordinated strategic direction to improving access to services in Herefordshire, identifying and managing strategic links between access to services initiatives across partnership groups, organisations, sectors and other networks.

to be addressed to ensure such buildings are valued resources within communities. The Strategy has the following objectives:

- To understand and reflect the current opportunities, policies and funding that are driving the local, regional and national agenda regarding community buildings;
- To map community buildings across the county and identify any geographical gaps;
- To identify partners' current and likely future support to community buildings. 'Support' in this context relates to:
 - policy (including asset transfer);
 - use of current buildings to deliver services for the local community;
 - use of current buildings for partners' own internal requirements, such as meetings or training;
 - financial support (whether direct or indirect);
 - promotion of community buildings as venues for activities and services;
- To understand the existing advice provided by community building advisors and identify where there are any gaps and opportunities;
- To understand what factors make a viable and sustainable community building which serves the needs of its community;
- To identify any models of good practice and partnership working in Herefordshire or elsewhere in the country in terms of partnership support for community buildings; **(See Appendix F)**
- To make an initial assessment of the condition of community halls, and how far they are 'fit for purpose'.

4.0 Methodology

The information used to inform this Strategy was gathered through the following mechanisms:

Partner interviews: with staff members from partner organisations regarding the delivery of services; with staff from partner organisations who give advice; and with community building committees.

Mapping: desk-based research to identify the National, Regional and Local context.

Best Practice Research: desk research identified good practice in relation to community buildings across the UK in conjunction with knowledge gleaned from existing community building advisors.

This research and consultation process has relied on the time and contribution from the strategic partners, organisations, community building committee representatives – all of which have assisted in shaping this Strategy. **Appendix G** gives a full list of acknowledgements.

5.0 Context

The development of this Strategy is driven by a need to ensure more effective use of community buildings and to ensure that they are sustainable³ and fit for purpose.

This fits with creating a sense of place for communities within Herefordshire. The Strategy supports the following national performance indicators:

- LAA local indicator – Access to key services;
- NI1 - Community Cohesion (% of people who believe that people from different backgrounds get on well in their local area);
- NI2 – Belonging to immediate neighbourhood;
- NI3 – Civic participation in the local area;
- NI5 – Satisfied with the local community/area as a place to live;
- NI6 – Participation in regular volunteering;
- NI7 – Environment for a thriving Third Sector.

The delivery of services within communities should also contribute to the reduction in carbon emissions - NI186 per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in Local Authority Area.

The Rural Access Partnership is responsible for the strategy, with progress and updates being provided to the Herefordshire Community Development Partnership. Both Partnerships report into the Stronger Communities Policy and Delivery Group and thus provide the mechanism for reporting to the Herefordshire Partnership Board and Management Group.

It is worth recognising at this point that there is in existence a strong ethos of partnership working together with a good level of support to communities of Herefordshire, including:-

- An accessible community buildings advice service covering all aspects of running community buildings, offering site visits as required and detailed support with

³ Sustainable in the context of this document refers to environmentally, socially and economically

funding bids; (provided by a community building advisor from Community First through a service level agreement with Herefordshire Council)

- A web based community buildings database promoting the halls in the county - useful both for potential hirers of facilities and professionals wishing to undertake their services in a particular locality; (run by Herefordshire Council)
- Well co-ordinated support for churches seeking to open their buildings to wider community use; (provided by the Hereford Diocese)
- Locally based face to face advice sessions offering advice and opportunities for management committees to meet and liaise with other hall committees in their area; (provided by community building advisor from Community First)
- Mechanisms for improving the supportive linkage between parish councils and their local community buildings; (provided by community building advisor from Community First in liaison with Herefordshire Association of Local Councils)
- Local knowledge of the age and state of all community buildings that could be developed to provide an accurate and detailed facilities profile to inform a targeted intervention programme; (held by community building advisor from Community First and Council Property Services)
- Grants to support the development and refurbishment of community buildings, currently on hold pending the completion of this document; (administered by the Delegated Grants & Programmes Team on behalf of the Community Development Team at Herefordshire Council)
- A clear policy on when the Council will consider transfer of its assets for community benefit. (supported by Herefordshire Council's Asset Management and Property Services Team and the Community Development Team)
- Community Buildings Workers Group (supported by Herefordshire Council's Regeneration Programmes Team)

This Strategy seeks to build on this good practice and identify ways to improve co-ordinated support to deliver thriving communities.

6.0 The Policy Context and Drivers for supporting Community Buildings in Herefordshire

Appendix A covers a wide range of strategies and policies at a national, regional and local level that supports the importance and role of community buildings in the context of social and service delivery.

The publication of the Quirk Review of Community Management and Ownership of Public Assets in 2007, was influential in encouraging public sector organisations, especially local authorities, to consider the transfer of their assets to community ownership and management to realise social or community benefits. In response, Herefordshire Council has developed an approach for Community Asset Transfer, in consultation with third sector partners, with a number of transfers being considered under the policy. As part of the process, community organisations are now required to complete a standard business plan to ensure consistency, transparency and to provide the sufficient detail to enable decisions on viability and sustainability to be made.

Case Study – Grange Court, Leominster

This Grade II* listed building, which housed a small number of Herefordshire Council staff, was identified as being ripe for development and advancement under the ownership of the Leominster Area Regeneration Company (LARC) as part of their exit strategy from Market Towns Partnership Funding.



Grange Court will be transferred from Council ownership to Leominster Area Regeneration Company (LARC) on practical completion. LARC is a local cross sector partnership encompassing representation from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors, with the key objective of regenerating the Leominster area and has been identified by Herefordshire Council to be a suitable custodian for Grange Court. The building is therefore the subject of a Community Assets Transfer arrangement to be taken over by LARC for a cost of £1. The arrangement is subject to funding, which has now been secured for the overall refurbishment project at a cost of around £2.8m, with the capital works to be completed prior to the transfer to LARC. Funding for the scheme has come from the Community Assets Transfer Fund (£1 million secured by Herefordshire Council), the Rural Development Programme for England (£750,000 secured by Herefordshire Council, and Community Builders Fund (£1 million secured by LARC).

LARC will run the building as a multi-use centre, tourist attraction and educational resource, as well as having lettable office and meeting space for businesses and community and voluntary organisations. The building will be remodelled to improve and extend access, create interpretation and showcasing space, and provide shared space for other users. It is anticipated that the office and meeting space will generate income for LARC to support the organisation in the medium and long term, so that it can continue to undertake community projects in Leominster and the surrounding area. There will be opportunities for visitors, both local and from elsewhere; to see the building and explore its heritage and history, and it will be a venue for talks, events and activities in the town. Leominster suffers from a lack of usefully sized community meeting spaces and lettable office space suitable for voluntary organisations, and the refurbishment of Grange Court presents an opportunity to rectify this.

The coalition government is continuing to promote this approach through its “Big Society” agenda. It aims to give more power to neighbourhoods and communities, to generate more action at a local level, with more freedom to do things the way they want. Many rural communities are already delivering this agenda, with village halls under local ownership, reflecting a culture of self reliance. Service providers and community groups in rural areas have significant experience already of working in partnership to help support and deliver local services.

Co-location of organisations and service delivery is also another key driver. Herefordshire’s emerging policy on locality working will enable local agencies, whether public or third sector to indentify ways of delivering services in a joined up and integrated way, which not only delivers better outcomes but may lead to a rationalisation of assets. This may have an impact on community buildings: firstly, they may be well placed to provide a base for delivery of services in rural areas; and secondly, the rationalisation of public sector assets may present opportunities for community asset transfer, although given the financial climate, pressure to maximise capital through the sale of assets may preclude this. If community buildings are to be used for the delivery of services, they will need to be accessible to local people. Broadband connectivity may also be an issue for service providers.

As communities seek to become more self-reliant and as public sector funding diminishes, the role of Parish Councils, in the delivery of local services and the meeting of identified needs of local communities, will significantly increase. For community buildings, this means that there will be opportunities for improved partnership working with community halls to secure funding for capital improvements and service delivery as well as ongoing support funding for the running of the buildings.

Case Study - St Peters, Peterchurch, Herefordshire

St Peter’s is an impressive 12th Century Grade 1 listed building which stands in the small village of Peterchurch situated in the Golden Valley in South West Herefordshire. The area is very rural with many families feeling isolated with few opportunities and a lack of access to services. Herefordshire Council was looking for ways to deliver Children and Young People’s Directorate in the area when they approached the Diocese of Hereford and expressed an interest in St Peter’s. A vision developed, and the whole community backed the idea of using the church for a variety of activities. The project to refurbish the interior involved freeing up space by removing the pews, installing environmentally friendly under floor heating, a lift, lighting, toilets, kitchen, consulting room and a new mezzanine floor with access into the bell tower to provide an additional room. The project was finished at the end of 2009 and is an exemplar of extended church use and partnership working. The project costs totalled £450k including all fees and the cost of equipment.

Golden Valley Children's Centre will use the centre, now known as St Peters Church Centre for 14 hours a week as part of its service delivery to this area of the county. This includes family support, healthy eating sessions, skill building and Jobcentreplus and benefits. The library, located in the bell ringing chamber in the tower, operates under a lease because it is a permanent feature, while the Children and Young People's Directorate can be covered by a licence.



The project has met several objectives and addressed several needs of the Peterchurch Community: a long term use for an underused community facility and resource, ensured the sustainability of a major heritage building now in regular daily use, helped address the issue of access, increased service delivery from the church centre, created a greater sense of community cohesion and people working together to address their own needs, improved access to cultural activities through the facility provided in a Library and an improved performance space, and improved quality of life for families and young children.

7.0 Funding Opportunities

There are a number of funding opportunities available to support the enhancement and adaptations of community buildings ranging from national to local. Below are a couple of examples only as this is an ever changing picture.

The Council holds an annual grant pot of £42,000 which is to be reviewed as a result of developing this strategy. The Big Lottery are launching their Community Buildings Programme through the Reaching Communities programme in the autumn of 2010. This fund supports the creation and improvement of facilities in community buildings. It offers maximum grants of £500,000 and expects to average the grants at nearer £250,000. The annual budget is £100m. In addition, there are currently a number of opportunities to support energy efficiency measures which is a particular area of need for the majority of community buildings in Herefordshire.

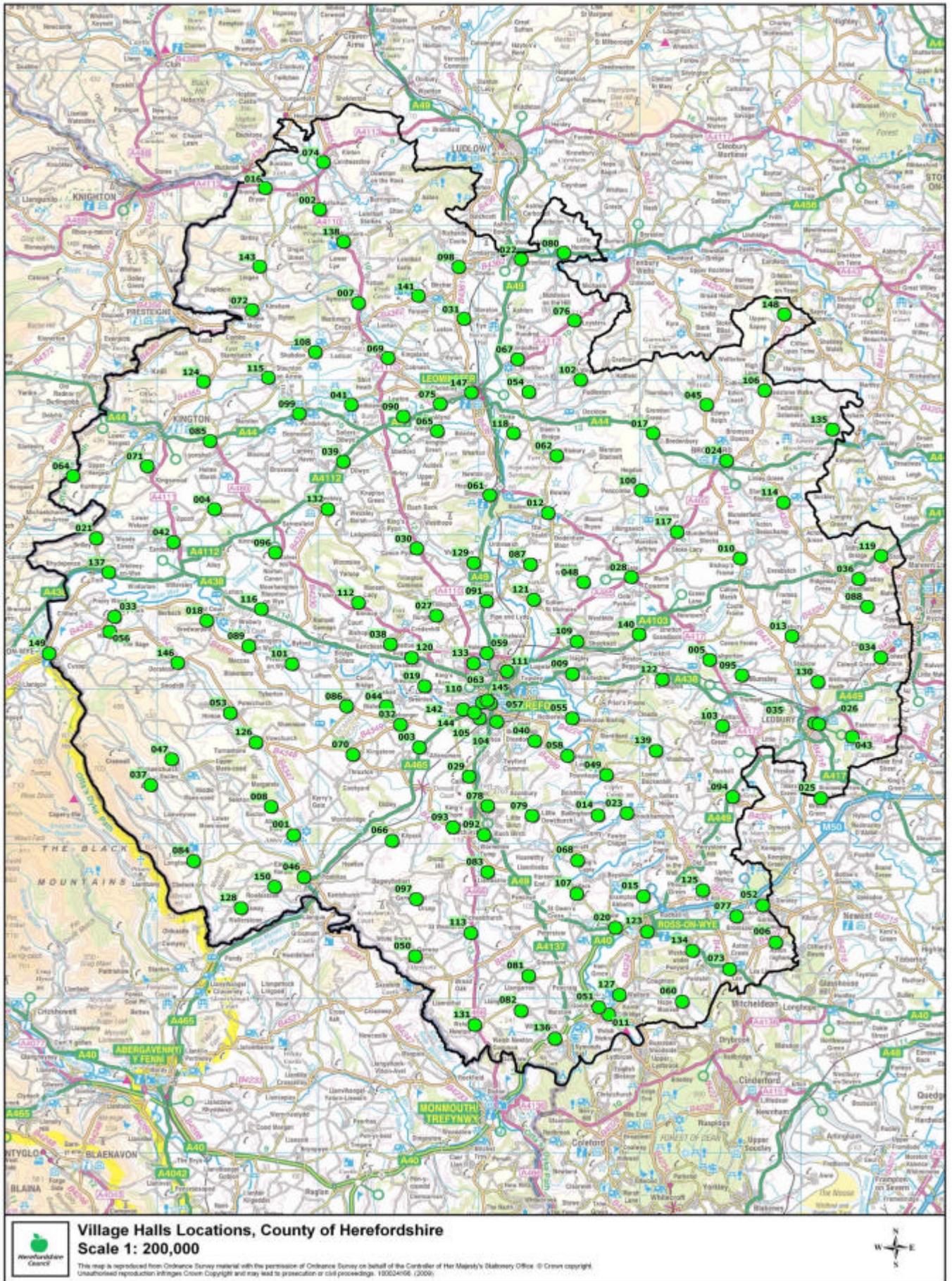
In addition to grants, there are opportunities for loans, from organisations such as ACRE as well as charitable banks. The Council has also recently approved the offer of a loan to a community organisation, which would have otherwise been unable to proceed with the redevelopment of its facility, due to retrospective nature of the external funding it had secured.

Community buildings are also well able to raise their own funds through self-help. Marketing and promotion of their facility, together with being business like in what they can offer to those interested in booking their facility, will increase income. Support for marketing and promotion has been recognised as a training recommendation. Additionally, by working in close partnership with their parish council, community hall committees can benefit by not having to pay VAT on goods and services if the parish council undertake the work. Parish Councils have the power to undertake projects on any community organisation's behalf as long as the audit trail clearly shows the full engagement of the parish council by way of offers, quotes, minutes of meeting's, etc and then the clear notification of the decision to 'gift' the work back to the community.

8.0 Geographical map of community building locations

Overleaf is a map depicting the locations of community buildings in Herefordshire together with the key to the map to interpret the location of the buildings contained within the Council's community halls database. One of the actions recommended from this Strategy is to understand the geographical location of community buildings and identify gaps. Without any further analysis this seems to show that there is good coverage of halls in the rural areas. However, it may be that not all halls are able to meet the service delivery needs of the communities they serve.

There is anecdotal evidence that the north of Hereford City is not well provided for. The Hereford City Plan, currently under development will provide more detailed evidence on the need and demand for community facilities across the City.



Key to the county map of community halls

ID	HALL NAME	ID	HALL NAME
1	Abbeydore Village Hall	50	Garway Village Hall
2	Adforton Church Community Hall	53	Golden Valley Community Centre
3	Allensmore Parish Hall	51	Goodrich Village Hall
4	Almeley Village Hall	52	Gorsley Village Hall
5	Ashperton Village Hall	54	Hamnish Village Hall
6	Aston Ingham Village Hall	55	Hampton Bishop Village Hall
7	Aymestrey Village Hall	56	Hardwicke Village Hall
8	Bacton Village Hall	57	Hinton Community Centre
14	Ballingham Old School Hall (BOSH)	58	Holme Lacy Village Hall
9	Bartestree Village Hall	59	Holmer Parish Centre
110	Belmont Community Centre	60	Hope Mansell Village Hall
10	Bishops Frome Village Centre	61	Hope-u-Dinmore Village Hall
11	Bishopswood Village Hall	62	Humber Village Hall
12	Bodenham Village Hall	63	Hunderton & Belmont Community Hall
13	Bosbury Parish Hall	64	Huntington Village Hall
15	Brampton Abbots Village Hall	65	Ivington Village Trust
16	Brampton Bryan Parish Hall	66	Kilpeck & Dist Village Hall
17	Bredenbury Parish Hall	67	Kimbolton Village Hall
18	Bredwardine Village Hall	145	Kindle Centre
19	Breinton Village Hall	68	Kings Caple Village
20	Bridstow Village Hall	69	Kingsland Coronation Hall
21	Brilley Parish Hall	70	Kingstone Village Hall
22	Brimfield Village Hall	71	Kingswood Village Hall
23	Brockhampton Parish Hall	72	Kinsham - The Arkwright Hall
24	Bromyard Public Hall	73	Lea Village Hall
25	Broomsgreen, Donnington & Ryton Village Hall	35	Ledbury Community Hall
26	Burgage Hall	74	Leintwardine Village Hall & Comm Ctr
27	Burghill Village Hall	75	Leominster Community Centre
28	Burley Gate Village Hall	76	Leysters & Middleton V H
29	Callow Village Hall	143	Lingen Village Hall
30	Canon Pyon Parish Hall	77	Linton Village Hall
31	Cawley Hall	147	Lion Ballroom
32	Clehonger Village Hall	78	Little Birch & Kingsthorpe VH
33	Clifford Community Centre	79	Little Dewchurch Village Hall
34	Colwall Village Hall	80	Little Hereford Village Hall
36	Cradley Village Hall	81	Llangarron Village Hall
37	Craswell Village Hall	82	Llangrove Village Hall
38	Credenhill Community Hall	83	Llanwarne Village Hall
149	Cusop Village Hall	84	Longtown Village Hall
39	Dilwyn Cedar Hall	85	Lyonshall Memorial Hall
40	Dinedor Village Hall	86	Madley Village Hall
146	Dorstone Village Hall	112	Mansel Lacy Community Hall
41	Eardisland Village Hall	87	Marden Community Centre
42	Eardisley Village Hall	88	Mathon Village Hall
43	Eastnor Village Hall	89	Moccas Village Hall
ID	HALL NAME	ID	HALL NAME

44	Eaton Bishop Village Hall	90	Monkland Village Hall
45	Edwyn Ralph Village Hall	91	Moreton-on-Lugg Village Hall
47	Escleyside Hall	92	Much Birch Community Hall
46	Ewyas Harold Memorial Hall	93	Much Dewchurch Memorial Hall
48	Felton & Preston Wynne VH	94	Much Marcle Village Hall
49	Fownhope New Memorial Hall	95	Munsley W I Hall
142	Northolme Community Centre	119	Storrige Village Hall
96	Norton Canon Village Hall	120	Stretton Sugwas Village Hall
97	Orcop Village Hall	121	Sutton St Nicholas Community Ctr
98	Orleton Village Hall	122	Tarrington Lady Emily Community Hall
99	Pembridge Village Hall	123	The Larruperz Centre
100	Pencombe Parish Hall	124	Titley Village Hall
101	Preston-on-Wye Village Hall	148	Upper Sapey (Edith Silcock Memorial) Village Hall
102	Pudleston Village Hall	125	Upton Bishop Millennium Hall
103	Putley Village Hall	126	Vowchurch & Turnastone M Hall
104	Putson Comm Assoc Ltd Saxon Hall	127	Walford Village Hall
105	Redhill Residents Assoc	128	Walterstone Village Hall
150	Rowlestone Village Hall	129	Wellington Community Assoc
106	Saltmarshe Village Hall	130	Wellington Heath Memorial Hall
107	Sellack Village Hall	131	Welsh Newton Village Hall
108	Shobdon Village Hall Committee	132	Weobley Village Hall
109	Smith Memorial Hall Withington	133	Westfields Village Hall
111	St Barnabas Church Centre	134	Weston under Penyard Village Hall
144	St Francis Initiative Community Centre	135	Whitbourne Village Hall
113	St Weonards Village Hall	136	Whitchurch & Ganarew Memorial Hall
114	Stanford Bishop Village Hall	137	Whitney on Wye Village Hall
115	Staunton on Arrow Village Hall	138	Wigmore Village Hall
116	Staunton on Wye Village Hall	139	Woolhope Village Hall
117	Stoke Lacy Village Hall	140	Yarkhill Village Hall
118	Stoke Prior Village Hall	141	Yarpole Village Hall

9.0 Current Partnership support for community buildings

Appendix B identifies key staff and partners who have been interviewed as part of the development of this Strategy and the responses that they gave. The questions asked were:-

- Do you currently use community buildings to deliver services?
- Do you currently use community buildings for your own internal requirements?
- Do you give any financial or advice support to community buildings either directly or indirectly?

Of those interviewed, some services clearly have direct engagement with community buildings and for others it is more peripheral. However, the potential for increased and sustained usage is evident from the responses.

For example, both Children and Young People's Directorate and Library service hire space in St Peter's Church at Peterchurch delivering statutory services within a community building. The Library services also rents space in at least another three community buildings around the county. The PCT deliver courses across the county in community halls accounting for a spend of just under £3,000 pa and the NHS Estates Strategy identifies areas where they are exploring opportunities to deliver more outreach services such as GP's, Dentists, etc. They already provide a drop in service in Wigmore within the village hall. However, there are potential issues associated with service delivery due to Department of Health standards in buildings.

The Citizens Advice Bureaux operates out of publicly owned buildings across the county including Herefordshire Council's buildings: Town Hall, Hereford; Ryefield Centre, Ross-on-Wye; Magistrates Court, Kington; Info offices in Leominster and Herefordshire Housing owned property at Newton Farm – they are offered these premises on a peppercorn rent as they are seen as providing a vital service on behalf of the Council. They recognise that there is not always the ability to provide a presence in every part of the county but there are other ways of addressing the gap through the use of the Community Access Points, kiosks or video conferencing. As part of this research conducted to inform this strategy, it has been identified that there is a need for consistency of approach on the terms and conditions of occupancy agreements for voluntary and community sector organisations. It is therefore recommended that a standardised template is created for future use.

Interestingly, it was found that there are also parts of the county that receive other services such as the Post Office and libraries via mobile provision. Mobile provision is sometimes the only way that services can be delivered in some very rural parts of the county. It is therefore important that a suitable venue and space for those services is found. Therefore whilst the village hall itself may not be used, there may be a need to use its car park.

In Herefordshire we already have examples where schools and community buildings share space for which there is a joint use agreement. It is recognised that there is a standard template for these agreements but there are different access and management arrangements that need to be considered. Ensuring that these are addressed prior to occupation is very important.

Community halls play an important part during emergency situations. When disasters strike such as flooding or fire then the large community hall spaces are the first to be approached. There are already examples through the county where some halls are being used as emergency centre, however, it is recommended that this is explored further.

During discussions, it came to light that there are a number of initiatives that are taking place across the county that can inform how we as partners operate currently and shape activity for the future e.g.:

- No Wrong Door – restructuring of the Children and Young People’s Directorate with regard to locality team;
- Mapping of Council services and demands on those services;
- Locality assessment across the County;
- NHS Estates Strategy and areas identified;
- Place Shaping consultation on the UDP (now complete);
- Extended Schools Full Core offer;
- Third Sector Support Services Review;
- Use and adoption of Parish plans;
- Consideration of statistical information provided through State of Herefordshire Report;
- Consideration of the new government and any initiatives or opportunities.

It is clear from the strategic and policy review as well as through evidence of the interviews of partnership staff that a holistic approach to service delivery, particularly in the remoter parts of the county, is important and clearly the way forward to utilising the space available in an area.

The use of community halls in that equation is important and the aim is to encourage service providers to use community halls as an initial focal point when looking at service delivery.

10.0 Current advice support

Appendix C identifies key staff and partners who currently give advice and guidance to community buildings, the questionnaire and information.

There are currently four organisations offering community building advice and support out in the community in Herefordshire:

- Rob Grunsell, the Community Buildings Advisor for Herefordshire and Worcestershire is employed by Community First. His time in Herefordshire (13 hours per week) is paid for by a Service Level Agreement from Herefordshire Council's Community Development Service.
- Wendy Coombey, the Diocese of Hereford's Partnership and Funding Officer, covering South Shropshire as well as all of Herefordshire, gives advice and support to Church buildings and works approximately 30hrs per week in Herefordshire.
- Herefordshire Voluntary Action employs Community Development Workers who now cover the whole county. Their role is more to support new and emerging community groups that may use community buildings rather than giving specific advice on how to run halls, at which stage they would refer the group to Rob Grunsell. Approximately 17 hours per week is spent supporting this activity.
- Within the Herefordshire Council's Project Development and Funding Advice team, Dave Tristram, Project Development Officer provides a signposting service to the appropriate community building advisor rather than any direct advice provision and also facilitates the Community Building Advisor's group. He spends approximately 4 hrs per week on this, although support provided by the Project Development Team at the Council is rising, as it provides support for the community asset transfer process, where that is deemed appropriate.

There is additional support to community buildings through the Community Hall Directory which lists 150 village and community halls in Herefordshire and can be found on the Council's website, www.herefordshire.gov.uk/communityhalls. Having been operational for over a year, it is well used with 1,000 unique visitors to the site each month and with over 15,000 hits per month. For each hall the site gives a photograph, map, directions and for most halls there is

access information, facilities, details of each bookable room, regular activities held and booking contact details. The site is maintained by Delegated Grants and Programmes. In addition, the Council's Parish and Community Liaison Officer oversees the service level agreement with Community First to supply community buildings advice. Both posts provide a signposting service to the appropriate community buildings advisor noted above.

All officers agree that they work in synergy, understanding who is working with which group, sharing information and good practice and drawing on each others strengths ensuring consistency of approach and advice. It is also evident that to cover the 150 community halls and the potential for more of the County's 420 churches changing their focus, resources on the ground are spread thinly and this will continue to be an issue. In fact there is ongoing concern from the representatives of the community buildings that the respective advisors are sometimes hard to get hold of (See **Appendix D**).

The Community Buildings Advisors group operates as an information sharing and mutual support group for those staff working across Herefordshire. This group has recently extended to include the Council's Strategic Asset Manager which has brought a useful dimension to the group, particularly by way of understanding and potentially facilitating the Community Asset Transfer process.

Particular gaps in provision and recommendations for the future identified by the workers questioned were:-

- Whilst there is a good range of specialist knowledge across the whole spectrum of community buildings advice needed, there is not enough of this resource to go around, there is a need to explore how this can be increased;
- Revision of the funding criteria for the grant scheme to reflect the current situation;
- Condition survey of buildings (including car parks) to pinpoint areas of poor provision and accessibility as per the recommendation;
- Explore a loan arrangement from the Council's grant to ensure cashflow for those hall committees that are undertaking very large refurbishments;
- Explore ways of supporting any reduction in insurance for buildings – this is by far one of the biggest costs to committees;
- Intensive proactive and targeted support to halls trying to lower bills and carbon footprint and those deemed to be 'at risk';

- Encourage hall committees to be more business-like, having business plans or maintenance plans, possibly linked to the Council grant;
- Develop training events for committees that can support activities to keep them self-supporting, e.g. management of meetings, undertaking inspections and identifying maintenance items, network events, etc. For community hall management committees to develop their self help skills, there needs to be a promotion of local inter-facility networking and joined up community service provision from community buildings in the same geographic areas; and the sharing of good practice in terms of innovative income generation and running cost savings achieved through the use of efficient green heating and building insulation;
- More systematic support for developing good relations and partnership working between Village Hall Management Committees and Parish Councils;
- Continued exploration of how to make the best use of the officers we have – by providing joint training with a particular focus, e.g. business planning, joint approach to BIG lottery applications, has worked very well in the past;
- Exploration of further linkages with Community Led Planning (CLP) officers, other Community Development (CD) workers and generally try and take an improved county wide approach to developing community buildings for the good of the community. We should also ensure that we refer projects to the most appropriate officer for advice to avoid confusion and wrong advice being given;
- Exploration of accredited quality standard mechanisms.

11.0 Findings from Community Building Committees

Appendix D identifies the members of the ten management committees that were questioned as part of the process, together with their responses to the questions asked. They were randomly chosen to give a geographical representation of the county and also to reflect the different types of buildings. The halls represented by the member of the committees consulted ranged from new build to a conversion of church space. The representatives questioned from the halls were either the chair, vice-chair or secretary of the committee.

In summary, all the hall committees had received some advice and support, mostly in relation to funding advice but also increasingly energy efficiency advice. The advice received was from the organisations and staff that would be expected to give that advice which was encouraging. It also appears that the majority of the advice was of benefit although some were unable to find suitable grants for their activity.

When asked what were the biggest problems facing the committee to keep the hall sustainable the majority responded that it was mainly about keeping the committee going and engaged. It is suggested that using the volunteering channels more positively could assist with this issue. This will be followed up as an action from this Strategy.

One hall committee said that one of the problems was competition of other local community buildings offering similar facilities. Part of the criteria for the Council's grant is ensuring that activity that is grant aided does not displace activity from other facilities either directly in that area or the surrounding area.

There was an overwhelming response that ongoing advice and support from Rob Grunsell particularly, was needed as well as ongoing funding for support to refurbish facilities.

Other points that were raised which were useful for the future of community buildings were that committees should aim to continually promote and improve their facilities to keep them sustainable; that climate change needs to be taken into consideration; all halls to have a regular inspection similar to a church quinquennial inspection⁴; and explore free broadband to all community buildings to improve facilities and accommodate users to carry out training.

12.0 What makes a viable and sustainable community building and how they can be supported?

There are undoubtedly many viewpoints about what makes a sustainable community building, two which are contained within **Appendix E** highlight models of good practice which assist and inform how halls can become sustainable.

From canvassing the Community Building Advisors, the general opinion would be that to enable a community building to be sustainable they would need to consider the following points:-

1. That the hall makes sufficient annual income to cover a year's running costs which can be saved towards predictable and routine repair, maintenance and replacement needs which will not attract external funding under normal circumstances;

⁴Undertaken every 5 years, paid for by the Diocese at a fixed average cost of £506 for large church and £376 for small church.

2. That it is in weekly use on a minimum of 2 or 3 occasions; used regularly through the year by at least 4 or 5 local organisations and has at least one public event for its whole catchment community each year;
3. That the management committee has either already taken, or is planning to take, measures to reduce its running costs for heat and light; measures including upgrade of insulation, installation of either the most efficient conventional heating systems or appropriate 'Green' systems (PV, ground source, biomass, etc.);
4. That it has a committee which attracts a minimum of 5 or 6 committee members to each and every meeting; that it holds AGMs according to its constitution which includes the production of annual accounts and complies with the Charity Commission reporting;
5. That the committee shows awareness of the need to attract new members to their committee on the most inclusive basis, understanding where the gaps are in knowledge and is trying to take steps to address this need;
6. That the committee also recognises the value of the members that it already has and has the ability to retain those members as wished;
7. That the committee has either taken steps or is in the process of taking steps to ensure compliance with all the relevant legislation and regulations that apply to community buildings (Health and Safety, Fire Regulations; Insurance; public hire; licensing, etc – as advised by the Community Building Development Officer);
8. That there is consistent evidence that the committee are trying to publicise the activity programme – regular and one-off events – and the hire availability for their hall;
9. That the committee is active and well informed and undertakes regular assessment of needs to understand that the building is offering and achieving what it needs for the community which it serves;
10. That the committee is open to opportunities that the surrounding area and environment offers;
11. That the committee is open to assistance and guidance;
12. That the committee operates in a business-like manner – possessing a business plan or maintenance plan to enable the hall to plan for the future;
13. That facilities are complementary and not competing against their neighbours.

This list provides a good starting point for considering which buildings to provide advice and support to for funding bids, such as the Big Lottery.

13. Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusion

As stated in the Sustainable Community Strategy, "local communities will be more sustainable if they have access to vital services and facilities that meet their needs and community buildings form part of that offering. We are going to have to find innovative solutions to ensure access to services such as, better use and combining of community, public and private sector buildings and facilities and mobile services."

Herefordshire is already finding ways to think creatively and achieve solutions to local needs and this trend looks to continue fitting with national strategies and thinking.

Suggestions of what makes a sustainable community building also encourage a flexible approach to what the building can offer which married with direct service provision enables a mixture of regular and one-off activities to take place.

It is important that service providers, both statutory and non-statutory, look at the bigger picture when considering resources for a particular area which supports the need to adopt the localities based approach. Within the climate of decreasing budgets, it is our duty to ensure that support is targeted at the right building/venue that is fit for purpose for the delivery of the right services, be it the village hall, church, school, shop, pub, or even purpose built, but it should be undertaken with community support.

The onus has to be on a community to consider their neighbouring communities and the continued links and opportunities that working together could provide, considering the scarcity of resources both in terms of financial and volunteering time. Some halls are operating within very small communities which could make it difficult for them to be sustainable in the future, therefore, joining forces and adding value to neighbouring community's offers would be beneficial. Funders and service providers alike, would look more favourably on supporting the most appropriate resources in an area taking into consideration their location and catchment.

Recommendations

The recommendations are grouped according to the Strategy's objectives:

These recommendations will inform the actions for the next five years and are defined further in the attached Action Plan.

Policy context and drivers

1. Ensure that the work that is being undertaken as part of the new policy context, such as Big Society and locality working is informed by the findings of this Strategy and recognises the role that the use of community buildings play in developing community cohesion, social capital and co-production.

Mapping of community buildings

2. Conduct a further mapping exercise of current provision against service delivery needs. This links to the role community buildings can play in locality working.

Support to community buildings

3. Review the Council's grant programme to ensure that it adds value in terms of
 - a. sustainability of community buildings and / or
 - b. ensure accessibility of services and activities and / or,
 - c. draw in greater match funding (either through grant or loan) and / or,
 - d. test the feasibility of the improvement or development of a community building to achieve the above.
4. Develop a standard joint use agreement which should be signed by both parties prior to the opening of joint use facilities, such as schools and community buildings sharing the same building.
5. Develop a standard policy for the terms by which voluntary and community organisations are given occupancy of partner buildings.
6. Continue to explore how halls can be utilised in times of emergencies linked to existing work already undertaken with the Emergency Planning Teams.
7. Ensure that the community buildings website is maintained and promoted and that all halls are encouraged to provide information.
8. Promote community buildings as venues for outreach service delivery, including the promotion of the website to all sectors as a source of bookable venues across the county.

9. Explore the opportunities for free/reduced cost broadband to all community buildings to improve facilities and accommodate users' requirements.

Advice provision

10. Ensure that the existing level of advice provision is maintained and explore further opportunities to increase this service, linked to the third sector support services review.
11. Building on the surgery approach, encourage community building management committees to develop their self help skills, through the promotion of local inter-facility networking and the sharing of good practice in terms of innovative income generation and running cost savings achieved through the use of efficient green heating and building insulation.

Support for viable and sustainable community buildings

12. Using the points recommended by the Community Buildings Advisors outlining what makes a community building sustainable, form the basis of a checklist which will allow support and investment to be targeted at those halls in most need.

Models of good practice and partnership working

13. Promote the practical benefits of partnership working between Parish Councils and Village Hall management committees.
14. Promote the use of a full range of general and specific information and guidance materials to aid professionalism and self-help e.g. ACRE toolkit and the Crossing the Threshold toolkits.
15. Explore the development of a local quality standard system based around the suggested areas recommended to make a hall sustainable and additionally, where appropriate, support community buildings to attain accredited quality standards, such as VISIBLE and HALLMARK.

Assess the condition of community buildings

16. Develop a self-assessment tool for community buildings to use to assess the condition of their halls, looking at improvements, including those of an environmental nature which contribute to the overall sustainability of the building.
17. Explore funding for a programme of condition surveys of community buildings.

Appendix A

National, Regional, Local Strategies and Policies

National

Total Place initiative 2009

Total Place looks at how a 'whole area' approach to public services can lead to better services at less cost. It seeks to identify and avoid overlap and duplication between organisations – delivering a step change in both service improvement and efficiency at the local level as well as across Whitehall.

13 pilot areas participated, with final reports returned on 10th February 2010. A joint report between local and central partners has just been published with the Budget. Herefordshire will need to explore the learning that has taken place through this system. This will be explored further as an action within the action plan. The Total Place Initiative has also informed Herefordshire's thinking on locality working (see 6.3.9)

Making Assets Work – The Quirk Review of Community Management and Ownership of public assets – 15 May 2007

This report states that the starting point is the recognition that optimizing the use of public assets is not the primary objective: the over-riding goal is community empowerment. Sir Michael Lyons (2004) highlighted the relationship between active community involvement and economic development. In a sense, we are moving from an assumption that the state's role is to try to solve all social problems, to one where the state's role is to help communities solve their own problems.

This Review is focused on how to optimise the community benefit of publicly owned assets by considering options for greater transfer of asset ownership and management to community groups. This has been reflected in the Council's Community Asset Transfer Strategy referred to below. Following the Review, the Office of the Third Sector has developed a number of funding streams to support the transfer of assets from the public sector as well as capacity building funding for organisations seeking to develop their asset base.

Strong and Prosperous Communities – White Paper 2006

This document states that it is the responsibility of local public service providers to inform and consult their community about what they are doing and, where appropriate, to devolve service delivery or management to them. The proposal was also to revise the best value duty to secure the participation of citizens and communities in the delivery of local public services. The paper also proposed to establish a review of the barriers to community management and ownership of assets. It suggested that more community involvement in owning and running local facilities can be good for community cohesion and for driving up service standards. This document was the driver for the Local Area Agreement and associated indicators and targets.

Sustainable Communities Act 2010

The Sustainable Communities Act aims to promote the sustainability of local communities. It begins from the principle that local people know best what needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area, but that sometimes they need central government to act to enable them to do so. It provides a channel for local people to ask central government to take such action. It is also a new way for local authorities to ask central government to take action which they believe would better enable them to improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. This could include a proposal to transfer the functions of one public body to another.

The scope of the Act is very broad, covering economic, social and environmental issues. It does not limit the type of action that could be put forward, provided the action is within that broad scope. It is for local people to decide what they think needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area.

The Act is designed to strengthen the role of communities. As well as enabling local communities and local authorities to make suggestions for government action, the Sustainable Communities Act also ensures that communities are better informed about the public funding that is spent in their area. New "Local Spending Reports" will provide quick and easy access to information about where public money is spent. This will enable local authorities, their partners and communities to take better informed decisions about the priorities they choose to pursue to promote the sustainability of their local community.

The Big Society -2010

The coalition government says it wants to make society stronger by getting more people working together to run their own affairs locally. It aims to put more power and responsibility into the hands of local communities and to generate more community activity, and foster a supportive environment for co-operatives, charities, social enterprises and small businesses. The Big Society idea is that more action will be taken at a local level, with more freedom to do things the way local communities want. This includes the “community right to build”, which will allow local communities to build without having to secure planning permission, if sufficient numbers within the community support the proposal. Community facilities are included within the proposal. The Localism Bill will encapsulate these proposals, due in autumn 2010

There are three key strands for the Big Society agenda:

1. Social Action - the government will foster and support a new culture of voluntarism and philanthropy
2. Public service reform - getting rid of the centralised bureaucracy and in its place giving professionals much more freedom, opening up public services to new providers like charities, social enterprises and private companies so we get more innovation, diversity and responsiveness to public need
3. Community empowerment - creating communities with neighbourhoods who are in charge of their own destiny, who feel if they club together and get involved they can shape the world around them.

All three elements of the Big Society agenda have relevance to the Community Buildings Support Strategy.

Rural Proofing

Rural proofing is a commitment by Government to ensure domestic policies take account of rural circumstances and needs. It is a mandatory part of the policy process, which means as policies are developed, policy makers should:

- **consider whether their policy is likely to have a different impact in rural areas because of particular circumstances or needs;**
- **make proper assessment of those impacts, if they are likely to be significant;**
- **adjust the policy where appropriate, with solutions to meet rural needs and circumstances.**

Rural proofing applies to all policies, programmes and initiatives and it applies to both design and delivery stages. The previous Government was committed to making rural proofing a reality at national and regional levels, it is unclear at present how the new Government will view this.

Evidence has suggested that this has not been applied consistently in the past. However, Herefordshire has continued to undertake lobbying on this point at every opportunity, particularly in response to the Rural Manifesto consultation. Since then, it does appear that the policymakers are now rural proofing their policies and initiatives to ensure that the rural parts of the country are not being overlooked. This should therefore mean that future funding and initiatives around service delivery will take into account the needs of the rural areas and may facilitate more opportunities for Herefordshire.

Regional

The sustainability of rural community buildings with the West Midlands report June 08

Commissioned by the West Midlands Rural Community Action Network, this document concludes that the issues and challenges impacting on the sustainability of rural community buildings remain fairly constant, but that finding solutions and funding to overcome these barriers is becoming increasingly difficult. Reasons why solutions become more difficult may be explained by the increasing expectations on the services provided by rural community buildings, especially by policy makers and funders. In particular, it states:

- “Rural community buildings are expected to become energy efficient and environmentally aware. This presents challenges for all community buildings, but particularly older style buildings, for which the cost of improvements and changes is often prohibitive;
- To some extent rural community buildings are expected to respond to the access to services agenda and develop into service delivery hubs. Although an opportunity for some communities, this is by no means feasible for all.”

ACRE – The Economic Impact of Community Buildings in Rural Communities

In 2009 ACRE carried out its third national survey of almost 10,000 rural community buildings, updating data from the 1988 and 1998 surveys with information from 2,355 respondents. This first report states that investment in rural community buildings has a multiplier effect. Building works create local employment, new halls activate community activity and development of services, which have important social benefits and create further employment.

For further information visit the ACRE website – www.acre.org.uk

Other findings and information are referred to within the body of this Strategy and will be reflected in the learning that supports the actions outlined in the Action Plan.

Local

Corporate Asset Management Plan 2009-2012

This document provides the backdrop of the rationale and method by which Herefordshire Council manages its assets. From 2009, the use of resources assessment formed part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment for Local Authorities. This considers how well organisations are managing and using their resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people. The assessment comprises three themes that focus on:-

- Sound and strategic financial management;
- Strategic commission and good governance; and
- The management of natural resources, assets and people.

In order to deliver “better access to service user and outcomes for the community” the Council recognises that transferring a current asset of the Council’s to the community can be deemed the most appropriate action and right way forward. The Community Asset Transfer Strategy forms part of the Asset Management Plan.

Herefordshire Council – Community Asset Transfer Strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to set a transparent, positive and proactive framework to enable asset transfer from the Council to the third sector to happen and be successful in the long-term.

The term 'asset transfer' relates primarily to leasehold or freehold arrangements at less than best consideration or in giving Third Sector Organisations (TSOs) first refusal on a commercially based disposal.

The Council supports strong and sustainable TSOs as key partners in the delivery of services and in providing a link with local communities. Working in partnership with thriving TSOs can greatly help the Council in achieving the outcomes enshrined in its Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement that will be of great benefit to local communities.

Whilst developing the Community Asset Transfer policy, it was noted that there was no standard business plan template. Whilst acknowledging that individual funders for capital funding for community buildings may have their own requirements. A standard business plan template has now been adopted, to enable organisations to make the business case for taking over an asset, but also to ensure consistency and transparency of approach.

Local Development Framework – Place Shaping

This document considers a preferred strategy and further options for the emerging Core Strategy. The Core Strategy is a long term strategic planning document, which sets out the vision and objectives for the county and establishes the policy framework and the broad locations for development necessary to delivery them. Once adopted in 2010/11 the Core Strategy will set the guidelines for development of new homes, businesses, open space and other facilities across the county to 2026. This includes the potential to secure Section 106 funding to provide community spaces and facilities such as a community building.

Herefordshire Community Strategy – known as the Sustainable Community Strategy (2010-2011)

This Strategy is designed to highlight the key issues and challenges facing the place of Herefordshire and its communities and our ambition to achieve better outcomes over the next 3 years.

The priority themes for action are:

- Children & young people
- Economic development and enterprise
- Environment
- Healthier communities and older people
- Safer communities
- Stronger communities

The Stronger Communities aim is to “develop stronger, vibrant, more inclusive communities in which people enjoy a good quality of life and feel they have influence over the decisions that affect them”.

A strong community is one that feels empowered, confident and accepted. In order to achieve this there should be respect for each other and groups, and individuals from all backgrounds need to be informed and have the opportunity to get involved in making decisions which affect their communities.

Local communities will be more sustainable if they have access to vital services and facilities that meet their needs, such as suitable housing, health facilities, leisure facilities, libraries and other cultural venues, shops and local meeting places. For Herefordshire, access to services is particularly key in rural areas, and this could be improved through innovative solutions, for instance, better use and combining of community, public and private sector buildings and facilities and mobile services.

Multi use facilities – Strategic Investment Framework – March 2007

This document states that “there is clear evidence that ease of access to services decreases as the sparsity of population increases and that in general terms the provision of services in rural areas is on the decline. Herefordshire is one of the most sparsely populated areas in England. This sparsity means that more people have to travel further to access the services they need than the average for other rural areas, (both for the West Midlands and for England)⁵. Many rural residents have the resources to overcome these difficulties, but for those that don’t – those without private transport, on low incomes, with health or mobility problems, the young and the old – the lack of local services can seriously affect their quality of

⁵ Herefordshire Quarterly Economic Report November 2006

life. Fair access to services isn't just a question of social justice, it is also a question of sustainability. The presence of local facilities maintains the social fabric of a community, makes it less likely that the young and those of low incomes move out and reduces the need to travel.

For these reasons improving access to social, economic and public services in rural communities are identified as key objectives."

Supporting the adaptation and growth of existing facilities across the County can assist in ensuring that the communities have the facilities that they need to survive. This Framework informed the investment strategy for Advantage West Midlands Multi-Use Facilities Programme, with funding approved for Peterchurch Phase 1, Grange Court (Leominster), Hope Centre (Bromyard) and Leintwardine.

Crossing the Threshold Toolkit

On 18 October 2004, the Church Heritage forum launched Building Faith in our Future a 'green paper' celebrating church buildings and the achievements of the volunteers who maintain them. The paper aimed to awaken greater understanding of how church buildings contribute to community and social cohesion and to seek partnership to support and enhance those achievements for the benefit of future generations. Since its publication, the way that church buildings have developed has changed quite dramatically and there is a renewed emphasis in recognising the importance of the role a church building can play as a resource for the local community. Hereford is one of the Dioceses which has led the way in encouraging its parishes to return their churches to the heart of their communities. Across the Diocese there are numerous examples of congregations sharing their building with a range of community groups and activities. Other churches are currently developing projects which will see churches sharing space with a heritage centre, a community shop, a branch library and a Childrens' Service Centre. Across England, churches are hosting outreach post offices, IT Online training centres, SureStart Centres, nurseries, doctors' and dentists' surgeries, health centres, police sub-stations, cafés, farmers' markets and providing venues for numerous exhibitions, concerts, plays as well as supporting outreach activities helping the most vulnerable in our society.

The Crossing the Threshold Toolkit – launched at the Hereford Conference held in November 2009, recognizes and encompasses all the tools and techniques needed to ensure that the churches are meeting the needs of the community within which they are located to ensure that

they complement other facilities, delivering much needed services and serving their communities for years to come.

NHS Herefordshire Estates Strategy 2010-2014

The Estates Strategy outlines how the NHS will manage the estates portfolio according to the vision and values of the NHS in Herefordshire and respond to the challenges, particularly around achieving more for more people with fewer resources. The Strategy sets out a range of objectives that will need to be achieved to support improvements in the delivery of high quality care and patient experience through the provision of an effective, efficient and sustainable estates portfolio.

This Strategy takes into consideration a number of factors, including national drivers for changes such as Total Place, Transforming Communities and the Herefordshire Public Services Joint Corporate Property Strategy. The particular point of interest in relation to the Community Buildings Strategy is the exploration of opportunities for joint accommodation ventures with other partners. NHSH will engage with other partners including the Police, education providers, other public sector and third sector organisations. This fits in well with the concept of locality working.

Locality working

Herefordshire Public Services and the wider Herefordshire Partnership are exploring an approach to delivering services based on a number of localities within Herefordshire. As part of this Localities initiative, it is intended to undertake a mapping exercise to determine the extent of land and buildings used to deliver services (including nurseries, schools, colleges, village halls, museums, libraries, church halls, churches, petrol filling stations, post offices, pharmacies, opticians, emergency services, etc) within 9 identified 'locations'; Weobley, Golden Valley, Mortimer, the five market towns of Leominster, Ross, Ledbury, Kington, Bromyard, and Hereford City and its hinterland. The mapping exercise will provide extremely useful information to enable future decision-making around local service delivery to take place. A workplan will be developed over the coming year to make locality working a reality.

Broadband for Community Buildings

Herefordshire has recently published an Intentions Paper (March 2010) on developing a county approach to broadband in Herefordshire. It is clear that the demand for broadband width is rising exponentially over time and this is of real concern in Herefordshire, where there are many "not spots" and "not-very-good spots". With the expense of maintaining services in rural areas, it would save costs of delivery and travel if more services could be made available interactively via the internet. Whilst delivery of many of these services will be within the home, there may be a role for community buildings to become broadband enabled, so that those providers delivering a service to a local area can do so from a community venue.

The Coalition Government has made a commitment that all homes and premises are to have affordable access to broadband at speeds of 2mbps by 2015. However, Herefordshire Partnership has a much more ambitious vision is that this should be brought forward to the end of 2012 for the county and that by 2020 any home or business should have the opportunity to access 100mbps download speed with a choice of upload speeds. Broadband services in Herefordshire must be affordable to the user and in most cases offer a choice of Internet Service Provider. How the vision should be delivered is subject to a range of technical options, but the majority of homes and premises should be served by countywide fibre optic infrastructure. New homes and new premises on business parks should be built by their developers with fibre optic connections. This is recognised as an extremely ambitious agenda in the current financial climate.

Community Access Points (CAPs)* were set up in 21 locations across the County in 2006 and 2007, in part to provide the opportunity for on-line access to advice, information, services and training that would otherwise not be available to the more remote communities in the County. Proposals for service delivery were developed, such as CAPs acting as a broadband enabled venue for service providers to deliver in house training across the County. However, the CAPs rely heavily on volunteer commitment, and the CAPs Chairs group was felt that without further resources, such a proposal would not be deliverable. However, as a concept for service delivery at community locations, broadband enabled community buildings will have more to offer.

*(Community Access Points – a venue where the provision of IT equipment, eg. Laptops, printers, cameras and other audio-visual equipment are available for hire/use by the community. It was particularly targeted at ensuring that there was access to the internet and internet related services in the most rural parts of the county.)

From the Margins to the Mainstream – The future of community led planning in Herefordshire – 2008

Herefordshire has adopted community led planning as a tried and tested method to understand the needs of local communities. Parish Planning, or Community Led Planning as it is now more commonly being referred to, is seen as a very important community consultation mechanism that identifies the needs of a parish or defined area. The process allows the thoughts and wishes of the community to be taken into account when undertaking planning for the future in terms of services and provision. Ideally, this allows service providers to assess the needs of a community to understand whether an area is the right place to deliver or support activity. It can be a tool to use to ensure that any facility is fit for purpose, takes into account what else is happening in that area and also whether it will displace or complement other activity in that area.

VITAL Herefordshire LEADER funding has just supported the employment of three new posts to support the development, youth engagement and implementation of parish plans across the county which should ensure that the parish plans that come forward in the future will be high quality and robust. This should give comfort to service providers that the level of need and demand is accurate and will inform any decision to resource activity.

Understanding the needs of the community through the community led planning process, enables resources to be targeted at the most appropriate buildings. The spatial analysis of community buildings in Herefordshire will inform this process.

Herefordshire Council Library Strategy – 2010

A new library strategy is being written with a view to complete by end of October 2010. The strategy will incorporate a new vision for the remodelling of the library service. One of the key features of the strategy will be to seek further opportunities to work in partnership with community buildings to support the delivery of a wider library service especially in the rural context. This approach will necessitate the further development of partnership arrangements and, in all likelihood, support for the third sector.

Appendix B

- ***Councillor Roger Phillips***, Leader of the Council
- ***Geoff Hughes***, Director of Regeneration, Herefordshire Council
- ***Euan McPherson***, Head of Customer Experience (interim) & Equitable Access to Primary Medical Care Programme Manager, Herefordshire Primary Care Trust
- ***Mike Emery***, Head of Business Support, Integrated Commissioning
- ***Claire Keetch***, Chief Executive, Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureaux
- ***Charmaine Hawker***, Head of Primary Care Finance
- ***Malcolm MacAskill***, Head of Asset Management & Property Services, Herefordshire Council
- ***Chris Baird***, Assistant Director, Planning Performance and Development
- ***Tony Featherstone***, Strategic Asset Manager
- ***Kate Murray***, Assistant Cultural Services Manager – Libraries, Heritage and Learning, Herefordshire Council

Questions asked:-

Q1. Do you currently use community buildings to deliver services?

- Schools, children's centres, youth services, canoe centre and locality centres. Aim is to make them accessible to a wider audience.
- Peterchurch, Belmont Library, Ledbury Library and Leintwardine Library.
- Ryefield Centre used as an outreach facility, Magistrates Court Kington and Newton Farm
- Expert Patience programme – self management course which operates around the county and use community buildings to deliver.

Q2. Do you currently use community buildings for you own internal requirements?

- Use of halls is a matter of course rather than an exception. Utilise the community buildings database for understanding delivery eg. over 60's club for new route for the mobile library.
- Occasionally use Kindle or Fred Bulmer Centre for away day.
- Staff away days have been undertaken at village halls in the past but would certainly look to using village halls again in the future and encourage their use for training.

Service delivery will be reduced because of Department of Health requirements or Herefordshire's interpretation of those requirements, however, that does not exclude the potential use of information services.

Q3. Do you give any financial or advice support to community buildings either directly or indirectly?

- Advice to children's centres therefore indirectly to community buildings if located within one, eg. Peterchurch.
- Financial support by way of lease and associated overhead costs for siting of library service in a community building.
- Advice in the form of any expansion in opening hours, health and safety, customer focus, being sensitive to the community needs, eg. large print, etc.
- Delivery of training courses at village halls is undertaken at a hire cost of just under £3k from jan 09-jan 10.

Other general comments:

- Need to build on existing groups/facilities as hubs for a community eg. Dorstone Front Room in Golden Valley.
- Service providers need to think wider than just having a physical building to deliver services, space such as the car parks attached to community buildings are equally as important to provide mobile services such as a mobile library, mobile post office, etc.

Appendix C

- **Rob Grunsell**, Community Buildings Advisor, Community First
- **Wendy Coombey**, Partnership and Funding Officer, Diocese of Hereford
- **Dave Tristram**, Project Development Officer, Herefordshire Council
- **Terry Osbourn**, REACH Community Development Co-ordinator, Herefordshire Voluntary Action
- **Amelia Quinlan**, Community Development Worker City and South Herefordshire, Herefordshire Voluntary Action

Questionnaires and responses

Name: Rob Grunsell

Organisation: Community Buildings Advisor, Community First

1. Please explain what advice service you provide/offer to community buildings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on all aspects of running community buildings: Legal and constitutional, Health and Safety, financial, fundraising, etc. • Health check visits by arrangement • Advice and support on fundraising including help with application forms • Service covers village halls, church halls and churches opening to wider public.
2. What geographical area do you cover? (eg. all of Herefordshire, certain parishes/wards, etc)	All of Herefordshire
3. How many hours and % of your time is spent providing this service? (per week)	12 hours (funded by HC) 37% of hours more in practice.
4. Please can you equate your service to an annual financial figure?	£17k pa
5. Do you, or your organisation offer funding towards community buildings?(N/a if question being answered by a Council employee).	CF is a channel through which Nexus, COMMA and Elmely funding is delivered.
6. How many 'clients' do you have – please breakdown by advice area and provide a database if kept.	Scheduled 22 villages per quarter.
7. How do you provide your advice – what are your methods of engagement?	Phone, email, visits to hall, attendance at MC meetings.
8. How do you promote your advice services to the public – what methods do you employ to ensure coverage.	Via extensive dedicated web pages on community first website, via quarterly newsletter dedicated pages going to all halls, via bimonthly local surgeries via Dave Tristram onward referrals, via HALC linkage.
9. Does your organisation collate customer feedback on your service? How do you know whether the advice you are giving is providing outcomes for local people?	I do collate feedback. VHs have to demonstrate local support when applying for money but other than that I have no ready means of knowing how far committees of VHs are delivering what their beneficiaries want.

<p>10. In your opinion what advice and support do you consider missing or is duplicated from the current provision offered in Herefordshire? (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive targeted support to halls trying to lower bills and carbon footprint. • Proactive support to halls deemed to be “at risk”. • Intensive support and training for committees and chairs especially, in trying to run better more efficient meetings. • More systematic support for developing good relations between VHMCs and PCs.
<p>11. Please can you provide any other information that you think would be useful towards the development and implementation of a community buildings strategy for Herefordshire?</p>	<p>Already contributed.</p>

Name: Wendy Coombey

Organisation: Diocese of Hereford

<p>1. Please explain what advice service you provide/offer to community buildings?</p>	<p>We offer advice to churches and community on developing their buildings for the widest possible use. This involves providing support and guidance all the way through from the initial idea, consultation, project development, legal advice and funding. We also advise on partnership working and getting involved in parish plans. We also offer a repairs service – providing support to local communities to keep their church building in the best repair possible. Next year we will be employing a 3 year post to specifically focus on church repairs.</p>
<p>2. What geographical area do you cover? (eg. all of Herefordshire, certain parishes/wards, etc)</p>	<p>The whole of Herefordshire, South Shropshire and a few parishes in Wales.</p>
<p>3. How many hours and % of your time is spent providing this service? (per week)</p>	<p>30 hours per week (approx).</p>
<p>4. Please can you equate your service to an annual financial figure?</p>	<p>No – except that since I have been in post we have raised in the region of £4 million towards a variety of projects.</p>
<p>5. Do you, or your organisation offer funding towards community buildings?(N/a if question being answered by a Council employee).</p>	<p>We can offer a small amount of funding for project development and have access to National Church funding organisations that will financially support projects.</p>
<p>6. How many ‘clients’ do you have – please breakdown by advice area and provide a database if kept.</p>	<p>We have a potential client base of 420 parishes – although not all have need of our service. Some are very self sufficient as far as repairs are concerned and some do not wish to explore the development of their buildings. We just try to have the resources available if they need them</p>

7. How do you provide your advice – what are your methods of engagement?	<p>We have a web site, with resources available and we have a toolkit and DVD using case local studies. We hold training sessions with groups and have run joint sessions with other workers in the county when needed.</p> <p>We send out a quarterly newsletter on funding and good practice.</p> <p>We will go and visit projects on a one to one basis.</p>
8. How do you promote your advice services to the public – what methods do you employ to ensure coverage.	We use our web site and we also promote good practice through the Diocesan Newspaper.
9. Does your organisation collate customer feedback on your service? How do you know whether the advice you are giving is providing outcomes for local people?	We keep in touch with our projects and some are subject to evaluation and monitoring as part of their funding agreements.
10. In your opinion what advice and support do you consider missing or is duplicated from the current provision offered in Herefordshire? (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	I feel there is a good range of specialist knowledge across the whole spectrum of community buildings advice needed, however there is not enough of this resource to go around. We have devised strategies in the past for getting the best use out of the officers we have – by providing joint training with a particular focus, i.e. business planning, joint approach to BIG lottery applications, and this has worked very well in the past. We should explore further linkages with CLP officers, other CD workers and generally try and take an improved county wide approach to developing community buildings for the good of the community. We should also ensure that we refer projects to the most appropriate officer to advise them to avoid confusion and wrong advice being given.
11. Please can you provide any other information that you think would be useful towards the development and implementation of a community buildings strategy for Herefordshire?	Just that any strategy should encourage fairness and equity and that any implications that some buildings are more 'important than others' or higher in the community buildings seniority table should be avoided.

Name: Dave Tristram

Organisation: Herefordshire Council

1. Please explain what advice service you provide/offer to community buildings?	<p>Mainly a signposting service in terms of referring people onto Rob Grunsell in terms of funding enquiries.</p> <p>Also facilitate the Community Buildings group, formulating advice and best practice to stakeholders throughout the county.</p>
2. What geographical area do you cover? (eg. all of Herefordshire, certain parishes/wards, etc)	All of the county

3. How many hours and % of your time is spent providing this service? (per week)	10%
4. Please can you equate your service to an annual financial figure?	£3,000 approximately in terms of paid time in the post however I have advised on many successful community building bids which have levered money into the county.
5. Do you, or your organisation offer funding towards community buildings?(N/a if question being answered by a Council employee).	N/A
6. How many 'clients' do you have – please breakdown by advice area and provide a database if kept.	Need to follow this up!
7. How do you provide your advice – what are your methods of engagement?	By telephone, email, word of mouth and occasionally through presentations.
8. How do you promote your advice services to the public – what methods do you employ to ensure coverage.	As above (though usually signposting these days).
9. Does your organisation collate customer feedback on your service? How do you know whether the advice you are giving is providing outcomes for local people?	If funding has been obtained to facilitate improvements to community buildings.
10. In your opinion what advice and support do you consider missing or is duplicated from the current provision offered in Herefordshire? (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	The general level of the service is good, think that this would be considerably improved by employment of an officer full time and under council employment. (offering objectivity and good communication with support from related teams – Delegated Grants, Project Development, strategic assets, etc.)
11. Please can you provide any other information that you think would be useful towards the development and implementation of a community buildings strategy for Herefordshire?	

Name: Terry Osborn

Organisation: The REACH Project (Lead Partner HVA)

1.Please explain what advice service you provide/offer to community buildings?	Through our delivery partners we offer a full spectrum of services including environmental sustainability, development of facilities, funding searches etc.
2.What geographical area do you cover? (eg. all of Herefordshire, certain parishes/wards, etc)	120 rural parishes in the following areas: Golden Valley North East Herefordshire Ledbury North West Herefordshire
3.How many hours and % of your time is spent providing this service? (per week)	14 hrs per wk minimum
4.Please can you equate your service to an annual financial figure?	No
5.Do you, or your organisation offer funding towards community buildings?(N/a if question being answered by a Council employee).	No
6.How many 'clients' do you have – please breakdown by advice area and provide a database if kept.	Project commenced Feb 2010 and in its first 2 months 2 projects in the Golden Valley were supported.

7.How do you provide your advice – what are your methods of engagement?	Face to face is preferred
8.How do you promote your advice services to the public – what methods do you employ to ensure coverage.	Project is marketed through a wide variety of means including parish clerks, newsletters, local press and launch events.
9.Does your organisation collate customer feedback on your service? How do you know whether the advice you are giving is providing outcomes for local people?	The project will, in due course, be fully evaluating its impact.
10.In your opinion what advice and support do you consider missing or is duplicated from the current provision offered in Herefordshire? (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary).	
11.Please can you provide any other information that you think would be useful towards the development and implementation of a community buildings strategy for Herefordshire?	

Name: Amelia Quinlan

Organisation: Herefordshire Voluntary Action – City and South Herefordshire

1. Please explain what advice service you provide/offer to community buildings?	<p>If a community building approaches me I briefly talk over there needs and issues and always liaise with Rob Grunsell re; their needs and sometimes I take the lead on the project</p> <p>I advise on groups wanting to do new builds to group wanting to have an asset transfer supporting them with planning business planning feasibility studies, funding and advice on sustainability.</p> <p>Community buildings worked on in the last year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tudorville youth centre • College community hub • North Tupsley group • Bromyard public hall • Aston Ingham scout hut • Brookfield school • North holme community centre • Ewyas Harold community building • Kingstone old school • St Marys church hall Ross • Whitbourne hall <p>I have been more involved in some than others depending on what they require or what they want to do .</p>
2. What geographical area do you cover? (eg. all of Herefordshire, certain parishes/wards, etc)	I now cover Ross Hereford and Leominster and the A49 Corridor
3. How many hours and % of your time is spent providing this service? (per week)	13%
4. Please can you equate your service to an	No

annual financial figure?	
5. Do you, or your organisation offer funding towards community buildings?(N/a if question being answered by a Council employee).	N/A
6. How many 'clients' do you have – please breakdown by advice area and provide a database if kept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tudorville youth centre • College community hub • North Tupsley group • Aston Ingham scout hut
7. How do you provide your advice – what are your methods of engagement?	By visits , attending committee meetings, email, telephone.
8. How do you promote your advice services to the public – what methods do you employ to ensure coverage.	Articles in press and local newsletters, web site events, training events. Regular HVA newsletter, word of mouth- we don't promote ourselves as community building advisors we always refer to Rob G at community first we are offering generic advice to groups.
9. Does your organisation collate customer feedback on your service? How do you know whether the advice you are giving is providing outcomes for local people?	
10. In your opinion what advice and support do you consider missing or is duplicated from the current provision offered in Herefordshire? (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary).	
11. Please can you provide any other information that you think would be useful towards the development and implementation of a community buildings strategy for Herefordshire?	

Appendix D

Hall visited/canvassed (please see Appendix F for committee members):-

- **Aymestrey Village Hall** – built 1932 – kitchen & toilets 1998, walls reclad 2005 and new roof 2009
- **Cusop Village Hall** – 2009 new build
- **Kingswood Village Hall** – built 1960 hall – last major refurb 2006
- **Longtown Village Hall** – built 1910 – last major refurb 1988, electrics 1985
- **Mansel Lacy Community Centre & Church** – community space in 1996
- **Orleton Village Hall** – built 1968, rebuilt 97/98
- **Redhill Jubilee Room** – ex Marlbrook School, renovated approx 1992
- **Upton Bishop Millenium Hall** – built 1999
- **Walford Village Hall** – **built 1969** – last major refurb 2000
- **Yarpole Village Hall** – **built 1985** – last major refurb 2006

Q1 – has your committee received any advice or support in relation to running your building (including grant advice and guidance). If yes, please explain who by and what advice did you receive. If No, please go to Question 2.

What advice/support did you receive?

- Guidance from consultants on heating, planning for materials for recladding new roof, grant coaching and review of application form
- Support and advice on funding – particularly after submission of unsuccessful lottery bid.
- Advice on energy efficiency measures.
- Support with grant forms.
- Grant advice for lighting and new heating.
- General funding advice.
- Course on how committees are run and developing/reviewing constitutions.
- Grant for rebuild from Leominster District Council.

Who did you receive it from?

- Rob Grunsell, Community First
- Wendy Coombey, Diocesan Partnership Funding Officer
- Cathy & Helen, Delegated Grants Team, Herefordshire Council.
- Clare Wichbold, Project Development team, Herefordshire Council
- Dave Tristram, Project development team, Herefordshire Council
- Will Lindesay, Herefordshire Voluntary Action
- Amelia Quinlan, Herefordshire Voluntary Action
- Planning, Herefordshire Council
- Various consultants for energy efficiency
- Bryan Haines, Community First

- Marches Energy Agency for energy efficiency advice.

Was the advice or benefit? If not why not?

- Yes, of great benefit and all grant applications were successful.
- Advice was good – Rob is hard to get hold of though!
- Cathy invaluable in helping to sort through the claims and forms.
- MEA very good but couldn't offer much advice for the hall.
- Yes very much so.
- Helpful information despite the bid being unsuccessful to the Lottery.
- It would be more helpful if Rob was more hands on but understand that he is only employed for a few hours a week.
- Slightly misguided information from Amelia, charities commission didn't need a full new constitution just an amendment.
- No grants were forthcoming – we did everything ourselves.
- Unfortunately, not able to support/find suitable grant.
- Unfortunately, as the hall has a fairly significant amount of unrestricted reserves the recommendation was that an application for funding would not be viewed favourably if the committee can afford it already.
- Many successful bids from Awards for All. I also attend the Community Development Workers Forum to pick up further networking and advice opportunities.

Q2 – If, in the future, you do require advice and guidance who would you approach to get that service?

No halls completed this question as all had received advice and guidance in some shape or form.

Q3 – What are the biggest problems your committee faces in keeping your hall sustainable in terms of its finances, the use it gets and the management it needs?

- Having a wider and active/hands on committee. We have 7 members and due to age and commitments, only 2 are active in all aspects all others help out when they can. The managing committee are also the fund raising/social events/maintenance and repair committee.
- Paying off the £50k loan – particularly as there is a reliance on the recycling and Hay festival parking to support that and will be crucial to how quickly the loan can be paid off.
- The committee are 'tired' – the plan is that the current committee will withdraw over time but will ensure that suitable replacements are made.
- Heavy reliance on 4 core people from the committee who are the doers – particularly regarding the maintenance. Despite the hall having bookings most of the week there is general apathy from the people of Kington who won't come up the hill to attend anything and not a lot of support from the parishioners either.
- It is very difficult getting volunteers to become officers on the Committee – not sure why this is.
- No real issues apart from the potential repositioning of the new portacabin.
- At present we breakeven each year after repairs and maintenance, although if there was a larger capital project we would need to seek grant aid.

- Geographic location is always a barrier as the village sprawls along the B4234. It is therefore a struggle to bring the community together. Trying to think of new events is hard as apathy seems to rule. There are also issues around bureaucracy and red tape which can hinder any progression.
- Many other local community buildings offer similar facilities.
- There is a possibility that the Diocese will withdraw from the building, however, if that happened the community association could withstand taking over the whole building.

Q4 – What advice and support do you consider would be beneficial for your committee to assist with the management and sustainability of your building?

- Advice and support from Rob for the lottery for 2nd phase of works.
- Marches Energy Agency for solar panels.
- Currently receive enough advice through Rob and guidance on grants.
- The Committee know where to go to for information would approach Rob for assistance in the first place
- Support is needed for funding to help the carpark and alleviate the flooding.
- Committee is fair well versed with the business side of things because of the natures of the skills already contained on the committee. Possible gap in the marketing element.
- Always need to know about funding opportunities and possibly any changes in health and safety and new legislation.

Q5 – Please can you provide any other information that you think would be useful towards the development and implementation of a community buildings strategy for Herefordshire?

Summary of points:-

- Continual promotion and improvement of facilities helps ensure that the building is sustainable.
- Ensure that there is ongoing support, advice and funding.
- Encourage funders to look at needs on a case by case basis.
- Climate change needs to be taken into consideration
- Free broadband to all community buildings would improve facilities and accommodate occasional users who need this facility to carry out training, etc.
- For churches there is a quinquennial inspection which is undertaken by an Architect so they always know what items are due and in need of repair/maintenance. Perhaps this is something that halls could look to undertake as a programme of works.

Appendix E

Definitions of sustainable community buildings

What is a sustainable rural community building?

A community building that is designed to minimise the negative **environmental impact** of the building by adopting design and construction methods that minimise adverse impacts on the environment and protects and enhances the diversity of nature.

In addition the building should be designed and/or managed to maximise its positive **economic impact** by designing and constructing a building that is cost-effective to run, has high quality/flexible working environments, a diverse range of income streams, provides local employment and where income exceeds outgoings sufficiently to enable a reserve to be established.

Finally the building should be designed and/or managed to maximise positive **social impact** by providing a building that enhances the quality of life for everyone living in the community, actively supports social inclusion and meets the respective needs of each local community.

Taken from the document – **The Sustainability of Rural Community Buildings within the West Midlands – June 2008**

Future sustainability of multi-use facilities

There is no point investing in facilities that are not going to generate enough income to be self-sustaining. There is very little or no 'new' money within the public and voluntary sector to support the delivery of services in multi-use centres. Revenue resources would have to be diverted from elsewhere, generated through efficiency savings or raised through other means (e.g. Operating as a social enterprise, where income could be raised from customers).

The organisational capacity within the public and voluntary sector

Effective partnership working is a pre-requisite for joint delivery of services and/or collocation. It needs the right mix of skills, resources and organisational culture. Underestimating the transaction 'costs' of partnership working is a potential barrier to success.

Community capacity within the community

High levels of skill and time are needed if facilities are to be managed by members of the local community on a voluntary basis (as is the case with most Village Halls and Community Centres). Access to ongoing advice and support is needed to ensure the future sustainability of any community run ventures.

Extract from document: **Multi-use facilities in Herefordshire – A Strategic Investment Framework March 2007**

Appendix F

Models of Good Practice

Hallmark scheme

Hallmark is a quality standards scheme that operates using external validation by trained peer visitors. The visitors use of a system of checklists to identify performance. Checklists exist for three different aspects or levels:

- Level 1. Charity administration and management;
- Level 2. Health, safety, security and licences;
- Level 3. Social awareness, community, forward planning and development.

The checklist at each level consists of elements that contribute to a hall that is well-managed and serves its community well.

VISIBLE

VISIBLE Communities™ is based around a set of seven core principles that underpin strong sustainable community organisations. The programme offers groups two tools to help implement the principles depending on the need of the organisation. These are VISIBLE Standards for medium to large organisations and preVISIBLE Review which concentrates on management systems and policies for a community organisation of any size but is not an accredited standard.

The seven standards are:

1. A VOICE to represent issues of local concern
2. An INDEPENDENT and politically neutral organisation
3. A SERVICE provider for local people
4. An INITIATOR of projects to meet locally identified needs
5. A BUILDER of partnerships with other local organisations and groups
6. A strong LOCAL network of people and organisations
7. A way to ENGAGE local people to become active in their communities

Mod-e-com – modular buildings

Modular ecological community buildings is a modular build system solution created by Community First in partnership with Architype green award winning local architects.

The enables a wide range of potential uses:

- Able to be built with volunteer and trainee labour input;
- With a variety of sizes and configurations;
- And a range of cladding options to suit the local vernacular
- Designed to the highest European levels of energy performance, achieving 'passivhaus' standard;
- With projected running costs 70-80% lower than conventional construction to current UK regulations;

- With an indicative build cost of £1,550-£1,600/sqm without any allowance for free labour input.

Funding is being sought to undertake a full feasibility which would take the project up to pilot build stage.

Community Building Advisors group

Regular meetings of the Community Buildings Advisors group representing workers across the county allowing sharing of information and best practice.

Community building database

Fully accessible interactive database available from the Councils website allowing access to full information on halls where information has been provided showing location, booking details, hire fees, space available, etc.

Advice Sessions

The Community Buildings Advisor runs locally based face to face advice sessions offering advice and opportunities for management committees to meet and liaise with other hall committees in their area;

Appendix G

Acknowledgements

- **Councillor Roger Phillips**, Leader of the Council
- **Geoff Hughes**, Director of Regeneration, Herefordshire Council
- **Euan McPherson**, Head of Customer Experience (interim) & Equitable Access to Primary Medical Care Programme Manager, Herefordshire Primary Care Trust
- **Mike Emery**, Head of Business Support, Integrated Commissioning
- **Claire Keetch**, Chief Executive, Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureaux
- **Charmaine Hawker**, Head of Primary Care Finance
- **Malcolm MacAskill**, Head of Asset Management & Property Services, H Council
- **Chris Baird**, Assistant Director, Planning Performance and Development
- **Tony Featherstone**, Strategic Asset Manager, Herefordshire Council
- **Kate Murray**, Assistant Cultural Services Manager – Libraries, Heritage and Learning, Herefordshire Council
- **Nina Bridges**, Community Regeneration Manager, Herefordshire Council
- **Rob Grunsell**, Community Buildings Advisor, Community First
- **Wendy Coombey**, Partnership and Funding Officer, Diocese of Hereford
- **Dave Tristram**, Project Development Officer, Herefordshire Council
- **Terry Osbourn**, REACH Community Development Co-ordinator, Herefordshire Voluntary Action
- **Amelia Quinlan**, Community Development Worker City and South Herefordshire, Herefordshire Voluntary Action
- **Kenneth Holland**, Chairman, Aymestrey Village Hall
- **Neville Jones & John Wilks**, Chair & Secretary, Cusop Village Hall
- **Teresa Misselbrook**, Secretary, Kingswood Village Hall
- **Milli Stein, Judith Whitehead, Alan Lavers**, Chair, Vice-Chair & Committee Member, Longtown Village Hall
- **Barbara Mark**, Secretary, Orleton village Hall
- **Wendy Jones**, Chair, Redhill Jubilee Room
- **Jane Fray**, Secretary, Upton Bishop Millennium Hall
- **David Berry**, Chairman, Walford Village Hall
- **Ronald Shaw**, Chairman, Yarpole Village Hall
- **Cal Edwards**, Chairman of Community Association, Mansel Lacy Community Centre & Church