Village halls survey

A report into the condition and use of village halls in Cumbria

2004
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Acknowledgements

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Foreword

This survey shows the vibrancy and self-reliance of the 325 Village Halls across rural Cumbria.

- Village Halls raise over one million pounds per year to support their activities
- Village Halls serve over 25,000 people per week.
- Over 3,000 people works as volunteers to run Village Halls

Key issues where hall committees continue to need support are:

- finding the funds for major capital works;
- legal, licensing and regulation issues; and
- support with governance issues like most other community organisations

Voluntary Action Cumbria will use these results to celebrate the achievements of Village Hall committees and to lobby for continuing support.

Voluntary Action Cumbria commends this report to all readers.

Leonard Coulthard

Leonard Coulthard
Chair of Voluntary Action Cumbria
Executive summary

The “Village halls in Cumbria” survey was conducted between June 2004 and February 2005 by Voluntary Action Cumbria and Cumbria County Council. All of Cumbria’s 325 village halls were sent a self-completion questionnaire, 197 were returned giving a response rate of 61 per cent.

The survey covered four main areas:

- Buildings
- Finance
- Management
- Usage

The survey findings provide the first systematic picture of the state of Cumbria’s village halls. Some of the key findings from the survey are summarised below.

Buildings

- The average age of halls in Cumbria is 97 years; the oldest is 400 years old.
- The majority of halls are of stone construction.
- The majority of halls provide a main hall, toilets, a kitchen and one or more meeting rooms. Only a minority of halls have disabled toilet facilities.
- Just under half of the halls surveyed had not yet conducted an Access Audit in line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Almost a third of halls reported that their building was in need of major repairs or complete renovation.
- A quarter of halls said that their heating system was in need of major repairs or replacement.

Finance

- The average annual income for a Cumbrian village hall is £4,264; the average expenditure is £3,352.
- Categorised by their income, wealthier halls’ incomes tend to be significantly higher as a percentage of expenditure than less wealthy halls.
- Almost 1 in 5 halls reported that their income did not cover their expenditure. On average income was only 75 per cent of what is required to break even.
• In terms of income from hall hire only a minority of halls charge differentiated rates for different categories of user (local, non-local, private hire) and only 40 per cent of halls use a hiring agreement.
• The average hourly charge for local groups is £5.20.
• Over half of halls surveyed had applied for funding from an external organisation in the previous 12 months.
• In total the halls surveyed had approached 60 different funding organisations. Most commonly application were made to the Parish council, district council and Neighbourhood Forums.

Management

• On average halls have 12 people on their management committees with five of these being user group representatives.
• The majority of management committees meet at least quarterly. Frequency of management committee meetings is related to hall income.
• 1 in 10 halls do not know who their Holding Trustees are.
• Only just under half reported they had a maintenance plan for their hall.

Usage

• In total approximately 12,000 people visit the surveyed halls each week. Extrapolating this figure to include all 325 halls an estimated 26,000 people, or 5 per cent of the Cumbrian population, visit a hall each week.
• The average number of weekly users is 81.
• 40 per cent of halls report that use of their hall is increasing. Only 15 per cent report that usage is decreasing. The state of repair of the hall is clearly related to halls performance in this regard.
• Almost two thirds of halls felt that their hall was currently underused.
• A very wide range of user groups make use of halls on a regular basis. The most common are parish councils, the Women’s Institute and bowling clubs.

The future

Halls identify many challenges for the future:
• Recruiting management committee members
• Generating sufficient income
• Raising funds to effect major repairs to their hall
• Financial impacts of new regulatory requirements.
• Limited numbers of potential users in small, scattered rural communities.
• Too many halls chasing too few users.

The full report expands on this summary to provide a more comprehensive picture of Cumbrian halls. If there are particular areas of interest not covered in the report it may be possible to interrogate the data further, if you would like to discuss this further contact:
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1. Introduction

Village halls are a common feature in many of Cumbria’s towns and villages and provide facilities for a wide range of valuable services. However, as a group little reliable, comprehensive information is available about them. The “Village halls in Cumbria” survey was an attempt by Voluntary Action Cumbria and Cumbria County Council to fill this information gap by gathering data direct from the people who manage Cumbria’s halls. The following report details the survey’s findings.

It is structured around four key themes:

- **Buildings**, including: age; size; state of repair; grounds; facilities; and disabled access.
- **Finance**, including: reserves; insurance costs; income and expenditure; funding sources; and hire charges
- **Management**, including: constitutions; management committees; user representation; and maintenance
- **Usage**, including: user groups and capacity

The findings show that halls remain a key community resource with a wide range of groups and a significant number of people using them on a regular basis. The majority of halls are in fact reporting increasing user numbers. The flipside is that many halls face serious problems in terms of maintenance, repair, funding and management.

This report provides a valuable insight into the current situation for anyone with an interest in ensuring village halls remain an integral part of local communities.
2. **Methodology**

The survey was conducted using a self-completion postal questionnaire sent to all halls on Voluntary Action Cumbria’s mailing list. This is the most comprehensive list of halls available. The questionnaire was sent to a named contact for each hall. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in appendix A.

Halls were given 8 weeks to complete and return their questionnaire. In the event this deadline had to be extended very significantly in order to allow time to follow up non-respondents and increase the response rate. By February 2005, 197 of Cumbria’s 325 halls had returned a questionnaire, giving a 61 per cent response rate.

Despite repeated contact clearly a significant proportion of halls did not respond to the survey. With no existing data it is not possible to compare the profile of respondents and non-respondents.
3. Buildings

_Cumbrian halls show a wide degree of variation in terms of size, age, construction, facilities and state of repair. While the majority of halls appear in good shape a significant minority face serious challenges._

3.1 Size, age and construction

Based on the number of people they are licensed to hold, halls vary greatly in size. The smallest hall holds just 25 people while the largest is licensed for 360. On average Cumbrian halls can accommodate around 130 people.

Halls tend to be long standing features of the local community and are sometimes historic buildings in their own right. The average age of a Cumbrian village hall is 97 years. The oldest hall to reply to the survey, Far Sawrey Village Hall, is 400 years old. Less than 1 in 5 halls are under 50 years old.

The majority of halls (57 per cent) are made of stone; the remainder are brick (25 per cent) or wood (10 per cent). A small number of halls are made of concrete block or are steel frame and cladding. Three halls had roofs or walls constructed from asbestos.

There are no wooden halls over 90 years old. All of the oldest halls are stone.

3.2 Facilities

Most halls provide a quite standard set of facilities to their local communities. However, as is shown below some halls do a lot more.

The average Cumbrian hall comprises of:

- One main hall (98 per cent);
- Two toilets (91 per cent);
- A kitchen (88 per cent); and
- One or more meeting rooms (60 per cent)
Only 42 per cent of halls are able to offer disabled toilet facilities. Perhaps unsurprisingly the presence or absence of disabled toilets is related to a hall’s size, larger halls being more likely to have them.

A small number of halls (10 per cent) also have their own bar facilities, these tend be found in the larger halls.

70 per cent have car parking facilities available. On average hall car parks have space for about 20 cars. Halls built in the post war period are significantly more likely to have car parking.

The majority of halls (54 per cent) have some small grounds (less than ½ and acre). Only a minority (22 per cent) have no grounds at all. A small number (12 per cent) have their own outside playground facilities. Newer halls are more likely to have these facilities.

A minority of halls have some additional less common facilities.

- 39 per cent have a sprung floor.
- 24 per cent have a hearing loop.
- 29 per cent have sports markings.

Additionally, 18 per cent of halls had some other specialist facilities. These included:

- Computers and other ICT
- Art display areas
- Flexible staging, lighting and sound system
- Indoor bowling
- Nursery facilities
- Snooker/ Darts/ Games
- Multi-media suite
- Table tennis
- Swimming pool

3.3 Access Audits and OFSTED Inspection

Under the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act all public buildings must conduct an Access Audit to assess whether the building is accessible. Buildings that
are not accessible are required to draw up an action plan to address the issues identified in the Access Audit. These requirements apply to village halls.

As of February 2005, 42 per cent of Cumbrian halls have **not** conducted an Access Audit.

Amongst halls that have conducted an Audit, 51 per cent have developed an Action Plan as a result, 35 per cent did not need a Plan and 14 per cent have taken no subsequent action.

The likelihood of having conducted an Audit is clearly related to the hall’s finances. Halls with smaller incomes are less likely to have done one. The survey findings also suggest that halls with active Management Committees that meet at least monthly are also more likely to have completed an Audit. Having user representatives on the Management Committee is also more common amongst these halls.

Only 18 per cent have been inspected by OFSTED. Amongst halls that run youth clubs or playgroups this increases to 33 per cent. Halls with higher incomes are significantly more likely to have been inspected.

### 3.4 State of repair

Respondents were asked to rate the general state of repair of their hall building and of their hall’s heating system.

The majority (46 per cent) felt their hall was in need of minor repairs. Only 27 per cent described their hall’s state of repair as excellent. 19 per cent felt major repairs were needed and 9 per cent said a complete renovation or rebuild was required.

Halls between 50 and 100 years old are the most likely to be in need of serious repairs. The oldest halls are in fact less likely to be in need. Wooden halls are, perhaps unsurprisingly, more likely than others to be in poor condition.

Having an effective and efficient heating system is an important factor in ensuring the fabric of the building remains in good condition. However, approximately 25 per cent report that their heating system is in need of major repair or replacement.
Again halls between 50 and 100 years old are the most likely to have heating systems in need of repair. However, age of hall seems to have slightly less impact on the state of the heating system than it does on the general state of the building itself.

Interestingly, while higher income halls are less likely to have problems with their building, income seems to have little bearing on the state of heating systems.

3.5 Comments

Respondents’ comments make clear the challenges halls face maintaining their buildings to a suitable standard. Many mentioned general repairs to the building but some specific issues were mentioned more frequently:

- Issues around DDA compliance
- Presence of asbestos roofing or panelling in poor condition
- The major capital expense required to effect serious renovation
- Effective but inefficient and expensive heating.

Very few commented that their hall was currently in good condition. Comments suggest that halls are heavily reliant on grants to allow them to make improvements.
4. Finances

The survey suggests that while the vast majority of halls have sufficient reserves to meet one year’s running costs many are operating on very narrow margins. This section looks more closely at hall finances, insurance, sources of funding and income generation.

4.1 Income and expenditure

Respondents were asked to indicate the average annual running costs for their hall and their average expenditure.

The average annual income for a Cumbrian village hall is £4,264. The average level of running costs is £3,352. On average hall’s incomes are 127 per cent of their running costs.

However, there is a wide degree of variation between halls on these figures. Incomes range from £150 to £27,000, running costs from £327 to £27,000. In terms of income as a percentage of expenditure this ranges from 27 per cent at one extreme to 566 per cent at the other.

Categorising hall size by income quartiles shows that halls with the lowest incomes are most vulnerable to variations in their income stream.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hall size based on income quartiles</th>
<th>Average annual running costs (£)</th>
<th>Average annual income (£)</th>
<th>Income as percentage of expenditure (averaged)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>1227.01</td>
<td>1061.27</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2060.13</td>
<td>2544.05</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>3352.83</td>
<td>4231.81</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very large</td>
<td>7538.09</td>
<td>9907.58</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On average the largest halls’ incomes exceed their running costs by 60 per cent, by contrast the smallest halls only have an 8 per cent surplus. This clearly limits their capacity to build up reserves or meet any capital expenditure.
Almost a fifth (17 per cent) of halls reported that their income did not cover their running costs. These halls tend to be clustered in the lowest income quartile (it should be noted that this also occurs in some halls in the highest income quartile). On average these halls’ incomes are only 75 per cent of their running costs, over time this is clearly unsustainable. The average short fall in income is £747; amongst the lowest income halls this drops to £504.

In total the surveyed halls had an income of £733,568 and spent £593,880 on running costs.

4.2 Hall hire

Hall hire is one of the main potential sources of income for village halls. Halls were asked to indicate their hire rates for local, non-local and private hire on an hourly, sessional and daily basis.

The survey suggests that most halls do not charge on this differentiated basis and that many do not charge a hire fee at all. The table below shows the percentage of halls that charge the different type of fee and the average fee in each case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hire type</th>
<th>% of halls that charge on this basis</th>
<th>Average hire charge (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hourly local</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>5.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly non-local</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly private hire</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sessional local</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>6.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sessional non-local</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sessional private hire</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily local</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>7.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily non-local</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily private hire</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As would be expected, hall income is related to hire charges. Halls in the top income quartile tend to charge the highest hire fees. However, hire fees do not appear strongly linked to weekly hall visitor numbers, halls with low user numbers tend to charge as much as those with high numbers. It is also curious that hire fees do not appear to be linked to the hall’s state of repair. On average halls that describe themselves as in need of complete renovation charge roughly the same as those that describe the hall’s condition as excellent.
This might suggest that some halls are charging below their potential and should look to review their pricing.

The inconsistent approach to hire fees is reflected in the fact that only 40 per cent of halls use a Hiring Agreement. The use of Hiring Agreements becomes more common as hall income increases; 54 per cent of top quartile halls use an agreement compared to only 25 per cent of bottom quartile. It is also linked to user numbers; 70 per cent of halls with more than 100 visitors a week use an agreement compared to only 18 per cent of those with 30 or less visitors.

4.3 Funding applications

Funding from external sources is an important source of income for Cumbrian halls; 56 per cent of halls had sought funding from another organisation in the last 12 months.

Neighbourhood forums were the most commonly approached funders; 48 per cent of halls that applied for funding did so to their local forum. 96 per cent of these were successful in their application.

Other commonly approached funders, and halls' “success rate” (successful applications as a percentage of total applications), are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>% of halls that applied</th>
<th>% success rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parish Council</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Council</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood forum</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumbria Community Foundation</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Parish Trust</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadfield Trust</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards for All</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Rock</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Fund</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: based on halls which applied for funding in past 12 months

In addition to these commonly applied to funding organisations, halls applied successfully to the following:

- Charles Godwin Trust
- Rank Foundation
• Rawdon Smith Trust
• Frieda Scott Trust
• Countryside Agency
• Cumbria County Council
• Heritage Lottery Fund
• Cumbria Recovery Fund
• Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust
• Lloyds TSB Foundation
• DEFRA
• The Network Fund
• Charles Hayward
• Bryan Lancaster Fund
• Cumberland Building Society
• Garfield Weston Trust
• Crossthwaite and Lyth Landowners
• John Fisher Foundation
• Harold Mason Bibby Trust
• Clifford Howarth Trust
• Furness Community Chest
• Furness Building Society
• Comic Relief
• Keswick Lions
• Lake District National Park Authority Sustainable Development Fund
• Shell Better Britain
• Royal Bank of Scotland
• Leader+
• CLAREN
• North East and Cumbria Co-op Community Dividend
• Rural Regeneration Cumbria
• Sea Dyke Trust
• Sellafield Trust
• Vital Villages Scheme

Applications were also made to the following but none were successful:
• Bernard Sunley Trust
• Cumberland Building Society
• Diocesean Board of Carlisle
• Tudor Trust
• Carnegie Trust
• Ravensdale Trust
• Esmie Fairbain Foundation
• Clare Duffield Foundation
• BAE Systems
• GLAXO
• John Cowan Foundation
• Pilkington Trust
• Children in Need
• Gannett Fund
• Millenium Commission
• United Utilities
• Chase Charity
• Lennox Hannay Trust

Hall management is clearly related to whether or not a hall applies for funding; 70 per cent of halls with management committees that meet at least monthly have applied for funding compared to only 44 per cent of halls that meet every three months. Halls with user group representatives on their management committee are also more likely to have applied for funding.

Unsurprisingly, halls in need of major renovations or rebuilding are more likely to have made funding applications.

4.4 Contact and funding from local councils

The majority of halls are in frequent contact with their parish council but less so with the district council and rarely with the county.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council type</th>
<th>Regular contact (%)</th>
<th>Occasional contact (%)</th>
<th>Rare contact (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parish</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many village halls (40 per cent) receive an annual financial contribution from their parish council. Far fewer receive any contribution from their district council (5 per cent) or the county council (3 per cent). The majority of halls (57 per cent) receive no support from these councils. While it is unlikely to be year on year funding, as noted above a large number of halls receive funds from neighbourhood forums, which are in fact arms of the county council.

4.5 Insurers and insurance charges

The average cost of buildings insurance is £676 per year but this varies widely between halls. The survey suggests that insurance forms a significant element of halls’ annual running costs, on average accounting for 30 per cent.

Categorising halls by income shows that as hall income increases average insurance costs also increase. However, the proportion of a hall’s expenditure accounted for by insurance costs tends to decrease as income increases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income quartile</th>
<th>Average insurance costs (£)</th>
<th>Insurance costs as a percentage of expenditure (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-25 bottom quartile</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-50</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-75</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-100 top quartile</td>
<td>1015</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Halls are insured with a wide range of insurers although some are particularly popular. The table below shows common insurers and their average insurance charges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insurer</th>
<th>Number of halls insured with company</th>
<th>Average insurance cost (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cornhill Alliance</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>696.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecclesiastical</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>544.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFU</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>671.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zurich</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>664.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Sun Alliance</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>661.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich Union</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>593.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talbots</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>666.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregational</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>289.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AXA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1020.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AON</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>756.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cornhill Alliance is by far the most commonly used insurer, accounting for over 60 per cent of halls. However, in comparison with the other more commonly used insurers they are not necessarily the least expensive. While all halls are different there may be scope for halls to save money by shopping around. Obviously this assumes that all insurers are providing an equivalent level of cover.

Halls also require public liability insurance. For the majority (68 per cent) this is included in their buildings insurance. A small number of halls (15) arrange their public liability insurance through their parish council.

The average cost of public liability insurance is £188 but this varies greatly between halls, several halls pay in excess of £600 a year. Alarmingly one hall reported they did not have public liability insurance.
5. Hall management

The survey suggests that how halls are managed has a clear relationship with their success in terms of user numbers and income.

5.1 Constitutions

All village halls will have a Trust Deed, which also lays out the hall’s constitution detailing how the management committee should operate. Despite this 12 per cent of halls reported they did not have a written constitution that governs how the hall should function. This suggests that these halls are either unaware of their Trust Deed or believe their constitution to be something different. Given the importance of these documents it is of some concern that any halls appear not to understand their significance.

Halls in the bottom income quartile are most likely to fall in this category. These halls are also more likely to be in need of major repair, less likely to have applied for funding in the past 12 months and have half as many users as halls with a constitution.

Of the halls that do have a constitution just under half (48 per cent) review their constitution regularly. Those halls that do not review regularly gave a number of reasons for this.

- Fixed in the building’s deeds / no power to review
- Review considered unnecessary
- Only reviewed as required
- Constitution laid down by Charity Commission

5.2 Management committees

The average hall’s management committee has 12 people on it. The majority (77 per cent) of halls include user group representatives; on average there are 5 user group representatives on the committee.

The majority of hall committees meet at least quarterly, however a sizeable minority meet less frequently, see below. The frequency of committee meetings clearly
reflects the hall’s size in terms of income, on average halls that meet monthly have three times the income of halls that meet less than every three months.

| Table 5.1: Management committee meeting frequency and annual income |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Meeting frequency             | Percentage of halls in category (%) | Average annual income (£) |
| Monthly                       | 30              | 6042            |
| Every 2 months                | 28              | 4588            |
| Every 3 months                | 23              | 3619            |
| Less than every 3 months      | 19              | 2098            |

Most halls (64 per cent) find that about 80 per cent of committee members usually attend meetings. Level of attendance at meetings does not appear related to hall income, likelihood of having sought funding or other variables.

| Table 5.2: Level of attendance at committee meetings and average number of members |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Percentage of committee members that usually attend meetings                | Percentage of halls in category (%) | Average number of committee members |
| 100%                          | 14              | 9               |
| 80%                           | 64              | 12              |
| 50%                           | 20              | 13              |
| Less than 50%                 | 3               | 12              |

A minority of halls (10 per cent) do not know who their Holding Trustees are. These halls do not appear markedly different from the rest, they are a similar age, have similar attendance at committee meetings and roughly similar incomes. However, they are noticeably less likely to be aware of their constitution.

Only just under half (46 per cent) of the halls surveyed reported that they had a Maintenance Plan for their hall. Larger halls, in terms of user numbers and number licensed to hold, are marginally more likely to have a plan. Halls with a plan also have a higher average income than halls that do not.

5.3 Public entertainments licence

Only 74 per cent of halls have a Public Entertainment Licence (PEL). On average halls with a PEL have twice the number of weekly users and twice the income of halls that do not.
Table 5.3: Frequency of Public Entertainments Licences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does hall have PEL?</th>
<th>% in category</th>
<th>Average weekly users</th>
<th>Average annual income (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>4995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Except where particular restrictions are laid down in a hall’s governing documents, for instance prohibiting dancing, all halls should have a PEL. 16 per cent is more than might be expected not to have a PEL.

5.4 Advertising

Advertising is an important way that halls can raise their profile in the local community. The survey shows that for many halls advertising tends to be quite limited.

The table below shows the most common advertising methods used by halls and the percentage of halls employing each.

Table 5.4: Frequency of advertising methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertising method</th>
<th>Percentage of halls employing method (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parish newsletter</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish notice board</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local press</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flyers</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 8 halls do not do any advertising. Many halls employ more than one advertising method. Up to a point increased advertising effort is related to increased user numbers.

Table 5.5: Number of advertising methods used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of methods used</th>
<th>Percentage of halls (%)</th>
<th>Average weekly user numbers</th>
<th>Average annual income (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>3893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>5441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2730</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.5 Support

Halls were asked where they would go to first if they required outside help in matters relating to their hall. Voluntary Action Cumbria is the most frequently cited source of support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of support</th>
<th>Percentage of halls that would use as first port of call (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VAC</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish council</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District council</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other common sources of information are:

- Councils for Voluntary Service
- County Council
- Lawyers
- Neighbourhood forum (also County Council)

Many halls said that whom they would contact would be dependent on the particular issue.

When asked what type of support they needed most the most frequent response was financial (69 per cent of halls), then legal (21 per cent). Other types of support required included:

- Practical help for maintenance and repair work
- Tax and VAT
- Events and current developments
- Assistance in preparing funding bids

5.6 Employees

Some halls are large enough to have paid employees. Janitors, cleaners and booking secretaries are the most common type of employee.
### Table 5.3: Employees by frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee type</th>
<th>Per centage of halls that employ (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Janitor</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaner</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booking secretary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. employees</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Miscellaneous employees include:

- Manager
- Play group leader
- Handyman
6. User groups and level of hall use

Generally village halls report that their user numbers are stable or increasing but most feel they are still not being used to capacity.

6.1 User numbers

Halls were asked to indicate the approximate number of people that visit their hall in an average week. According to these figures around 12,000 people visit the surveyed halls each week, on average this equates to 81 users per hall. Scaling this up to include all 325 Cumbrian halls suggests that approximately 26,000 people, or around 5 per cent of the Cumbrian population, use village halls every week.

However, it should be noted that hall visitor numbers vary considerably, 25 per cent of halls have less than 30 users a week and only the same proportion have more than 100.

Encouragingly, 40 per cent of halls reported that their visitor numbers were increasing; only 15 per cent felt they were in decline. The table below shows average weekly user numbers and average incomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of hall use</th>
<th>% in category</th>
<th>Average weekly user numbers</th>
<th>Average annual income (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>5449.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying same</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3460.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3523.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Halls with decreasing visitors tend to have management committees that meet less frequently and are less likely to have user group representatives on their management committees.

As might be expected hall condition is linked to level of use, 40 per cent of halls with increasing users describe their hall's condition as excellent compared to only 11 per cent of halls with decreasing numbers. Proportionately, halls with decreasing users are roughly three times more likely to be in need of complete renovation or rebuild. These halls are also less likely to have applied for funding from other organisations.
The survey suggests that the majority of halls feel they have spare capacity and could cope with more users, 63 per cent describe their hall as “underused”. This rises to 86 per cent amongst those who feel the level of hall use is decreasing.

6.2 User groups

Halls were asked to list the groups that used their hall on a regular basis. The findings show that halls are used for a wide variety of activities. The table below lists the most common user groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Halls with group (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parish Council</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Institute</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance class</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mums and toddlers group</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art class</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play group</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep fit class</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth club</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day club</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amateur Dramatic society</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog training</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Dance</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tai Chi</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, there is a wide range of miscellaneous groups that makes use of particular halls.
7. The future

_Halls were asked to comment on what they felt the future held for them. While some halls are thriving others have deep concerns about their future viability and face serious challenges._

These include:

- Recruiting new members on to management committees – several halls referred to the aging nature of their committees and the difficulties they have in finding people to replace existing members as they retire.
- Difficulty for user groups to find volunteers to help run the groups.
- Poor facilities in poor condition resulting in lower user numbers, creating a vicious circle of decreasing use and deterioration. Unable to change without external funding.
- In some areas the proportion of second homes in the hall’s ‘catchment’ area means that the actual number of potential regular users is very low.
- New regulatory requirements in terms of DDA compliance, entertainments licences, asbestos and others places severe financial burdens halls are often ill equipped to meet.
- General lack of interest in the hall from the ‘younger generation’.
- Higher expectations of the hall facilities from users.
- Complexity of completing lengthy application forms to funders.
- In small rural areas simply not enough user groups to generate the income the hall needs to survive.
- Several note that future success is heavily dependent on outcome of funding applications that cannot be guaranteed.
- In areas where there are several halls in relatively close proximity to each other they are competing for the same, often small, ‘market’.

Many halls reference the importance of the Lottery as a source of funding for major expenditure. Indeed some comments suggest a ‘make or break’ attitude to Lottery funding, the survey findings do suggest however that halls are approaching a wide variety of funders. Few however are able to provide grants at the Lottery’s level. (Halls’ full comments can be found in appendix B.)
Appendix A

Questionnaire with headline frequencies
Village Halls in Cumbria

Summer 2004 survey

Village Halls are vital to rural communities. But although there are a large number of halls across the county little is known about them by the agencies that could provide support. Currently, it is very difficult to get a clear idea of the problems that village halls face, or to show the range and extent of services halls’ offer to their local communities. Voluntary Action Cumbria & Cumbria County Council have got together to ask you to help us gather this missing information for the benefit of all village halls.

Instructions for completing this questionnaire:
If a question has ☐ you must only choose one of the answer options.
If a question has ☑ you can choose as many of the answer options as apply.
Questions with a blue box require you to write your answer in.
Unless instructed (▶) otherwise you should always answer the following question.

If you have any problems filling in the questionnaire feel free to contact Carl Glynn, Village Halls Advisor, who will be more than happy to help.

**T: 01768 869 525**
**E: carlglynn@ruralcumbria.org.uk**

Voluntary Action Cumbria
Old Stables
Redhills
Penrith
CA11 0DT

A summary of the results of this survey will be included in the Winter 2004 edition of Village Hall Update.

---

**Section 1: Your Village Hall**

**Q1** What is the name and postcode of your village hall?

Name: 
Postcode: 

**Q2** What number of people is your hall licensed to hold?

130 average

**Q3** Please list the different rooms in your hall (main hall, toilets, meeting rooms etc).

- Main hall – 98%
- Two toilets – 91%
- Kitchen – 88%
- Meeting room – 60%
- Disabled toilet – 42%
- Bar – 10%

**Q4** Approximately how old is your village hall building?

Average 97 Years

**Q5** What size of grounds does your village hall have?

- Small (less than ½ an acre) 54%
- Medium (½ -1 acre) 19%
- Large (more than 1 acre) 5%
- No grounds 22%

**Q6** Does your village hall have a car park?

Yes 70%
No 30% ▶ go to Q8

**Q7** How many cars can your car park take?

Average 20 cars

**Q8** Does your hall have a children’s playground in its grounds?

Yes 12%
No 88%
Q9 Have you conducted an Access Audit on your hall?
Yes 58%
No 42% go to Q11

Q10 Do you have an Action Plan to address any issues arising from the Access Audit?
Yes 51%
No 14%
No plan required 35%

Q11 How would you describe your hall’s general state of repair?
Excellent 27%
Minor repairs needed 46%
Major repairs needed 19%
Complete renovation / rebuild needed 9%

Q12 How would you describe the state of repair of your hall’s heating system?
Excellent 51%
Minor repairs needed 23%
Major repairs needed 6%
Needs replacing 21%
No heating system at present 0%

Q13 What is the main building material used in your hall?
Wood 10%
Stone 57%
Brick 25%
Concrete block 4%
Other (specify) 4%

Q14 Which of the following facilities does your hall provide?
A stage 39%
Sprung floor 39%
Hearing loop system 23%
Sports markings (eg Badminton) 28%
Other special facilities (list below) 5%

Q15 Has your hall been inspected by OFSTED for childcare provision?
Yes 18%
No 82%

Q16 Are there any other issues relating to the physical condition of the building you would like to mention?

Section 2: Finance and your hall

Q17 Does your hall have enough reserves to cover 1 year’s costs?
Yes 92%
No 8%

Q18 What is the current annual cost of your hall’s buildings insurance?
£676 average

Q19 Which company is your hall insured with?
-

Q20 How is your public liability insurance arranged?
Arranged by ourselves 92%
Arranged through Parish Council 8%
We have no public liability insurance *

Q21 What is the annual cost of your current public liability insurance?
£

Q22 What are your hall’s average annual running costs?
£3352 average
Q23 What is your hall’s average annual income?

£4264 average

Q24 Have you applied for funding from another organisation within the last 12 months?

Yes 56% ➔ go to Q25

No 46% ➔ go to Q26

Q25 Please list all organisations you applied to and tick if your application was successful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>% applied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most commonly applied to:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish council</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District council</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood forum</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumbria Community Foundation</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Parish Trust</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadfield Trust</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards for All</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Rock</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Fund</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q26 Some village halls charge different rates for hire of the hall depending on which organisation is hiring. In the table below please indicate the hire charge for each different type of hirer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hirer</th>
<th>Rate (£) Average</th>
<th>Hourly</th>
<th>Sessional</th>
<th>Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>7.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-local</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.97</td>
<td>17.41</td>
<td>19.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private hire</td>
<td></td>
<td>29.80</td>
<td>40.78</td>
<td>43.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q27 Does your hall have a constitution that governs how your hall should function? (A constitution may be known by another name. For example Objects, Rules, Scheme or Deeds.)

Yes 88% ➔ go to Q28

No 12% ➔ go to Q30

Q28 Do you regularly review your constitution at a committee meeting?

Yes 48% ➔ go to Q30

No 52% ➔ go to Q27

Q29 If no, why not?

Q30 How frequently does your hall Management Committee meet?

- Once a fortnight 0%
- Once a month 30%
- Once every 2 months 28%
- Once every 3 months 23%
- Less than once every three months 19%

Q31 How many Committee members are there?

12 average

Q32 Are there representatives from user groups on the Management Committee?

Yes 77% ➔ go to Q33

No 23% ➔ go to Q34

Q33 How many user group representatives are there?

5 average
Q34  Approximately what percentage of Management Committee members usually attends Committee Meetings?

- 100%  14%
- 80%  64%
- 50%  20%
- Less than 50%  3%

Q35  Do you know who your Holding Trustees are? (Holding Trustees are the individuals or organisations that hold or own the building for the benefit of the community.)

- Yes  90%
- No  10%

Q36  Do you use a ‘hiring agreement’?

- Yes  40%
- No  60%

Q37  Does your hall have any kind of Maintenance Plan?

- Yes  46%
- No  54%

Q38  Please list the job titles of anyone who is employed by your hall in a paid capacity.

- Janitor – 17%
- Cleaner – 35%
- Booking secretary – 1%
- Misc. employees – 3%

Q39  Approximately how many people visit your hall each week?

- 81 average

Q40  Generally speaking do you feel use of your hall is

- ...increasing?  40%
- ...decreasing?  45%
- ...staying the same?  15%

Q41  Please use the space below to list all the groups that regularly use your hall. Please tick a circle for each group to indicate roughly how regularly they use the hall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most common group types</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parish Council</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Institute</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance class</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mums and toddlers group</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art class</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play group</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep fit class</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth club</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day club</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amateur Dramatic society</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog training</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Dance</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tai’Chi</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Q42  Do you consider your hall to be underused?

- Yes  63%
- No  37%
Q43 Does your hall have a Public Entertainments Licence?

Yes 74%
No 16%

Q44 How does your hall advertise its facilities to the local community?

Parish newsletter – 60%
Parish noticeboard – 42%
Posters – 25%
Local press – 25%
Word of mouth – 21%
Flyers – 19%

Q45 How frequently do you have contact with each of the following organisations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Occasional</th>
<th>Rare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parish Council</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Council</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Council</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q46 Do any of these organisations make an annual financial contribution to the hall?

Parish Council 40%
District Council 5%
County Council 3%
None of above 57%

Q47 If you required outside help in a matter relating to your hall where would be your first port of call?

VAC – 55%
Parish council – 15%
District council – 14%

Q48 What type of support is most often needed from outside bodies?

Financial – 69%
Legal – 21%

Q49 VAC produces a newsletter – Village Hall Update – that is sent to village halls 4 times a year. Does your hall receive the newsletter?

Yes ○
No ○ ➔ go to Q52

Q50 How would you describe the Village Hall Update newsletter?

Very relevant 21%
Sometimes relevant 74%
Rarely relevant 5%
Never relevant 0%

Q51 How could VAC improve Village Hall Update?


Q52 Please provide contact details for general enquiries about your hall.

Name:
Address:
Tel:
Email:

Q53 Are you willing to have the contact details above published in a Directory of Cumbrian Village Halls that would be available to the public?

Sign below:

Yes ○
No ○

Q54 We may have questions or need to clarify details when we are compiling the information from this survey. For this reason please provide the name and contact details of the person who has filled in this questionnaire.

Name:
Address:
Tel:
Email:
Q55 What do you think the future holds for your Village Hall?

Q56 Please use the space below if you would like to make any other comments.

Can you contribute to a photographic record of Cumbria’s village halls?
There are over 300 village halls in Cumbria and we think it would be great to have a photographic record of all of them. Therefore we’d like, if possible, for you to send us a picture of your hall (from the outside). Either you can post it along with this questionnaire or, if you have a digital camera, you can email it to carlglynn@ruralcumbria.org.uk. Please write your hall’s name on the back of the photo.

Thank you for taking part in the 2004 Cumbrian Village Hall survey.
Please return your completed questionnaire in the reply paid envelope no later than 30th July.
Appendix B

Halls’ comments on the future

- We are working towards modernising the facilities in the hall. If we are successful with this, we think that the hall will continue to be well utilised. However, if we fail to improve the facilities in the hall, it is likely that the use of the hall will gradually decline.
- The future looks good although I would like to see the hall used more. We have managed to break even for the last few years and if needed we could increase fundraising events.
- Good prospects, including additional use.
- Financially ok, but used less & less in a changing world
- Alterations to inside the building ie disabled toilets, taking out stairs etc. Hopefully a bright future
- More of the same.
- We need to upgrade our facilities to compete. Both schools in Coniston offer their facilities for local use and can offer better parking and toilet facilities. There is a church room utilised by toddlers and dance groups. The Church of England with Millenium (Lottery) funding built a meeting room for use by all village users. Now the football club with Sport Aid (Lottery) funding has opened a sports and social club and is welcoming sports and meeting users. All the above five facilities plus ourselves are in serious competition. Lottery money given can have a detrimental effect on village facilities. Locals, planning, private parties/dances want to retain the Institute but use competing facilities.
- I don’t think that there will be much improvement of use for our Village Hall as we are such a small community and nowadays parents of children have to spend more time and money on school functions etc - there is nothing left for the V Hall. There are few children in our community and with Greystoke, Skelton and Stainton so close we are surrounded by villages which have a greater population and can therefore provide better facilities and put on functions at their Halls. There is little interest except from the stalwarts of the committee and a few others!!
- There will continue to be a need for the facilities provided by the Community Centre. Facilities will continue to be developed & service improved. Core revenue funding will continue to be a problem.
- Depending on progress of new formation of management committee in the village - some people needed to help - goodwill is in decline.

- As the present committee is an aging one, unless younger members can become involved, I have concerns for the future. The increasing amount of bureaucracy will deter any new volunteers (as it does the present ones!). The grant aid is scattered and not made readily accessible and departments appear to work in isolation (right hand not knowing what left hand is doing).

- At the moment the future of our Reading Room does not look good by any means, but perhaps given the assistance of other people/bodies in order to bring our building up to date ie getting running water, toilets and a small kitchen who can tell what the future holds?

- Depends on local community who are being consulted

- I recently attended a Village Hall road show at Crosby-on-Eden and discussed our problems there. There is no doubt that attracting extra users to our Hall is a problem. Our Hall really needs new kitchen facilities, better toilets and in general a lift into the 21st Century. People will no longer book parties (21st, anniversaries etc) because the Hall does not meet their needs - appearance, facilities etc. To add to our problems due to some historical problem the Hall belongs to the Church and we lease. Funding can be a problem in some instances. Some younger members of our community have said "Why do any work for the Church?" Attracting younger members to our committee is also a problem. I often ask the question - "If the present committee resigned would a new committee be formed?" Please feel free to contact me if there are any points I have missed or you would like further information. Ken Boyd (sec).

- Not much change/decline in use.

- The structure of the Village Hall requires regular maintenance. Without major improvements to the building, the present condition and the facilities provided will keep current activities fairly static at present.

- Hopefully a successful completion of Phase 2, followed by increased usage. If we can implement plans for PV panels & wind charger in Phase 2 to achieve almost total 'energy dependence' this would allow us to reduce our hire charges to promote more use. It would also create a 'haven' of warmth/light etc for the village in the event of power cuts.

- Just completed refurbishment. Hope to retain/regain all previous user groups and attract some new ones. Hope to extend private hire.
• The Village Hall, together with the hall and church are the centre of the community and without it the surrounding parishes and community would have nowhere to meet. It is an essential part of the local community so hopefully it will continue to be well used. We try to keep the cost of lettings down as we feel it is better to have a well used facility rather than an underused facility and risk closure. Indeed, the use of our Hall is increasing we think partly due to our reasonable costs. Obviously because of the age of the Hall and some major work that needs to be done, we will need quite a bit of financial support in the not too distant future.

• We will continue to provide for the social, educational and recreational needs of the community

• Little change from the present

• At the present bleak, with refurbishment very hopeful.

• Concerned over the lack of volunteers to join the committee. At best we shall keep it going as now - in reasonable condition as there are no really big problems. We are fortunate in having received monies from wills of local people therefore have not had to do extensive fundraising

• We hope to install new electric heating in the nest few months and this should improve the ambiance of the place. This should make it more user friendly and hopefully it will get more use from the local community and outside bodies.

• The hall will continue to provide a variety of facilities to the community. Because of a substantial grant received in 2000 the finances are sound and there are sufficient resources for a continued programme of maintenance and improvement.

• We are soon starting a feasibility study into having a conference centre facilities at the hall of future financial availability

• Constantly fundraising for new and updated equipment possibly let 1 small office to a regular tenant. We are increasing number of live theatre performances. We hope to host a film club in the future use of office space as a local community policing office.

• With due care, stability and continued usage. Development of activities to ensure regular participation. Potential for extended use with choice of new equipment. Long term substantial ongoing maintenance for roof and structure. Need to continue local fundraising and support. Need to meet new legislation and business/social trends
• After the hall is refurbished it should be cheaper to maintain and provide much better facilities for everyone. It should have a very good future as there are no other similar facilities within 4 miles

• Very positive - especially as we are currently the only modern hall in this area

• It is always a struggle keeping the Hall going financially via fundraising (in view of our employment of a full-time caretaker). But we have recently refurbished our buildings, our bookings are increasing, we have large premises, and we are optimistic for the future.

• We are a scattered community of approx 150 people so we need the village hall to bring everyone together. During the last 18 months many changes have occurred with several young families moving into the village so we hope to involve them in the future. As we are approx 3 and a half miles from Appleby many residents at Ormside join the clubs and evening classes etc in Appleby but we have this year purchased two sets of second hand indoor bowling equipment and we intend to start a weekly bowling club in September. Our village hall is kept in very good condition and we feel quite positive that it will continue to be used for the good of the community.

• We continue to improve with increased bookings. We are at present doing a feasibility study with a view to extending and updating the village hall and its facilities.

• Since our major facelift and refurbishment commenced in August 2003 there is an even greater interest in helping with future needs and this is already significant increased usage by new groups. The future is therefore considered to be bright

• Same as hitherto

• Newly refurbished with lottery grant increased number of bookings/enquiries short and medium term future seems assured need to put careful management plan in place now, including building resources, to prepare for on-going repair/replacement programme for building and equipment

• Future looks quite good, but we desperately need a car park. However farmer is unwilling to sell us some land. We have a lot more people using facilities now

• We have recently completed a community funded renovation of the hall, which is now an excellent facility. Only reopened in late March, use is
increasing as word gets round. The future looks quite bright as long as the villagers respond.

- Excellent with plans to enhance and increase facilities to promote and attract. This has been/is possible as a result of having a (1996) Five Year Plan which is still very much active. Never rest on laurels - that would be fatal.

- I would like to think a bright future but sadly less and less people are able to give up their time on a regular basis to volunteer. The 10 committee members forming Crosscanonby Parish Community Centre Management team give up their time about once a month to clean and maintain the building. As long as we continue to do this the centre can run at a reasonable letting rate and hopefully allow the Parish groups the financial incentive to keep running. Unfortunately the user groups also find it difficult to recruit volunteers and those who will continue to do as best they can.

- Hopefully to continue as a community facility

- Minimal if not supported by local communities

- Continued enjoyment of the facility by the members of the village

- We are the only community meeting place in the parish and both new ideas and new committee members are needed if the hall is to continue successfully. Previous committee resigned en-masse in 1999 and new committee commenced with 12 members. Now down to 8 despite replacements. Social functions are well supported - over 100 at last weeks BBQ - but volunteers few and far between.

- Disabled access - big issue

- Very little unless large funding can be obtained to totally re-furbish the hall. As there are more than 50% of the homes owned in our village are used as holiday or 2nd homes, the heart of our community is failing. If we can re-furbish and upgrade our hall we know a lot more use and community involvement will occur and hopefully provide a focus for the village.

- The future for our village hall is extremely positive. There is a need for a venue for local clubs and organisations but this does need to be affordable. Our policy has always been to meet the need. Participation in the highlights touring programme has also increased use and given a huge boost to income. We have a forward looking committee who have through an annual improved project, raised the standard of the hall to well above average.
• The membership of the hall has almost doubled in the last year. Many young parents have become involved - as they are planning the new play area for children in our grounds. Plans have gone to the planning board and we await their approval.

• Present level of use to continue and to increase with more activities coming on stream, we would like to see more economic, social, educational and commercial use of the hall - within the constraints of our charitable status. An extension is urgently needed to accommodate existing activities. It is essential for the after school club and kitchen is needed for the luncheon club - both these activities are essential for the village. After school funding is in place, but to implement will mean the craft club, afternoon club and crusades youth club will have to make alternative arrangements or even close. The parish council wants to use the village hall for its meeting, but can only do so when there is available space - usually in the summer.

• The aim is to maintain and preserve it for the benefit of the village. The future is fairly bright whilst use of the hall continues at current levels but funding of heavy maintenance bills, such as work required to comply with disabilities legislation by October 2004, will represent a major headache. We set charges at a level so that expenditure is covered but this does not allow for a build up of capital to any large degree.

• Used by the village when needed. Well used for private functions

• We have managers to stay open so far despite the efforts of legislation which forced us to spend £8500 to install disabled facilities which will rarely, if ever be used. We also now have 11 emergency lights thanks to the fire service - next thing, they might make us install an electronic fire alarm. Next time the environmental health inspector comes we will probably have to spend some more money. Every time the entertainment license gets renewed there are new conditions attached. In the future we will have to provide an electrical certificate every year. Next survey is asbestos - watch out!

• The community centre is losing income due to poor maintenance from Allerdale as they are aware of disabled access issues and do not want to spend any money on the building.

• Present in for renovation - hopes for greater use

• Problems! If the younger generation don't start to show more interest (all committee members over 60!) and the hall does not get used more the future is bleak. A Parish Plan recently produced by the Parish Council indicates that
the majority of committee members think that the hall is a necessity - they would miss it if it was not there. Events like the flower show and indeed the "Parish exhibition" in November 2003 and very well attended

- Continued usage providing rent is low but increasing number of organisations not based in Waverton but from north Cumbria will use it.
- Further education appears to be the "new social activity" we need to enhance this provision to ensure the Hall's sustainability.
- We are currently fighting to renew our lease from the church commission who own a number of the farms and the Hall. We are very concerned they may wish to sell the Hall in the next 10 years. We are responsible for all the maintenance and running costs. It is a very active Hall and just the right size. We would find it difficult to build a new one.
- As this is a very rural area - Easton is an area rather than a village - the numbers of young people are declining - we used to have a toddler group but there is no need for it now. I think the Hall is being used less than it was 10 years ago.
- We are holding our own at the moment but the future may be a different prospect when our savings are depleted.
- Hopefully to stay popular with the local people and users of the Hall.
- Generally, use of the Village Hall has decreased due to a number of local groups disbanding ie WI YFC. We are continually trying to raise funds in the hope of ensuring the Village has the Hall for use in many years to come.
- It is a vital community facility. Usage of the Hall is increasing but to accommodate this we have to constantly look at physical changes to the facilities and do our utmost to maintain high standards. There will come a time when the existing fabric of the Hall is no longer capable of dealing with community needs and therefore an appropriate feasibility study will have to be undertaken.
- I think the difficulty in recruiting and keeping committee members who are hands on will increase until no-one is willing to stand.
- To serve the community as long as they want it.
- With an active committee and plenty Hall users the future looks promising. I anticipate the Hall will be improved and continue to be used extensively.
- The Hall is used by the community for social events - bingo, tattie pie suppers, domino drives, summer barbecue, Firbank party etc. The Hall is used by the WI and by the Parish Meeting. The Hall is used as the local
Polling Station. The Hall is used by the Church for PCC meetings, for harvest suppers, for harvest sales for young people workshops. The Hall is used for birthday parties, for funeral teas, for baptism teas etc.

- A very bright picture. The Hall has been refurbished and a new building added as well as a new play area created on an adjoining site. Funding of £316,000 from the Community Fund plus other small grants enabled the work to proceed. The facilities at the Hall have always been well used by the community and with the recent improvements and closure of neighbouring Halls the demand is set to increase. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the building which was built by George Dixon as a school for the education of the children of the Parish. It closed as a school in 1989 and was taken over as a Village Hall in 1991 by means of a leasehold from the Carlisle diocesan board of education, the owners of the property. The Hall Trustees have just been awarded a grant of £8000 plus by English Heritage to restore shields bearing religious texts which were incorporated into the Hall when it was built. Although the Hall has recently been reopened for general use our official opening will not take place until after the restoration and conservation work has been completed.

- To continue to provide facilities for the local community, and to foster a community spirit.

- If we do not secure the Lottery funding applied for we will not be able to rebuild and as a result will lose user groups from the present building. Our main users plan to seek alternative accommodation if we are unsuccessful. The Hall as it stands is not financially viable due to inefficient heating system. We also have no disabled toilet facilities. Our future looks dodgy if we have not made progress by the end of this year.

- We could do with some of the younger folk showing some interest in the running of the Hall. Treasurer is age 82 years, Secretary is 71 years, Chairman is 60 years, committee ages from 60 years - 75 years.

- We hope the Hall will see greater use by the community. We have just had it refurbished and are now looking to raise funds to update the catering facilities to make it a more viable function Hall for use by the community.

- To keep and maintain our Hall we have to keep looking for income from user groups, and in a small rural community this is proving very difficult.

- We applied to National Lottery for money for an extension. We were turned down not because of lack of need but because the forms were not filled out
100% to their satisfaction. We are volunteers with our own lives, families and employment. We are not experts on Lottery applications. We now hope to build an annex ourselves without the help of the National Lottery.

- Continued use by local groups, social activities and occasional hire.
- Without seeking out financial help now in aid of grants to maintain an old building and dwindling number of functions held (not trend anymore for celebrating birthdays for 18 & 21 year olds) we can forsee the Hall closing down within the next 3 years. Dedicated volunteers are 40 year age group upwards and younger generation aren't interested in helping anyone or anything other than themselves.
- Unless younger adults with families take more interest it will eventually close. As a Grade 2 listed building this could happen sooner if major repairs were needed.
- Upgrading to provide a safe, flexible, accessible venue for all, leading to increased and more varied use.
- An eco-friendly, self financing, easily maintained facility, open for all, used all day with a minimum of two full time paid officers, run along the lines of a business by volunteers with or without training with a full programme of events for parishioners (stakeholders) to enjoy.
- I think Stapleton’s Village Hall's future will be good providing we can get Lottery funding, as we must improve toilets and kitchen to comply with disability regulations. It’s a nice little Hall with lots of character, at present we have no cooking facilities, so no hot meals for functions, this would surely bring in more users.
- To continue to keep the community together.
- Needs a committed committee to keep a rolling programme of maintenance and keeping up with latest regulations. I have been involved for last 19 years and so far this has happened. However, it's not easy to get new members on committee and if some key members left and weren't replaced it could easily become neglected. Or, get some enthusiastic members with lots of time and it could go the other way. Good financial support in that virtually every household in village has joined a new monthly lottery we have started but not so much people to help! Everyone is too busy!
- Hall has an excellent future. It is central to the activities in the Parish and is well used. In recent Vital Villages Plan Initiative the comments were overwhelmingly in favour of the Hall being refurbished, particularly the toilets,
kitchen facilities and safer access. The committee has applied for a grant from Award for All in order to carry out a feasibility study but to date have been unsuccessful.

- I feel the future of Scotby Village Hall will be secure providing various grants continue to be available to enable our committee to continue with annual improvements. Every effort is made by our committee to keep our Hall at its highest possible standard.

- We feel there has been a resurgence in the uses of Village Halls in North Cumbria in the last decade. If we can agree with the school and the department of the environment to get land to build an extension to our Hall and refurbish and update our facilities, then it will be somewhere for the local population to continue using as enshrined in our original constitution, and our recent updated constitution.

- Continued use as a community facility and for future generations.

- In the medium term we have to devise and cost a proper maintenance plan, to ultimately replace the structure with a brick structure.

- Future looks poor. New people to the village don't always support village functions. People go to towns but people don't come to villages for functions! Elderly residents who did support events are not able to or have died.

- Good.

- Very important for community meeting place. Usual struggle to be self-financing. Need to get younger dale residents involved in its running.

- Refurbishment is urgently required and we hope to gain funding from the Landfill Tax and go ahead with the work later in the year. We need to sort out our committee, enlarge it to bring on new people who are prepared to share the load. Our committee is largely made up of over 60's.

- Excellent future

- Greater use by community. Refurbishment.

- Obviously we made a new start with a magnificent new Hall this year. The old Hall, although tatty and falling down, was very well used and we hope to expand use of the new hall with its extra facilities (small meetings room, flexible staging, toddlers play park and older children’s recreational area. Our main problem is sustaining the effort on a very small base (electoral roll is 134) after five years exhausting and intensive work getting the new Hall built and commissioned. Also to encourage younger people on to the management committee, which is rich in experience but rather tired!
• To become more integrated with the village.
• We can foresee that there will be a continued need for the facilities that the Village Hall provides. Our concern is that we may have difficulty in meeting the increasing costs required to maintain the facility and meet our legal requirements.
• The last few years the Hall has survived on a wing and a prayer, however this new committee are determined to turn it back into the heart of this thriving village it used to be. We know it's going to be damned hard work, getting the paperwork sorted is daunting enough, then we need to concentrate on some community consultation before we apply for funding for internal and external upgrading.
• Repairs are urgently required to bring the letting of the Hall up to standards required. We have many users if we can improve the Hall.
• I think that unless more people are willing to get involved it will close down. Repair/refurbishment costs are high but at present the Hall is OK. Income exceeds expenditure but may not always be so. Brampton has community rooms to hire and several people use this facility.
• It should continue as a vital facility in this small, relatively isolated rural community, for public and private use. It might yet provide some small-scale internet facility. We hope to increase usage by providing an exercise class for the elderly.
• We have improved the facilities at the Hall with the aid of grants and fundraising and we hope that we will get more private bookings as a result. The venue is particularly suitable for family parties, with children, because of its position in the countryside away from busy roads. On the other hand, because there is no centre of population nearby, only scattered houses, mostly with retired inhabitants, there is less scope for regular use by organisations such as playgroup, after school club, youth club etc. We hope to be able to continue to provide a facility for the community.
• I think their popularity is increasing, and more people are using their facilities. They are so important to maintain community life in rural areas. I am sure the future of our Hall is secure.
• Realistically the Hall is an under used asset to the area at the moment. New properties have been built in Parish - we hope for more use. People would be reluctant to lose use of Hall and its grounds. Hall is on route of "Hadrians Trail" another hope for increased use.
• Continue to serve the social needs of a small but scattered community.
• The future is uncertain but we are confident that our Hall will improve its condition and lead to more use.
• This depends on whether our Lottery application is successful and we are able to buy the Hall, renovate it with central heating, a new kitchen, a meeting room with telecommunications facilities and disabled access and new kitchen as well as building a car park on adjacent land. If the bid is unsuccessful we will continue to limp along on period small grants and continue fundraising through the committee as we currently have no lease as the owner won't give us one.
• As already discuss with yourselves we are hoping to sell the existing Hall and relocate to a smaller building within the village. We hope this will be more cost effective and practical.
• Whilst presently incomplete it should be excellent and is eagerly anticipated.
• We hope that after refurbishment and extension (Lottery funded) use of the Hall will increase. We will try and offer more diverse events and try to include all sections of our community. We will also try to encourage members of the village to run events in an effort to lighten the load on the Hall Committee!
• Since it is the major public facility for this small (68 households) isolated (3 1/2 miles to nearest shop, 11 to nearest supermarket/cinema/general shopping) community, and has been refurbished with the specific needs of the user groups (formed in the village in the response to the possibility of receiving a grant from the Lottery) incorporated into the design, we are confident that it will continue to be well used and well supported.
• To continue to be a popular venue for local events - from toddler groups to old time dance groups. The Hall is well maintained and most people enjoy using it. The hourly hire rate is very competitive and the committee intend to keep low prices.
• It will continue to struggle but still remains an important element in local community life.
• To become of benefit to only our community, but the whole borough. Once the new Hall is opened we see a successful future. We have already had enquiries from possible new user groups and the old groups cannot wait to get back.
• Use will always be small scale. Wasdale is a small community (only 72 voters in a valley several miles long). We hope to attract more use by groups camping in the nearby campsite, though this will be occasional evenings only.

• We would like to have enough volunteers and resources to continue as we are doing at the moment. We feel that our Village Hall is well used and provides a very good facility to the Parish due to the hard work of a dedicated management committee. We are concerned about the increase in paperwork and regulations which produces a lot of work and which we do not feel benefits our Village Hall.

• Hopefully we can carry on as we are now. The Village Hall gets very little use due to the fact that the local community is now made up of a lot of holiday homes. When we do have a local function it is very well supported and attended, but we find that it is not possible to hold them too frequently.

• The Hall is claimed by the County Council and rented to the Parish Council, administered by a Village Hall Committee. We are in the process of negotiation with the County Council to purchase the Hall. If this is possible, the property will be invested with the Parish Council to hold for a newly formed Matterdale Community Association, possibly with Charitable status. At the moment the lease is annual, so it is impossible to improve facilities - which is essential.

• We have just completed a £40,000 refurbishment of the Hall, so it is in good shape and will serve our community for the foreseeable future. There is limited scope for improving local use although we continue to try. There is more scope for continuing to increase use by holiday organisations such as schools for school trips, scouts and guides etc. We already advertise (and are planning a web site) and send out flyers.

• We would like to see it used more as a centre for the social life of the village and surrounding area. We hope that the provision of a modern kitchen may facilitate this.

• We wish to continue maintaining the Village Hall for all the people of Colby, as it is the only nearby place. No pub, shop or Church.

• Continual need to attract users so as to raise revenue for the upkeep of the Hall. Anticipated greater use as benefits of new Hall become more widely known.
• Our outgoings currently exceed incomings finances, so unless more commercial use is made of the Hall, maintenance and improvements cannot be made.

• We are a hard working group of volunteers who are striving to ensure our only community facility in this Parish is used to its best potential. We are holding more regular fundraising events to keep our profile high and have succeeded to attract three new regular user groups in the last three months and are working on attracting a more varied, interesting facility for all age groups.

• Up to now, we have been able to accommodate new organisations, modifying the Hall's facilities if necessary. We believe that we can continue to provide this service to our community.

• Having just had a major update we hope the Hall will carry us through serving the community of Crosthwaite and Lyth for many years. (Thanks to a Lottery/Community Fund Grant). The only major expense remaining we plan to fund from our current bank monies the tiling of the kitchen/bar area and porch with ceramic tiles thus completing a whole refurbishment plan over the past year.

• Our Village Hall is the former Bobbin Mill building. The Martindale resident population has changed since when the Hall was purchased by local fundraising as a Village Hall. There are now approximately half the number of permanent residents and a large number of holiday homes. The Hall is still vital centre for community gatherings, family events and meetings in a rural area where houses and farms are not close together. It provides a neutral place to meet, with ample space and fosters a feeling of community. It is also part of the areas industrial heritage as a former Bobbin Mill with attendant outbuildings, drying barn etc.

• Better support from the local community.

• Our Village is only used by people who only live in the village and do not seem to be community minded.

• Think it might be shaky when the present generation of people who care pass on.

• As long as there are a sufficient number of people prepared to be part of the committee and to organise events it should be a continuing part of village life. Because we are fairly close to Millom (where there is a sports hall and evening class facilities) and Thwaites Village Hall (which has car parking and
a recreation ground) and the number of children in the village is small, we are not in a position to offer play group or recreational facilities.

- Hopefully we can get organisations to use the Hall more as we are disabled friendly, and have just had the Hall improvements finished.
- May survive if funds are available to help with expenses, especially insurance and rates if they were to be charged again.
- If we can raise funding our Hall will be refurbished and hopefully a very useful Hall. Two Halls that were in the village have recently been made into dwellings, therefore this is the only building for the community to come together.
- The Village Hall is central to our community. The various committees, groups and events based in the Hall are what keeps our widespread rural community together. Without this local, central meeting point, we might never get together - formally or informally, as we have no footpaths on the A595/A5092 roads which carve our village into three.
- We are currently working with an architect to renovate and improve the Hall. We have held 2 consultation evenings and have surveyed existing users and, through a village questionnaire (80% returns), the two villages involved. We intend to market the Village Hall to let people know of its existence and facilities.
- Depends on future and local support.
- Due to the construction of the Village Hall there will come a time it will need to be replaced by a brick/slate roof building. Also if the bookings suddenly dried up there would not be enough income to cover our outgoings, the insurance being the biggest problem. Should this situation arise, I think the Hall would have to shut down.
- If Jehovah’s Witness Group cease to use we will be unable to fund maintenance to accommodate changing regulations. The Hall may need to close if it is not used by other groups.
- Unless we can obtain planning permission and funding to revamp the existing building there is every possibility it will close. A detailed survey completed by Allerdale Disability association concludes many faults for us to put right to provide access for all. This is a major project. The building is accessed thirteen steps - the new ramp alone will cost some thousands of pounds. We
have been turned down twice for Lottery funding for a new building. The renovation of the existing Hall seems to be the last option.

- We anticipate a good level of use both by local residents and groups and those from outside the village. This will depend on the facilities remaining up to date and of a high quality. We realise that there may be further improvements necessary to ensure that we comply with current legislation and the DDA. Your advice would be appreciated on this matter. We would also like to make further improvements to the catering facilities.

- The Hall is central to the social spirit of the community and as such will carry on in one form or another. It requires a concentrated effort on behalf of all the residents to undertake major refurbishment work.

- More politically correct interference, which will ultimately result in the demise of small traditional Village Halls.

- As a committee along with a group of local residents we are determined to maintain and promote the Village Hall. We are particularly keen to attract new groups to the Hall and try to increase our income. We would be grateful for any advice regarding this.

- The Village Hall is an essential part of the Village now that the school and the Post Office have gone. We are actually looking for funding to replace the Hall. We have had the feasibility study, public consultation plans drawn up and now going to seek planning permission and the design study.

- We have a continuous programme of maintenance and improvement which an elderly building needs. We would like to be able to cater more for community needs like travelling theatres. We also hold an annual village show for handicrafts, produce and baking. We have just installed a ramp to conform with disabled access criteria.

- More use of the Hall by residents of Brigham and Broughton Cross once the Hall has been upgraded.

- Following the change from a very inactive committee to a very active one, we hope to open up the Hall to a much wider and varied use by the community. The Hall is owned by the Parish of Garrigill, following a community buy-out in 1990, and we wish to see more local people using the Hall for their own needs, and all of us are actively "selling" the Hall in this respect. We want to see community events for all members of the community happening on a regular basis (2-3 times a week).
At the moment we are looking at the possibility of taking over the chapel on a long lease and peppercorn rent to use it as a Village Hall for Stainton. No decisions have been taken. The Church is looking at having services on a Sunday afternoon and using the Chapel for meetings and the Parish Council would sublet to the Church for this. If the Parish Council agree we will probably have a meeting for the Parish in January.

In September 2004 Allhallows Parish Council proposed selling the Village Hall to a local developer and replacing it with a smaller facility. At a public meeting, the community rejected the proposal overwhelmingly and it was agreed to retain the Hall in the old school building. However, there have been several years of poor management leading to a deterioration in the physical condition of the building, lost bookings and rising costs. A new committee has now been formed and there is a real desire to make the centre financially viable and the centre point for community activity. However, the legacy of the previous committee makes this a difficult task. We hope we can stabilise the finances in the short term to enable us to develop the facility and range of services on offer in the longer term.

Anticipating there could be some problems arising from changes in licensing laws.

If we get funding and the planned improvements take place, we think the use of the Hall will increase, both by local groups and for private rental. It is a very important and valued community facility.

If only more of the local community would appreciate what a lovely Hall and what the committee are trying to arrange functions for them to change to come along to.

At our November 2004 meeting, one committee member reported on the event for Village Halls put on by Voluntary Action Cumbria that he had attended. He came back with a wealth of useful material that will help us to manage the Village Hall more expertly. We shall be working through this material, section by section, at our management committee meetings. Much of it is in the form of self-assessment "healthchecks" on how we deal with such things as; Health & Safety issues, model leases and model hiring agreements, maintenance of the premises, survey of our users (and potential users) and what they want, our constitution. One very relevant piece of advice from VAC was that funding for a medium-term, proactive improvement plan is much more readily available than it is for simply keeping on top of short-term
maintenance work. Already, we have made good progress in drawing up our own comprehensive improvement plan.

- The Village Hall will continue for the foreseeable future to be the main centre for the two villages of Finsthwaite and Lakeside educational, leisure and recreational activities.

- Low Hesket Village Hall not only offers a variety of facilities for the local village but has users from well beyond. Since 1996 we have been unable to find a caretaker although we do employ a cleaner who is helped on major occasions by committee members. Much voluntary work is carried out by a small number of active committee members and we also have members of the community who, although not willing to serve on the committee, will willingly help at functions. Providing that the present level of commitment is maintained, we expect the Hall to have a continued and promising future.

- Providing that the refurbishment creates an attractive venue with good facilities it should become a focal point for the community. Besides catering for present users there is considerable interest in having a venue for private parties. There would appear to be a possibility of community based recreational courses such as yoga or keep fit.

- The Village Hall at present is a decent and warm place to use. It could be used more, and that is the object of the committee for the future. Of course we need to get funding to get the outside walls, otherwise we can see a problem of keeping the damp out. We have spent a lot of money on a new floor and kitchen, but at least the people know it is there now for their use.

- Good future, couldn’t do without it.

- All the 2004 housing sales in the village have been mainly as second/holiday homes. The Holiday Property Bond continues to acquire property in the village for visitors use. This does not bode well for the future management of the Hall. Most trustees are now over 60 and the remainder are heading that way - there is little support to join the trustees from the usual sources. The caretaker is 65 in February and the secretary is 65 past - there being no obvious successors. With no new families settling in Braithwaite (housing costs are a barrier) the long term future for management of the Hall does not look good.
• The Hall is well used, well maintained and well funded with the aid of an annual gala (£4000), lettings (£2500) and investments. There is a dedicated committee and support from the local community. All this indicates continuing success. A simple children's playground is at the planning stage.

• For the short term the Hall is fine, long term we don't know, unless we can get some younger people interested.

• The existing Hall is coming to the end of its useful life for various reasons including lack of access for disabled, poor parking, remote from playing fields etc. There are active plans to build new facilities to replace the Village Hall and "youth & community centre" and provide new facilities for playing field groups.

• With funding for the Village Hall we will be able to extend the Hall and hopefully provide a shop to run alongside the Post Office.