



**Action**  
**in rural Sussex**  
**Community Buildings**

**Jeremy Leggett**

## **Our not-so-dirty little secret!**

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- ✓ **We don't really think Village Halls are particularly important....**
- ✓ **...we think the trustees who run them are...**
- ✓ **...we think the volunteers who run all the groups who use them are...**
- ✓ **...we think the people who benefit from everything that goes on in them are...**
- ✓ **...so we think Village Halls are!**

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

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- 1. Village Halls: an invaluable community asset...**
- 2. ...but there are challenges, as there are for all voluntary and community groups**
- 3. How do these apply to hall trustees?**
- 4. AirS Village Halls and Community Buildings Service**
- 5. Participate in improving our service**

## **One building, a thousand uses!**

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- ✓ **Local community activities, clubs and groups**
- ✓ **Events – anniversary parties, weddings, wakes etc**
- ✓ **Attracting services out of urban centres e.g baby checks, podiatry clinic, strength and balance classes**
- ✓ **Public role – polling stations, meetings, public consultations, parish council meetings**
- ✓ **Community services – improving access for key groups, reducing isolation – childcare and nursery provision, dementia support, older people’s support, carer services**
- ✓ **Effect of cutbacks - more childcare but no increase in resources, cutbacks of rural Library Service - role for halls.**

23 November, 2017

## **Top five challenges, is this you?**

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- 1. Finding, keeping and replacing volunteers**
- 2. Finding someone to lead or co-ordinate a group, replace existing leaders**
- 3. Finding funding, fundraising help**
- 4. Overcoming / understanding 'red tape', bureaucracy**
- 5. Finding expert help when needed.**

## **What you say to us:**

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- ✓ **Finding people to run the hall, help with routine tasks, people with confidence to help with processes**
- ✓ **Treasurer, Chairman roles are particularly difficult to fill**
- ✓ **New build funding can take years to accumulate and sources of funding have reduced over the last 5 years**
- ✓ **Small fundraising for equipment or activity is easier**
- ✓ **Increased bureaucracy / routine tasks/ processes have grown every year.**
- ✓ **Expert help is often needed at short notice so need a good referral system for halls**
- ✓ **Issues are often different for large and small halls**

23 November, 2017

## **Are we delivering what you need?**

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- ✓ **National policy framework translated, part of national network ACRE and national lobbying (VAT, PRS, Loan Fund etc)**
- ✓ **Monthly newsletter - updates on all issues / information**
- ✓ **Web information - model documents, topic notes, information sheets**
- ✓ **Email Helpline for routine questions – [villagehalls@ruralsussex.org.uk](mailto:villagehalls@ruralsussex.org.uk)**
- ✓ **Consultancy service – the bit and ‘knotty issues**
- ✓ **Representation on your behalf to public sector providers**
- ✓ **Encouraging and supporting the use of village halls by others**

23 November, 2017

## **At the AirS stand**

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- ✓ **What are you most proud of because it meets local needs of your community.**
- ✓ **What are your aspirations for your hall?**
- ✓ **What key challenges you face in achieving them?**
- ✓ **What do you need assistance with?**





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