

Annual Report 2017/18

Management Committee: Thanks must be extended to the 9 members of the management committee (Mike Barlow, Jill Bungay, David Easby, Michael Elphick, Neville Gray, Sarah Hallberg, Vicky Herod, Andy Pryor and Roly Taylor) who have worked extremely hard this year, attending four Ordinary Meetings and the AGM. All have contributed greatly to the year's work.

Special thanks are extended to the following:

- **Sarah Hallberg** for the secretarial role
- **Louise Currie (CAN)** for providing administrative and advisory services
- **Roly Taylor** for managing the PAT scheme for another year
- **All our volunteer PATesters** who give up their valuable time to help
- **Michael Elphick** for managing the website
- **Andy Pryor** for his role as Treasurer
- **Neville Gray** for 'shadowing' Andy this year in preparation for taking on the Treasurer's role going forwards.

This year has been the very first, of the new partnership between the Consortium and Community Action Northumberland (CAN). It has been a busy and productive year and we feel that the partnership is working extremely well.

WNCBC's formal thanks are also extended to the halls that have hosted the meetings over the last year.

Sustainability and benefits of joint-working: The new partnership has proved to be very positive indeed. CAN benefits from increased involvement with individual halls (resulting in many of them receiving bespoke support) and the consortium benefits from the expertise of a dedicated village halls 'service' as well as the administration function Louise and CAN provide.

Membership: We currently have 63 members of the consortium. The increased membership fee did not appear to have been an issue with any of the halls – and we are grateful to all our members for paying so quickly. As mentioned earlier, some halls have received increased individual support, demonstrating 'value for money'.

Communication with members: This year, members have received 2 full newsletters (in Spring and Autumn), 12 bulletins, and a questionnaire. The information WNCBC has sent out to its members covers a wide range of topics, including information regarding legislation (such as GDPR,) the Website Portal Questionnaire (distributed), Hallmark, Emergency Rest Centres, trustee training and the importance of adequate insurance, to name just a few topics.

Last year we sent all communication, only to the nominated 'Main Contact' as recorded by each hall, expecting that person to disseminate everything to the rest of the hall's trustees. However, there is some evidence that this idea hasn't always worked, so in future (as communicated to halls along with the membership renewal requests) everyone for whom we have been given an e-mail address on our membership forms will receive all communications. We only send out information which is directly relevant to you as members of the consortium and we never give out your email address to anyone outside the consortium or CAN (for the purposes of administration).

If you have any queries or want to contact us directly:

- WNCBC Website www.westnorthumberlandcbc.org.uk
- Sarah (Secretary) sarahwncbc@btinternet.com Tel 01434 240767 (Ex-dir)
- Louise (CAN) louise.wncbc@ca-north.org.uk Tel: 01670 517178. Mob: 07554 569660

Insurance Companies: We have three companies on the consortium 'panel': Insure Your Village Hall, Norris and Fisher and Allied Westminster. Please note that AON has now been removed from the panel as it has ceased to provide relevant cover.

If you choose to insure with one of these companies, you will receive a significant discount because you are a member of the Consortium, and you will receive an additional discount if you have achieved the Hallmark Standard.

Training: A range of trustee training events are currently underway, delivered by CAN. The Consortium gives a subsidy for members wanting to attend. See CAN's website for details. Further courses will be offered during the year if there is sufficient demand.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) – Roly Taylor has once again managed a very successful PAT programme over the 2017/18 year. It is worth noting that PAT Expenses increased this year from £1868 to £2358, which was due entirely to timing differences, with the annual insurance renewal premiums for 2018/19 falling just into the current financial year, which has meant that £632 was paid on 1st October 2017 and £638 was paid on 20th September 2018. This does mean that on paper, the PAT service shows a slight deficit for the current year while in reality, the programme is sustainable.

The PAT report for 2017/18 is summarised below:

Testing 2017 – 2018: *Testing began in October 2017 and was completed in August 2018 with a total of 58 halls being tested. I am grateful to all the volunteers who cheerfully completed their tasks on time and passed their kit on to the next volunteer. All three kits were sent to First Stop Safety for Servicing and calibration in early September and were returned to us on 20 September, in time for this year's testing programme.*

Website Operations: With Michael Elphick's imminent retirement from the committee, effective from this AGM, the consortium will be looking for someone to take over running the consortium website. Sarah Hallberg has agreed to take over

temporarily, but the consortium would like, if possible, to recruit someone who will take on the role as a specific project. Michael has, this year, updated the website so that it is now transferrable across various devices (phones, PCs and tablets). We are very grateful for the help and expertise Michael has given to the Consortium to date.

We have also, in line with new GDPR requirements, removed all personal contact information from our website. We have left up non-identifiable email addresses (such as village hall@) but this means that where halls do not have any non-identifiable contact information, we are not able to publish names, addresses or telephone numbers without your specific permission to do so. When we send out our Members' Needs Questionnaire (see below), we will be asking halls to provide contact information that they are happy for us to put onto the public contact details on our website.

Website Portal Questionnaire: WNCBC had discussed with CAN the idea of having a website 'portal' for use by its members. This portal would be able to give each member access to what would be, in effect, its own simple, good-looking and easy-to-use mini-website - without all the cost and technical requirements that surround setting up a full website from scratch. If Halls already have their own websites, however, the portal would also be able to link directly to those external websites and social media accounts, so if members do already have their own websites or Facebook pages, those could be easily linked to via the portal. In order to gauge our members' reactions to the concept, a web survey was emailed to all member halls in early September and to date, we have had 34 responses. It would help if we had as much feedback as possible from our members, as the question of whether it would be a worthwhile exercise must come directly from our membership. Responses to the survey will also determine what levels of sponsorship/funding we would be able to apply for to allow this project to happen. Therefore, we will be re-sending the link in the next week or so to those member halls who haven't yet completed the survey, and would ask as many people to complete it as possible so that we have an accurate picture of what our members want.

Member's needs Questionnaire: To be sent out early next year, in order that the results are not confused by the questions regarding the Portal above. As a result of changes to GDPR legislation, our increasing relationship with CAN and the potential for development of the Portal (see above), it was therefore decided that it is likely our website needs will change and the focus of the questionnaire this year should be on our online and IT needs. We would therefore welcome your feedback on such issues as the WNCBC website – how often do you use it? What types of things do you find useful? What would you like to see, etc. As with our Portal questionnaire, it is important that we get as much feedback from as many of our members as possible, so we can get a truly representative picture of what our members feel they need in a changing environment.

Management Committee 'leavers': Special thanks must be extended from all the committee on behalf of all the membership, to **Andy Pryor** (treasurer) and **Mike Elphick** (website manager) who are standing down this year. Thank you both for the

years of dedication to the Consortium and for managing the Finances and Website so efficiently – both of which require considerable commitment and dedication.

Members Needs: With the questionnaires mentioned above, we have been very much focused on the IT needs of our members. However, the committee is also very keen to hear about the non-IT needs of our members. Please feel free to contact us if you think there is anything else we can do, to add to our service. As stated above, in the New Year there will be a questionnaire circulated to all our members focussing on IT needs, so please help us by completing it when you receive it.

Annual Report prepared by:

Louise Currie, Community Action Northumberland. 30/10/2018

Sarah Hallberg, Secretary, WNCBC, Northumberland. 12/11/2018