

# **WEST NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS CONSORTIUM**

A registered Charity Number 1168006

**MEMBERS NEWSLETTER No.20. MAY 2017**

**Web Site - [www.westnorthumberlandcbc.org.uk](http://www.westnorthumberlandcbc.org.uk)**

## **CONSORTIUM PROPOSES TO BUY IN SERVICES**

The Consortium Committee has sent out a letter to each Chair and Secretary of all Member organisations with a proposal to appoint Community Action Northumberland (CAN) to undertake some secretarial and other tasks for the Consortium. The Committee is unanimously behind this proposal and would like to see it go ahead but have asked for the views of Members. This Newsletter is intended to give more information on the proposal so that Member Committees have a more informed understanding.

The drawback for Members is that the membership fee will have to rise from £10 to £35 per year and it is fully appreciated that some Members will find this difficult to meet, although the existing benefits of membership will continue and others will arise.

These proposals are not just about replacing a retiring Secretary. They are more about transforming the Consortium to create a new level of working and support for Members that will see additional benefits being captured and a much more professional level of service.

### WHAT CAN HAS BEEN ASKED TO DO

- 1 Secretarial tasks.
  - (a) Arrange the Consortium 4 Committee meetings and the AGM. This will include agendas, minutes, organise speakers and venues promoting networking and good practice.
  - (b) Request and collect the annual membership fee and maintain the membership data base.
  - (c) Produce a bi monthly E Newsletter.
  - (d) Frequent updates on compliance, licencing, statutory and legal requirements.
  - (e) Give full access to information and ACRE Information sheets
  - (f) Circulation of urgent one off information emails as necessary.
  - (g) Full telephone and email access to CAN's Community Buildings Officer (Louise Currie) for a wide range of support and advice.
  - (h) Conduct an annual survey of the needs of Members (using Survey Monkey).
  - (i) Update the Charity Commission records for trustees and the Annual Return.
- 2 Maintenance and administration of the Consortium web-site and exploration of future development options.
- 3 Support to achieve the Hallmark quality standard.

4 Offer funding advice to the Consortium and completing application forms. This would be aimed at the development of the Consortium including web site development, support for training and other possibilities.

5 Identify the training needs of members and organise training courses. Member organisations will be offered a discount of up to £70 for any training course organised by CAN.

6 Advise on constitutional issues to the Consortium and its Members.

7 Promote EnergyCAN and OilCAN

### IS THIS A TAKEOVER OF THE CONSORTIUM BY CAN?

Certainly not, indeed just the opposite. The proposals are intended to make the Consortium more independent, more effective and more professional. The Consortium exists to give service to Community Buildings throughout West Northumberland and the Committee strongly believes that it can improve on what has been achieved in the last nine years.

## WHAT THE CONSORTIUM WILL LOOK LIKE IF THE PROPOSALS ARE ADOPTED

- (a) It will continue to be a charity in its own right.
- (b) The Management Committee will continue and CAN would report to it.
- (c) The Committee will continue to run the Consortium in a similar manner to the last 9 years but with CAN undertaking secretarial tasks and other responsibilities.
- (d) CAN will collect the members subscriptions on behalf of the Consortium.
- (e) The Committee will be responsible for identifying the needs of Members and for finding ways of meeting those needs.
- (f) The Treasurer will maintain the books of account.
- (g) The Consortium will continue to offer a Portable Appliance Testing Service.
- (h) The Consortium will continue to maintain a panel of Insurers that offer discounts to members
- (i) The Consortium will look for other opportunities to generate value and benefit to members through bulk buying.
- (j) The Consortium will look for opportunities to raise funding to meet specific needs.
- (k) The web-site will continue as the primary tool for communication with Members but there will also be a bi-monthly E Newsletter.
- (l) Networking and the identification of best practice will continue to be a main aim.
- (m) The Committee will continue to lobby on behalf of Members .

## WHAT WILL BE THE MAIN IMPACT ON MEMBERS OF THE CONSORTIUM?

- (a) **Service**  
Members will receive an improved and more consistent level of service compared to the one they currently receive. The service will be more responsive and of a greater width and depth.
- (b) **Membership Fee.**  
Membership fees will have to rise from £10 per annum to £35.
- (c) **Training Discount**  
CAN will offer a discount to each Member organisation of up to £70 on training courses organised by CAN.
- (d) **PAT Testing Service**  
The Consortium will continue to offer a Portable Appliance Testing Service to Members that saves each Member a minimum of £50.
- (e) **Existing Discounts**  
All existing discounts on insurance and contracts energy will continue to be available to Members.

## BI-MONTHLY E NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter will include information on changes, new legislation, licensing changes and requirements,

certifications and compliances and other general information. Over the last 9 years we have only managed an average of two Newsletters each year, so this proposal is an improvement.

## WEB-SITE

The Consortium web-site is an important communications tool but it now needs to be developed and improved so that mobile phones and tablets can access the information more easily.

## INFORMATION SERVICE

Members will have direct access to Louise Currie CANs Community Buildings Officer and other CAN staff as necessary. Louise has extensive knowledge on all matters relating to community buildings. The circulation of bulk emails will continue on items that cannot wait for the E Newsletter and there will continue to be a strong emphasis on networking and the identification of best practice.

## ANNUAL SURVEY

There will be an annual survey of the needs of Members using Survey Monkey. This will ensure that the Consortium is aware of the needs of Members and acts to satisfy those needs. This has not been achieved consistently over the last 9 years.

## LOBBYING ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS

On key issues where the interests of members are at stake the Consortium Committee will lobby to get the best outcome.

## APPEAL FOR NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Consortium Committee has vacancies for several Committee members. It is essential to have a good representation of Members on the Committee that understand the business of running community buildings and a good coverage of Members. The commitment is to four meetings each year. New members could be seconded at the July meeting or elected at the AGM in November. Member organisations are asked to consider nominating a Committee member.

## THE EXISTING CONSORTIUM COMMITTEE

Chairman	Mike Wood
Secretary	Adrian Hinchcliffe
Treasurer	Andy Pryor
Membership Secretary.	David Easby
Web Site Manager.	Michael Elphick
PAT Testing Co-ordinator	Roly Taylor
Committee Members	
Keith Robson	
Neville Gray	

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