

Village Halls Sustainability Project

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New Opportunities Fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

Project Evaluation

Rachel Benson
December 2005



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Evaluation of the Village Halls Sustainability Project

Rachel Benson, Project Officer

December 2005

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Introduction

The need for the Village Halls Sustainability Project was identified through the existing Village Hall Advisory Service provided by Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council (HWRCC). Statistics in 2002 showed that out of 240 Community Buildings:

- 100 pre dated World War 2
- 57% provided limited or no access for disabled people

In addition, implementation of part 3 the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in October 2004, and an increasing political focus on environmental issues, rural Community Buildings would be expected to improve facilities to comply with new legislation.

Aims of the Project

The aims of the project were to help management committees of community buildings in the East Riding of Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire:

- Increase access into the building by complying with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, thereby increasing the potential number of people being able to use the facilities; and
- Reduce running costs by increasing energy efficiency in the building

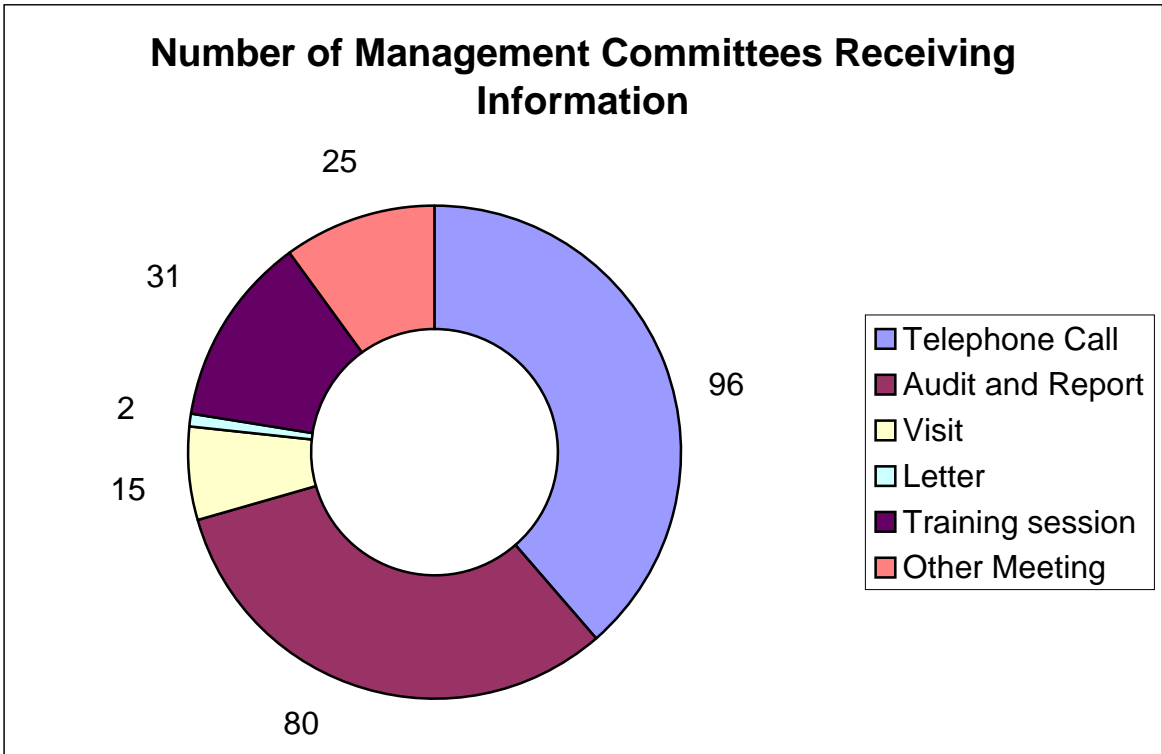
The project started on 1st January 2003 and was funded for three years by the Community Fund and The New Opportunities Fund, SEED programme, subsequently The Big Lottery Fund. In kind support was also given by HWRCC.

Evaluation Methodology

Evaluation of the project has been a continuous process throughout the three years, culminating in a formal assessment in November and December 2005. This has been done through feedback questionnaires following training events, verbal requests for comments and an evaluation questionnaire (appendix 1).

Summary

It is clear from the response from management committees that the help and support provided by the project was needed. Implementation of the recommendations to improve accessibility and energy efficiency will take time as the process of applying for permissions and grants is lengthy and therefore the tangible benefits will not be seen for a few years.



The most popular way management committees contacted the project was by telephone (96) and the majority then went on to request an audit of their building (80). A full report detailing recommendations was produced for all buildings audited. A number of other halls were visited (15) and recommendations were discussed.

Training seminars attracted a number of committees (31) and a further number (25) attended other events where the project was represented. A full list of the Community Buildings and the type of help and support they received is included as Appendix 2.



Haisthorpe Methodist Chapel
East Riding



Seaton Ross Village Hall
East Riding



Broughton Village Hall
North Lincolnshire



Broomfleet Village Hall
East Riding



Habrough Village Hall
North East Lincolnshire

Promotion of the Project and Mail shots

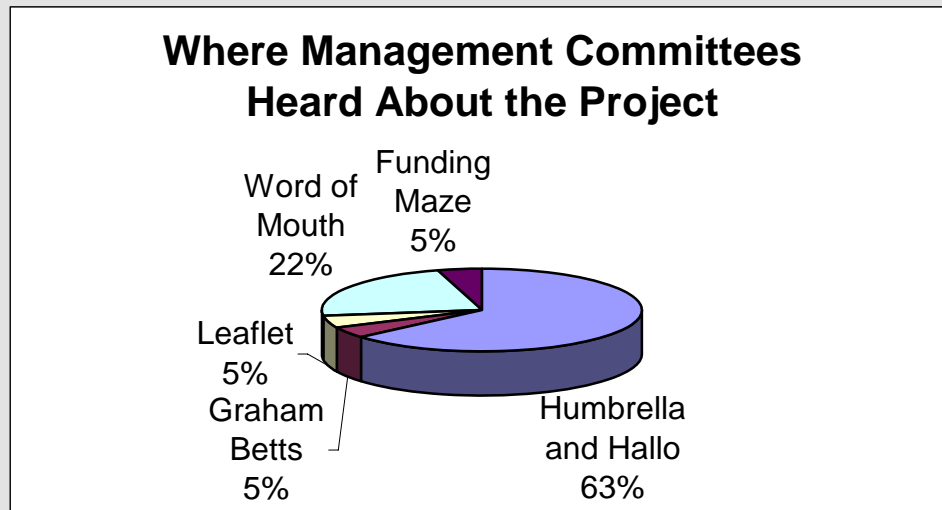
Target set: 4 Mail shots to all 240 Village Halls

Achieved: 19 mailings

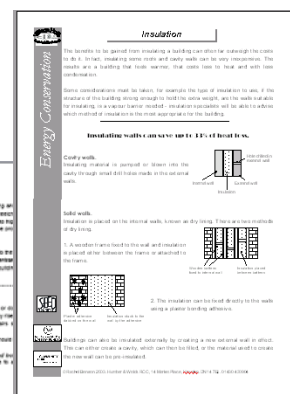
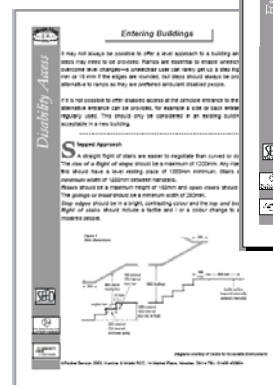
Initial promotion of the project was through an article in *Humbrella*, the bi-monthly newsletter for HWRCC. A leaflet detailing the help and support on offer was also sent to all village halls with this issue.

Evaluation Question

How did you hear about the Village Hall Sustainability Project?



Information Sheets covering Disability Access and Energy Efficiency for Community Buildings were included in the following eight issues of *Humbrella*. The Information Sheets were written and produced by the project officer. An article was also included in *Hallo!*, the bi-monthly newsletter for Village Hall Committees produced by the Village Hall Advisory Team at HWRCC and distributed with *Humbrella*.



Seminars and Workshops

Target set: Deliver 10 Energy Conservation seminars/workshops; 11 Disabled Facility seminars/workshops; 5 Combined Energy-Disability seminar/workshops;

Achieved: 4 Disability Seminars, 3 combined energy/disability seminars

Early in the project, it became evident from the number of requests received that one to one support in the form of a buildings audit and report was what the management committees wanted and needed. This was backed up by the poor response to Disability Access Seminars organised in 2003, and therefore efforts were concentrated on providing the building audits. However, the seminars that did take place were well attended.

<i>Seminar</i>	<i>Number attending</i>	<i>Halls represented</i>
Disability at Middleton on the Wolds 14/08/03	11	7
Disability at Harpham 20/08/03	13	4
Disability at Sproatley 26/08/03	12	4
Disability at Habrough 11/09/03	10	5
Combined at Newport 22/02/05	6	4
Combined at Market Weighton 26/04/05	5	3
Combined at Wilberfoss 17/05/05	6	4
TOTAL = 7	63	31

B&Q awarded the project a donation of energy efficient and disability equipment which was used in the training seminars and in the promotional display for the project.

The Energy Efficiency Advice Centre at York attended the 'combined' events, where they held sessions for local school children.



Display boards with equipment from B&Q.
Training session at Newport Village Hall

Local school children making mobiles from recycled materials



The project also attended a number of events around the region:

- Funding Maze, Scunthorpe 2003, 2004 and 2005
- Funding Maze, Driffield 2004
- HWRCC Rural Roadshows 2004 and 2005
- Howden Show 2004
- Village Hall Conference 2005

The project officer was invited to speak about sustainable community buildings at the Yorkshire Rural Community Council Annual Conference in 2004 and to run a workshop at their 2005 Conference on Disability Access.

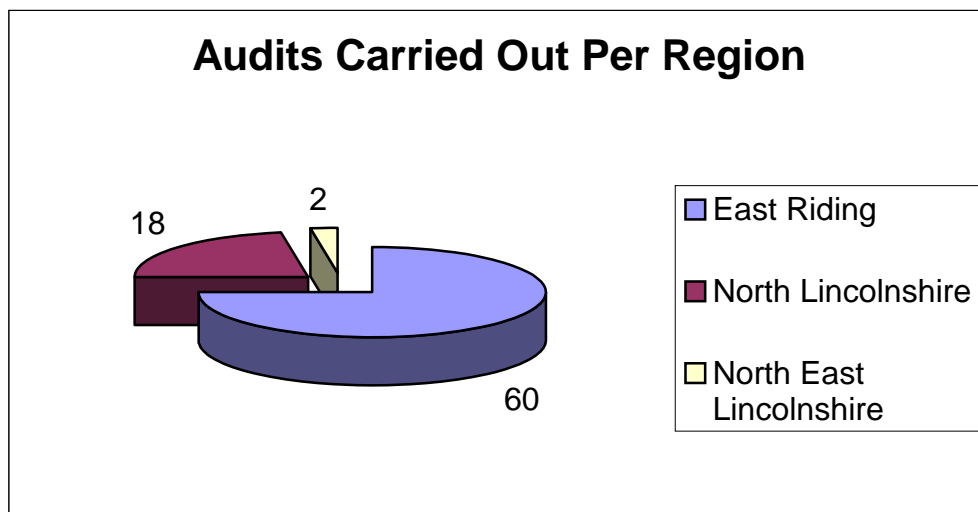
Site Visits

Target set: Conduct 75 Energy site visits and 75 Disability site visits

Achieved: 95 site visits completed

Visits to Community Buildings was deemed the most valuable way of giving benefit to committee members as recommendations specific to the building could be given.

Of the 95 sites visited, 80 received a full audit.



An audit entailed an assessment of the interior and exterior of the building together with information given by committee members present at the meeting.

Where an audit was not conducted, a set of Information Sheets was left with the committee members.

Comment from the evaluation:

“The visit to the hall was probably the most useful item gained from the scheme”

Bespoke Reports

Target set: Produce 64 bespoke reports

Achieved: 80 reports produced

A report detailing recommendations to increase disability access and reduce energy consumption was produced for all Community Buildings where a full audit was completed.

The report has proved a valuable tool for committee members to both prioritise work required and provide evidence of need when applying for grants.

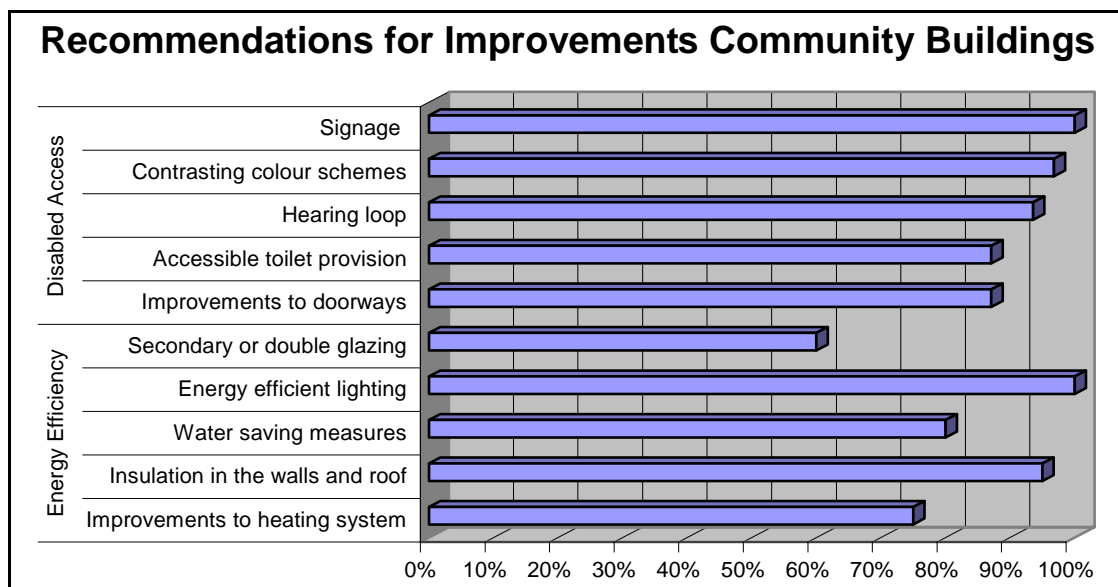
Comments from the evaluation:

“Excellent, thorough report which was photocopied for all committee members.”

“Focused committee onto the urgent and non urgent works ... motivated the committee into action.”

“Used to support grant applications and business plan.”

“Put in terminology we could understand, became less daunting.”



Energy Efficiency Measures

Target set: Evidence of reduction in energy use at 25 community buildings

Achieved: 9 buildings reporting measures taken, 28 in progress

The rising cost of energy prices has increased the outgoings of Community Buildings, sometimes resulting in an increased cost to the users. In order to keep the community facility a viable proposition, costs must be kept to a minimum.

In general, energy efficiency measures cost money to implement and therefore management committees will be looking to raise money, through local fundraising or grants. Finding tradesmen to provide quotations and recommend equipment suitable and applicable to the building is difficult. This combined means putting the measure in to place can take time. It is therefore expected the results of energy efficiency measures will be seen in years to come.

Measure Taken	Number of buildings implementing the measure
Energy saving lighting	6
Double Glazing	3
Improved doors	2
New / improved heating system	5
New Floor	1
Loft Insulation	6
Lowered ceiling	2
New outer shell to the building	1

Comments from the evaluation:

“3 new groups are using the hall since the improvements were made”

“The overall comfort in the hall has increased”

“We can use the building in winter now!”

Case Study

Nafferton Village Hall had a high ceiling with no insulation and the main hall took a long time to heat up. The boiler was noisy and inefficient. For 30 years the committee had talked about installing an insulated suspended



ceiling but had decided against it because badminton was played in the hall. When it became clear the boiler needed replacing and the cost of oil was increasing, they decided it was time to act.

To everyone's surprise, installing the suspended ceiling has not stopped badminton being played. Switching to gas, installing two boilers to provide heat to different parts of the building and siting the boilers above the stage have not only contributed to energy efficiency but has given the Village Hall some much needed room.

Evaluation Question

Have you considered renewable energy in your community building?

- Only 3 halls had considered solar electricity or hot water and 2 felt it could be an option for the long term.
- 33% felt it would be too expensive to install, 20% didn't know anything about it and 20% felt it was too complicated.

With the increasing focus on reduction of use of fossil fuels, renewable energy is an area that Community Buildings should be encouraged to explore in the future.

Disabled Access Measures

Target set: Evidence of improvements regarding disability issues in 25 community buildings

Achieved: 10 building reporting measures taken, 28 in progress

The implementation of part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in October 2004 had a direct effect on Community Buildings, who were then expected to provide facilities for disabled people. An existing building can be difficult to alter to incorporate, for example, ramps to entrances and accessible toilet cubicles. The project officer advised what was reasonable to expect of the committee, the users and the building in order to give easy access for all members of the community. Measures which assist partially sighted people, hearing impaired, mobility impaired and those with temporary injuries were also recommended, as well as those to assist wheelchair users.

Case Study

South Cave WI Hall is set up high from the road, with steps and a sloping concrete path to the front entrance. Internally, the hall is on two levels, with the toilets lower than the main hall. Local fundraising enabled them to replace the steps with a slope and a



handrail was added all along the path. The steps inside were replaced with a ramp and handrails and an existing toilet cubicle had grab rails added to create an accessible WC. These small things have made a lot of difference to the users, many of whom are elderly. The committee are pleased with the improvements, although they think they should have done it years ago it's made such a difference!

Measure Taken	Number of buildings implementing the measure
Accessible toilet cubicle	7
Ramp and handrails	7
Disabled parking bay	1
Removed obstructions to doors	2
Visible signs	3
Portable Ramp	1
Wider doors	1
Internal ramp	2
Improved footpath	3

Comments from the evaluation:

“2 wheelchair users were pleased with the facility”

“Facilities are used by every user”

“People can get in and out of the building easily now”



An accessible toilet cubicle such as this one at Goxhill Memorial Hall can easily be used by wheelchair users and people with mobility impairments. It also has contrasting colours so the white ware is visible against the walls, a feature that partially sighted people find useful.

Perception of the Service

Overall the management committees found the service provided by the Village Halls Sustainability Project very good. Some management committees commented on the service provided by HWRCC, and again this was generally very good. A couple of areas for improvement were noted.

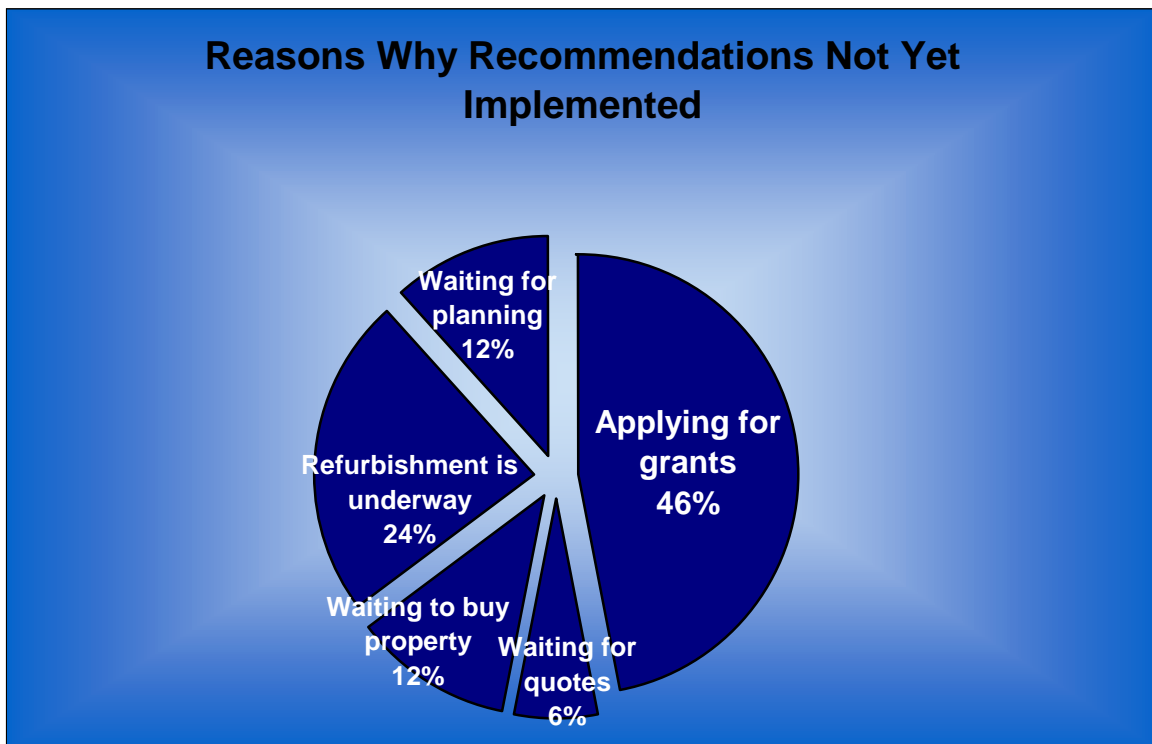
Evaluation Question

What is your opinion of the support/advice received?

- *6 respondents said “very good”*
- *3 respondents said “Excellent”*
- *2 respondents said the advice was “straight forward and clear”*
- *2 respondents said “very helpful and thorough”*
- *“Felt I had a hand to hold with difficult situations”*
- *“Advice was independent and impartial”*
- *“Staff team were extremely knowledgeable on subject”*
- *“Initial contact frustrating, possible for both parties. Once contact established, works well.”*
- *“Sometimes hard to reach due to meetings, phone not answered on Wednesdays or part time working”*
- *“Unclear of how HWRCC, Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire Council work together”*

Further Support Requested

The number of Community Buildings reporting implementing the recommendations is lower than expected and therefore investigation into the reasons for this was required.



The process is lengthy because time is needed to obtain:

- Planning Permission
- Architects drawings
- 3 quotations to satisfy funders
- Community Consultation
- Decision from funders, which can take up to six months
- Local fundraising

As this process is completed by a voluntary management committee, who may lack skills, knowledge and time, it is unsurprising results are not seen for some period of time.

Evaluation Question

Would any of the following have helped you to put the advice and recommendations in to practice?

	Number of respondents answering Yes
Help with locating suppliers of equipment?	43%
Help with locating and liasing with local contractors to provide quotations?	43%
Having a Village Hall Adviser contact you on a regular basis to check on progress?	48%
Knowing there was a source of funding available for the measures required?	67%
Having more volunteers to help with the project?	67%
More knowledge about energy efficiency measures?	24%
More knowledge about Disability Access?	28%

This indicates that the respondents would have benefited from a more dedicated 'hand holding' service. This could have resulted in more community buildings implementing the recommendations in a shorter period of time.

Conclusions

Overall, the project has achieved its aims and has reached, and in some cases, exceeded the targets set. The benefits to the rural communities are starting to be seen, and it is anticipated that it will take three years or longer for some of the committees to be in a position to make the alterations recommended.

A greater result may have been achieved if the project had included the scope for the project officer to be more involved with the process of implementing the recommendations. It has identified an additional specialist need to assist local communities identify suppliers, products and installers.

The report produced for management committee's following an audit of their community building has proved an invaluable tool for future planning and as evidence for grant applications. It is anticipated that the reports will continue to be referred to, particularly if the building requires any refurbishment in the future.

The ability to implement any improvements to a community building is highly dependent on the availability of grant funding. It is hoped that new funding streams will ensure management committees have access to the funding they require in order to provide a warm, comfortable, easy to use and safe community facility that is efficient and economical to run.



The newly refurbished WI Hall in Flamborough, East Riding

Appendix 1. Evaluation Questionnaire

1. How did you hear about the Village Hall Sustainability Project?
2. Describe what help, support and advice you received from the Village Hall Sustainability Project.
Please give, where applicable, dates, locations, amount of time spent, number of people involved.
 - Telephone advice
 - Information Sheets (sent with Umbrella mailings)
 - Audit of the building
 - Report and recommendations
 - Training seminar
3. What is your opinion of the support/advice you received?
4. What measures have you taken to improve the energy efficiency of your building from the advice and recommendations made?
Please list all measures such as insulation, heating, lighting, water.
5. What difference has it made putting the energy efficiency measures in to place?
 - a. To your utility bills?
Please give comparative figures for electricity, gas and oil for at least two years if possible.
 - b. To the number of people and groups using the hall?
Please give comparative figures for before and after the advice was given.
 - c. To the lives of people in the community.
Please give anecdotal evidence in support of this.
6. Have you considered renewable energy in your community building?
 - Solar electricity generation
 - Solar hot water
 - Wind power for electricity generation
 - Wood fuelled heating system
7. If not you haven't considered renewable energy, or have considered it but have not installed it, why not?
 - Don't know anything about it
 - Too complicated
 - Too expensive
 - Location is inappropriate

Appendix 1. Evaluation Questionnaire

8. What measures have you taken to make your building more accessible for disabled people?
Please list all measures.
9. What difference has it made putting the Disability Access measures in to place?
a. To the number of people and groups using the hall?
Please give comparative figures for before and after the advice was given.
- b. To the lives of people in the community.
Please give anecdotal evidence in support of this.
10. If you haven't acted on some or all the advice and recommendations, why not?
11. Would any of the following have helped you to put the advice and recommendations in to practice?
Please answer this question whether you have or haven't put in place the recommendations made.
- Help with locating suppliers of equipment?
 - Help with locating and liaising with local contractors to provide quotations?
 - Having a Village Hall Adviser contacting you on a regular basis to check on progress?
 - Knowing there was a source of funding available for the measures required?
 - Having more volunteers to help with the project?
 - More knowledge about energy efficiency measures?
 - More knowledge about Disability Access?
12. Is there any other help and support the Village Halls Advisory Service could give you?
This can be on any issue, not just Disability Access and Energy Efficiency.

Thank you for taking time to complete this evaluation sheet.
Your responses are confidential and will only be used to monitor the Village Hall Sustainability Project.

Appendix 2. Summary of Work Done 1.1.03 – 31.12.05

Community Building	Type of advice, information and support given						
	Tel Call	Visit	Audit	Report	Letter	Training session	Other meeting
Althorpe Memorial Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Anlaby Village Hall							✓
Appleby Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Atwick Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Bainton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Barmby Marsh Methodist Hall		✓					✓
Barmby Moor V Hall	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Barmston & Fraisthorpe V Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Barnetby Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Barrow On Humber VH	✓						
Barton, St Marys Church Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Beeford Meth Church	✓				✓		
Belton Church Hall	✓						
Bonby Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			✓
Broomfleet Village Hall			✓	✓		✓	
Brough Meth Church			✓	✓		✓	
Brough, All Saints Youth Hall			✓	✓		✓	
Broughton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Bugthorpe MemHall			✓	✓		✓	
Burstwick Village Hall	✓						
Burton Fleming V Hall	✓	✓					
Burton Pidsea Mem Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Cherry Burton Sports Pavillion	✓						
Cherry Burton V Hall	✓	✓					
Cottingham, St Marys Church Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Crowle Community Hall	✓	✓					
Driffield, All Sts PC Hall	✓		✓	✓			
East Butterwick V Hall	✓	✓					
East Cottingham V Hall	✓		✓	✓			
East Garton Meth Chapel	✓						
East Halton Village Hall	✓						
Eastoft Meth Chapel	✓	✓					
Eastoft Village Hall	✓	✓					
Ellerton Village Hall			✓	✓		✓	
Elsham Village Hall	✓	✓					
Epworth Imperial Hall							✓
Etton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			✓

 East Riding

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Appendix 2. Summary of Work Done 1.1.03 – 31.12.05

Community Building	Type of advice, information and support given						
	Tel Call	Visit	Audit	Report	Letter	Training session	Other meeting
Everingham Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Flamborough Church Hall	✓	✓			✓		
Flamborough WI Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Foggathorpe Meth Chapel	✓						
Garton Meth Chapel	✓						
Gilberdyke Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Goole Methodist Church							✓
Goxhill Memorial Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Goxhill Parish Rooms	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Great Coates P Council							✓
Habrough Village Hall	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Haisthorpe Chapel			✓	✓			
Harpham & Lowthorpe	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Hatfield Meth Chapel	✓		✓	✓			
Haxey Memorial Hall							✓
Hedon, Alexandra Hall	✓						
Hibaldstow Village Hall			✓	✓		✓	
Hollym Village Hall			✓	✓		✓	
Holme On S. Moor	✓					✓	✓
Holmpton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Hook Memorial Hall	✓		✓	✓			✓
Horkstow Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Humbleton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Hutton Cranswick Bowls Club	✓						
Irby on Humber Church Hall	✓	✓					
Keady Church Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Kilham Village Hall	✓	✓					
Kirkburn Village Hall			✓	✓		✓	
Kirton in Lindsey Town Hall							✓
Langtoft Sports Hall							✓
Laxton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Leven Youth centre						✓	
Little Weighton V Hall	✓						
Luddington Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Mappleton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Market Weighton Scout Hut						✓	
Market Weighton Town Council						✓	

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Appendix 2. Summary of Work Done 1.1.03 – 31.12.05

Community Building	Type of advice, information and support given						
	Tel Call	Visit	Audit	Report	Letter	Training session	Other meeting
Melbourne Village Hall						✓	
Middleton OT Wolds Reading Rms	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Middleton on the Wolds VH	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Millington Village Hall	✓	✓	✓x2	✓		✓	
Nafferton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓		✓	
New Ellerby Meth Church			✓	✓			✓
New Waltham V Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Newport Recreation Hall	✓		✓	✓			
North & South Cliffe V Hall	✓		✓	✓			
North Cave Village Hall	✓						
North Dalton						✓	
North Ferriby V Hall	✓		✓	✓			✓
North Froddingham Social Centre			✓	✓		✓	✓
North Killingholme V Hall	✓					✓	
North Newbald V Hall	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Ottringham Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			✓
Ottringham Village Institute			✓	✓		✓	
Ousefleet Community Centre	✓						
Owston Ferry Coronation Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Pocklington Town Council	✓						
Preston South V Hall			✓	✓			✓
Rawcliffe Village Hall	✓	✓					
Rudston Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Ryehill Village Hall	✓						
Saxby All Saints V Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Seaton Ross V Hall	✓		✓	✓			✓
Seaton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Shiptonthorpe V Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Skidby Village Hall							✓
Skipsea Village Hall	✓						
Skirlaugh Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			✓
Sledmere Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Snaith Sports Hall	✓						
South Cave Family Centre	✓		✓	✓			
South Cave WI Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Sproatley Village Hall						✓	
Stamford Bridge V Hall	✓		✓	✓		✓	

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Appendix 2. Summary of Work Done 1.1.03 – 31.12.05

Community Building	Type of advice, information and support given						
	Tel Call	Visit	Audit	Report	Letter	Training session	Other meeting
Sunk Island Village Hall			✓	✓			
Sutton on Derwent V Hall		✓				✓	
Swanland Village Hall						✓	✓
Swinefleet Village Hall			✓	✓		✓	
Tibthorpe Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Tickton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Ulceby Meth Church						✓	
Ulceby Village Hall			✓	✓			
Ulrome, Rickaby Hall			✓	✓		✓	
Wansford Village Hall	✓						
Wawne Village Hall	✓		✓x2	✓			
Welton Memorial Hall	✓		✓	✓			
West Butterwick V Hall	✓						
Westwoodside V Hall	✓		✓	✓			✓
Wetwang Village Hall	✓						
Whitton Village Hall	✓		✓	✓			✓
Winteringham V Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Wold Newton Comm Hall	✓		✓	✓			
Wroot Village Hall	✓	✓					
Yapham village Hall	✓		✓	✓			



New Waltham Village Hall
North East Lincolnshire



William Stephenson
Memorial Hall
North Lincolnshire



Yapham Village Hall
East Riding



Barmby Moor Village Hall
East Riding



Appleby Village Hall
North Lincolnshire

This report is published by Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council ©2006, an independent local charity working to support rural communities in the East Riding of Yorkshire, North and North East Lincolnshire. Founded in 1975, it aims to strengthen community life by offering information, advice, support and training.



Humber & Wolds
Rural Community Council

We'll work with you to make the difference locally

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