Ideas marketplace

Online breakout rooms – summary notes

# Succeeding at finding funding

* Most halls covered costs with self-generated funding e.g. room hire. But there were issues around having the knowledge/experience to know whether they were charging a ‘commercial rate’ and about revising costs annually.
* Finding 3 quotes for work to put into a funding application can be problematic.
* There were some big winners from wind farms (some with so much money they didn’t know what to spend it on) and others outwith the area of benefit, even though they were nearby.
* Everyone tapping into the same pot so it would be good if there was a more streamlined application process i.e. SCVO was suggested.
* Need to improve capacity and/or upskill board/volunteers on fundraising, preparing applications and estimating funding needed for a capital project.
* Funders need to be clearer in their guidance, particularly local authorities when they are asking for expressions of interest.
* Conflicts of interest in small communities – often people on Community Councils decide funding awards but also sit on village hall committees and other local projects.
* And the usual – getting core funding is always a problem.

# Village and community halls Handbook

About 50% of attendees had heard of the handbook and/or used it and the others didn’t know it existed.

 Top 3 topics identified by both groups:

* Governance
* Facilities Management
* Funding

(with Climate confidence and Digital close runners up)

Issues raised about the physical time and effort it takes just to run the building.

Issues with getting tradespeople as well – a couple of participants are on islands and struggle to get people to come to them.

Lots of concerns about succession and where new trustees will come from – one participant commented that they were from a tiny village where the youngest person is 62 and they have no idea if their hall will continue in the future.

Changing to a SCIO – the process takes a ridiculously long time and is complicated.

Few issues with getting people to join their SCIO, where they need to have members to be able to representative of the community.

Few people share ideas about fundraising e.g. buy a slate to help them replace the roof, buying g a brick and putting a picture or photo onto it – creates a visual display/legacy, Bonds were also mentioned as being used to generate income and the government administers it so low cost to use these.

That halls are unique – it is the building which is the charity.

Thoughts on the handbook:

- that it could also be outward looking to help people understand how halls work, seems very internally focused for halls themselves at the moment.

- that a forum to post questions in and get responses/ideas from other people in halls would be really useful (Borders TSI contributed that they are setting this up for their network of village halls so maybe we could work with them to replicate across Scotland?).

# Climate confident Scotland

**Success:**

* Where there is paid person in post whose job it is to find out how the village hall can be more sustainable.
* Local TSI investment in climate issues - Village hall federation in the Borders- run and managed by the TSI. The Borders TSI is looking to recruit a full time post dedicated to this.
* Scottish Borders federation of village halls is awesome.
* A paid person working in the community.
* Once they have managed to source them Air source heat pumps seem to be a success
* TSI and SVCO funding – Funding Scotland is a ‘godsend’

**Challenges:**

* Volunteers, time and lack of knowledge – most village halls are staffed by volunteers who lack the skills and knowledge in this area, they don’t have the time to look for grants funding what options are available to them, and they don’t know where to look for these things or where to start. It is time consuming for people who are already time-poor.
* No specific plan in village hall- most village halls have no plan for sustainability and need help creating one but don’t know where to go.
* Time is an issue for people finding and applying for grants
* Finding contractors (and trusted contractors) that will come out to rural locations and are willing to such small jobs
* Most frustrating for most volunteers is that there seems to be a fragmented and inconsistent approach.
* Community lead regional climate networks funds are helping.
* Challenge of being realistic over costs.

**Support wanted:**

* Paid person to support lots of orgs – shared post across the LA (local authority)
* A space to share info with each other- the things that have worked and not worked
* Realistic approach – an underrating that only so much they can do due to make up of building.
* Central hub for sharing help and guidance is needed! Some standardised info would be great!
* Learnt things a few today that’s been really useful.
* Recruiting Younger people to volunteer (by younger people they mean folks that are in their 40s, there was an overall feeling that anyone younger would not be interested)
* More access to the initiatives that are coming out and guidance.
* The creation of a national federation of village halls.
* A place where local halls can share skills as well as information.
* The more open communication, the better.