

Village and Community Halls for Hall Advisers Update 20: 15 September 2020

This statement is ACRE's interpretation of the current situation for activities taking place in village halls

The version of the Government Guidance for Community Facilities issued on 14th September, section 3c, has unfortunately given rise to misunderstanding and confusion. **Community halls are able to remain open and to host formal or informal clubs and hobby groups and amateur choirs and orchestras.**

The guidance stresses that activities and clubs must be limited to attendance in groups of no more than 6 people following social distancing rules. Only "where there is a ***significant likelihood*** (bold italics are ACREs insert) of groups mixing and socialising (and where it will be difficult to prevent mingling and therefore breaking the law)" should activities not take place in a community facility". The listing of activities such as Women's Institutes, sewing clubs, book clubs, craft clubs, reading groups, amateur choirs and orchestras does not mean they cannot take place: It is a flag for organisers of such activities to take particular care to ensure that individuals attend them in groups no larger than 6, and that these small groups remain socially distanced from each other and do not mingle while on the premises.

Such groups and clubs are important for the wellbeing of individuals, particularly those who have been isolated from the company of friends and family over the last six months. The emphasis is clearly on the need to conduct such activities safely, not to prevent them.

Where such activities are attended by individuals on their own (i.e. in a group of one) normal social distancing requirements will apply to their interactions with anyone else.

More updates in due course, thanks Deborah