

**Is it a Lease?
Is it a Conveyance?
Is it a Land Certificate?**

Your hall's ownership will be governed by one or more of these documents and your committee needs to know:

- Where the document is
- Not just what it says, but what it each part of it means in practice

Martin Levinson, a very experienced property lawyer, will

- guide us through the intricacies of ownership documents in language we can all understand,
- tell us how to use the Land Registry and
- give us some help about how to trace missing deeds

There will also be a question and answer session. So come along with any property queries you may have. There will be two sessions, both on

Tuesday 7th June –

**At Kirklevington Village Hall (near Yarm) at 2 pm
At Charltons Village Hall (near Guisborough) at 7 pm**

To book your places (free to network members) contact:

Brian Wake on 01642 782282 wakebrian38@gmail.com

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Tees Valley Halls Network in partnership
with
Tees Valley Rural Community Council
www.teesvalleyhallsnetwork.org.uk
Email : teesvalleyvillagehalls@yahoo.co.uk

**the
Tudortrust**



FAME AT LAST?

Having left the Welfare Hall behind, I headed to Lazenby to speak at a meeting of the Tees Valley Village Halls Network. The Network covers 40 village halls in a patch stretching from Summerhouse to Loftus. The organisation provides practical support, shares good practice and helps keep the halls afloat.

This is an extract from the editor's column in the Northern Echo of March 21st. The editor, Peter Barron (pictured), spoke both informatively and entertainingly at the well-attended Network Annual General Meeting.



In addition apart from the usual AGM business, we enjoyed an excellent buffet supper prepared by the Lazenby ladies, tackled a fiendishly difficult quiz prepared by Hugh Jackson and applauded Ingleby Barwick Community Hall whose people were presented with their *Hallmark 2* award by Graham Pacey, chair of the trustees of Tees Valley Rural Community Council.



Greatham Community Centre revitalized

Brian Walker tells the story

Our former Victorian school was not being maintained by the lessee, the Local Authority. With a view to doing our own repairs the Community Association registered as a charity in 2005 and started to build up a reserve fund. In 2010 the lease ended but the Authority refused to take up a new lease. The owners of the building and the Authority were in dispute about its condition at the end of the lease. Legal costs were escalating and in the end compensation was paid by the Authority though well below the estimated repair cost. The owners were paid their legal costs.

We at the Association continued to operate under a licence to occupy as discussions continued for us to acquire the 25 year lease needed to secure grants. Fortunately we were able to access free legal help via the Tees Valley Community Foundation's Professional Services group. We had to re-invent ourselves to limit trustee liability by becoming a Charitable Company limited by guarantee, engaging Co-operatives U K to guide us through the process which brought us into the frightening realms of Companies House and H.M.R.C.

Then the new entity had to be registered with the Charity Commission. Finally the new lease could be signed in 2013. It included, as an attachment, a photographic schedule of dilapidations recording the state of the building being taken on.

Architects were employed to produce a feasibility study for bringing the crumbling building up to a standard fit for the 21st century. The estimated cost was £285,500 – well over ten times the previous estimated repair cost!

The community and the Centre users rallied to the cause and fund raising has taken off. The Lottery was our first thought and, because of our postcode, we were invited to apply. Disappointment followed – we were not a *Lower Super Output Area* after all and so did not qualify. However, with help from Hartlepool Voluntary Development Association, we secured a landfill tax grant from Veolia of £47,608. This meant we could have a new roof and heating system (including conversion from oil to gas) completed. We had no income for four months while the Centre was necessarily closed. Extra costs, including redecoration, took a toll on our reserves. Further grants are being applied for. We continue to work on each job as needed – new windows are next!



SWAP & SHARE



Carlin How Jubilee Hall needed replacements for their buzzing lights. The message went out to Network members – did they have any experience in sorting out lights and did they know of a good firm?

Hurworth offered advice. Maltby also responded. They had been offered 8 modern, eco-friendly lights which they were happy to pass on – perhaps with a donation. Liz Westhead and her colleagues from Carlin How (pictured) went along to see them and gratefully accepted them.

Ingleby Barwick Community Hall replaced their rather heavy tables with some new, lighter, ones. Margrove Park Village Hall needed tables. The tables went over to Margrove. Ally Miles from Margrove thanked Ingleby, adding: They arrived safe and sound and are perfect for us. It would have taken us ages to raise enough funds to buy them and they have been on our wish list for quite some time.

If your hall needs equipment or has spare equipment, let the Network know and we'll try to arrange another Swap & Share!

Communication, Communication

This was the Network's April Event presented by Tilly Bailey & Irvine (tbi) on the topics of **Marketing, PR, use of Social Media, press releases, web pages**, and related issues. It was held in two separate locations across Tees valley, once in the afternoon and once in the evening. It was very well received, with a lot of questions, and a lot of food for thought.

Evaluation of the event from the Evaluation sheets submitted by individuals/halls indicated that

- well over two thirds of those there thought that the event and presentations had been useful, interesting and relevant, with some very supportive comments.
- over two thirds of those there went away with ideas of their own to think about in order to improve their own marketing.

One useful idea which came across was that the Network should establish its own Facebook page to enhance and raise the visibility of the Network. The Network Committee has already agreed that this should happen. Other ideas were presented for future Network events. Watch this space!

Our thanks to tbi for their time and effort for such an interesting and informative presentation.