



Dorset's Community News

The Latest Community News, Events & Offers from DCA

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This month we wish to welcome our new Trustees and also thank our leaving Trustees for their time and dedication, plus a message regarding our Operations Manager, Paula Bennetts, see page 3 and 4 for messages from our CE, Alex Picot.

We also have some exciting news coming in the New Year for all of Dorset's Village Halls and Community Spaces on page 11.

Enjoy reading and please do share across your organisation or community if it might also be of benefit to others.

Stay safe out there!

Get in Touch:



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[@dorsetcommunityaction](https://www.facebook.com/dorsetcommunityaction)

News around Dorset

Click the underlined words to
link to more information.

Share your thoughts on Stoptober. The NHS are asking you to share feedback and outcomes of local activity via a short online survey. Your responses will not only help ensure that future campaign resources are fit for purpose, but also enable us to identify examples of best practice to help other organisations promote campaigns effectively in the future. Please note that the deadline for completion is Friday 6 December.

Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks - Community Toolkit. Tools to help you promote the Priority Services Register within your organisations or communities, like posters and social media assets.

Tune into The Village Halls Podcast -
A podcast for Britain's 10,000 village, church and community halls and anyone interested in the vital community services they provide.

The second phase of NHS England's Pharmacy First Campaign has launched and assets are now available on the [Campaign Resource Centre](#). The campaign aims to increase the public's awareness of the breadth of support community pharmacists can offer to patients on their doorstep. It focuses on the Pharmacy First service that allows pharmacists to provide some prescription medicine for seven common conditions, if needed, without the need to see a GP or prescription

Wednesday 27 November was National Energy Action's Fuel Poverty Awareness Day (FPAD). Six million households are in fuel poverty, with a growing mountain of debt putting pressure on those least able to afford it. The energy crisis has been going on for over three years, meaning household budgets have been stretched and many are struggling in cold, unsafe and unhealthy homes. Debt is at record levels with households over £3.7 billion to their supplier. The situation is stark with people either having to accrue debt or live in homes that will negatively impact their physical and mental health. You can download their [media pack here](#).

The best slow cooker Christmas recipes
Let the slow cooker do the hard work this Christmas Day! Read more on page 8 for our Energy Saving Sessions for more information.





Batch Cooking - cuts down on fuel costs and food waste And your shopping bill!

Use a slow cooker for a cheaper option and delicious meals.

An Air Fryer cuts down on cooking time and on energy bills

Sign up as a Standard Member to gain access to free ACRE factsheets, our fuller tailored funding information bulletins plus more benefits for your organisation.

DCA Trustee News

This month, we bid farewell to two remarkable members of our board: Simon Wraw, our outgoing Chair of Trustees, and John Morley. After several years of dedicated service, both are stepping back from their roles, taking well-earned breaks from their charity commitments. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to

Simon and John for their invaluable support and leadership during their time with DCA. Their unwavering commitment has guided us through significant challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the ending of the European Social Fund, the transition away from other key funding sources, and a successful exit from a longstanding pension scheme.

Their steady, assured approach has been a source of strength, and we are incredibly grateful for all they have done.

As we say goodbye to Simon and John, we're excited to welcome new trustees to the DCA Board, each bringing a unique blend of experience and perspective:

Rob Watt joins us with over three decades of experience in the technology industry, having served in senior UK board roles at both Hewlett-Packard and SAP Software Solutions. Rob is also engaged in community projects, from fundraising for his local village hall to exploring ways to support community hospital discharge initiatives in Sturminster Newton.

Rebecca Savoury-Fuller brings a strong creative and arts background, having served as Senior Lecturer for the BA (Hons) Acting program at Arts University Bournemouth.

She recently launched her own creative consulting business, adding valuable industry insight to our board.

Together, Rob and Rebecca bring a dynamic mix of corporate, sales, and creative expertise to DCA, and we're delighted to have them on board.

Please join us in welcoming them as we look forward to an exciting new chapter for DCA!

Should you wish to follow on Linked In, please click below to link to some of our Trustee's profiles:

- **Rebecca Savoury-Fuller**
- **Phil Longdin** (Treasurer), Assistant Director - Group Finance at Aster Group UK
- **Aimie Cole**, experienced VCSE sector consultant often working for NAVCA
- **Chris Spackman** (DCA Vice Chair), Mentoring and investing in start-ups, enhancing career prospects for young people
- **Jeff Hart** --Education Consultant/Executive Coach

If you feel you'd make a great Trustee, would like the opportunity or wish to find out more then have a look at page 6 for further Trustee roles available.

Have a look at our Jobs and Adverts listings here!
Got a role to advertised? Get in touch with us to help spread the word.

Farewell to Paula

It is with both pride and a sense of sadness that we announce Paula Bennetts will be leaving DCA on the 13th of December to take on her new role as the Director of the Dorset VCSE Assembly CIC. While this is wonderful news for the Assembly and the wider Dorset community, Paula's departure will undoubtedly leave a significant gap in our organisation.

Paula joined DCA in January 2015, to become our Operations Manager, bringing exceptional leadership to a team of Community Advisors working across Dorset. Her dedication and expertise empowered countless Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) groups to achieve their goals through her advice, support, and training. Paula's impact on our communities has been nothing short of transformative.

Her work shone particularly brightly during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. With tireless commitment, Paula led the charge in delivering timely and accurate guidance to our members, often hosting daily webinars to interpret rapidly changing government policies. Her leadership during this critical period was invaluable.

Beyond her operational expertise, Paula has been a driving force in health, public health, and social care initiatives. She most recently led the Trusted Voices research project for Dorset Public Health and the Integrated Care System (ICS), amplifying the voices of underserved communities, including the homeless, visually impaired, and ethnically diverse groups. Her work continues to break barriers and promote equity in accessing essential services.

Paula's dedication was rightly recognised earlier this year with the High Sheriff's Award for her outstanding service to Dorset's communities—a fitting tribute to her decade-long commitment to DCA and the people of Dorset.

While we bid farewell to Paula as a colleague, we will always consider her a cherished member of the DCA family. We wish her every success in her new role, confident that her vision and passion will have an equally profound impact as she leads the Dorset VCSE Assembly.

Thank you, Paula, for your years of service, your unwavering dedication, and your heartfelt contributions to DCA and Dorset.
You will be deeply missed by us all at Dorset Community Action.

Sign up as a Member to gain access to free ACRE factsheets, our fuller tailored funding information bulletins plus more benefits for your organisation.

Training & Events

Click the underlined TITLE of each event to read more and book your place.



Bite-sized Training

Date: Tuesday 10th December

Time: 3 sessions - 2pm, 2.45pm and 3.30pm.

Where: Online via Zoom

2pm Recruiting Trustees. How to recruit the trustees you need. Whether or not to recruit someone as a trustee and how to make the role attractive.

2:45pm GDPR. How to work out what to have in place, how to create the procedures and implement the policy. This session will demystify the whole process and give you plenty of links and information.

3:30pm Financial systems & accounts. Based on the ACRE Hallmark, this session will go through good practice, plus tricks for ensuring your systems are effective and the rules for accounts.



Artisan Makers Market

Date: Saturday 14th December 2024

Time: 10am to 3pm

Where: Wimborne Community Centre, BH21 1EA

Local Produce, Artisan Crafts and Gifts, friendly cafe, plus dogs allowed.



Energy Saving Session

Date: Wednesday 18th December 2024

Time: 10am - 11am

Where: Online via Zoom

Read more about this event in full detail on page 8.



Community Spaces Networking

Date: Wednesday 29th January 2025

Time: 10am - 11am

Where: Online via Zoom

In January we will be considering how community spaces can get involved in tackling food insecurity and have a speaker Emily Brown who manages Dorset Council's food security projects. We have a speaker PLUS ACRE knows best; going through a factsheet, Ask the Experts, updates and other useful information helping you to stay up-to-date.

Our events page has all the latest timetabled activity and updates, so check it out for up to date information.

Training & Events

Click the underlined TITLE of each event to read more and book your place.



COMING SOON a repeat of the popular **Masterclass: How to research & choose funders**

Date: Thursday 30th January 2025

Time: 10am to 12pm

Where: Online via Zoom

Cost: £75

This session will help you to take your funding applications to the next level. It will look at how to find out about possible funding, find out about the funder and how to make sure it's appropriate for you. After the presentation, there will be time for networking and further discussion on specific challenges you are facing.

Caro Hart, DCA's Community Training Consultant is an experienced fundraiser herself and will be happy to answer any questions.

PLEASE NOTE: This session is limited to 8 people on a first come first served basis.

ACRE Hallmark applications will open in January 2025 to all community centres, faith centres and Village Halls in Dorset **LIMITED PLACES**



It was a very beneficial experience all round and we, as a committee, are very grateful for the opportunity.

As a new Committee which changed wholesale and were in the dark, the Hallmark framework and the guidance we have had has been immeasurably helpful. Essential service. 2024 Hallmark participants

In January 2025, we will be opening up the scheme to a total of 5 community spaces. The ACRE Hallmark is a standard that helps community spaces to look at their systems and how they do things from major policies to meetings to giving keys to hirers. Achieving a Hallmark can reduce your costs and gives everyone confidence that you are a well run community space.

DCA is the certified ACRE assessor for Dorset.

Hallmark assessments will be FREE until 31st March 2025. After this, there will be a charge for the assessment process of £135 + VAT for Hallmark 1 or 2 or £200 + VAT for both together and £100 + VAT for Hallmark 3. Please also contact Caro at caro.hart@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk for more information and an application form.

"It turned out we weren't as disorganised as we thought we were! It helped focus the committee and the roles each member took. We were guided without judgement and that was really helpful and very supportive." 2024 Hallmark participant

Sign up as a Member to gain access to free ACRE factsheets, our fuller tailored funding information bulletins plus more benefits for your organisation.

Jobs & Adverts

Click the underlined TITLE to read more.

Chair of Trustees

DCA is recruiting a new Chair of Trustees

- Want to be part of a dynamic and well-respected charity championing the voluntary sector in Dorset?
- Can you help Dorset Community Action become more enterprising and market-driven to better achieve our charitable aims whilst maintaining our values?
- Could you use your professional skills to benefit Dorset's communities?
- Could you help us meet the challenge of delivering impactful services to our communities?

In return, we can offer you the opportunity to work with a passionate and committed staff team, who are supporting disadvantaged residents and community organisations across Dorset to realise their aspirations.

Trustee with experience in Finance

Dorset Community Action's mission is to bring people together to develop community-based solutions that deliver better services for the benefit of Dorset's communities.

We find innovative ways to solve complex community/social problems by:

- developing neighbourhood solutions through practical community projects
- offering training and developing skills in the community;
- developing the capability of Dorset's voluntary sector
- representing community organisations

Whilst a commitment to attend monthly Finance and Operations Committee meetings, and Board meetings four times per year, is important, so too is a willingness to get to know, and provide guidance to the operational team.

In return, we can offer you the opportunity to work with a passionate and committed staff and Trustee team, who are supporting community organisations across Dorset to realise their aspirations.



WANT TO ADVERTISE YOUR OWN JOB VACANCY OR EVENT?

Reaching all across Dorset's VCSE and statutory sector community!
[Click here to read more on our advertising options.](#)

Energy Outreach Advice



Dorset
Community
Action



ADVICE SESSIONS for FRONTLINE WORKERS & VOLUNTEERS in 24/25

Are you a volunteer or frontline worker supporting under-represented communities who may struggle to pay their energy bills this winter?

We are pleased to announce Dorset Community Action has been successful in securing funding to deliver Energy Insecurity Awareness Training for frontline workers, staff and volunteers for the remainder of 2024 and 2025, in partnership with the Big Energy Saving Network and Citizens Advice Bureau.

There have been many changes since March 2024 with a new government, changes in policy, changes in energy price caps and in financial support available for individuals. For those who have not accessed the Energy Outreach Advice Training previously, this is an opportunity to learn the latest on how you can support your under-represented communities to provide valuable information on how to save on energy bills this winter, be more energy efficient, signpost to energy schemes, upgrade heating or replacing appliances and make referrals to access grants and fuel vouchers.

For those who attended previously this is an opportunity to Refresh and Upskill yourselves or to book for new members of your team.

The training will be for one hour and we will cover topics such as:

- Energy Efficiency
- COL & Fuel Poverty
- Fuel Poverty and Health Impacts
- Debt Advice & Grants
- Your Rights as a Consumer
- Support & Signposting

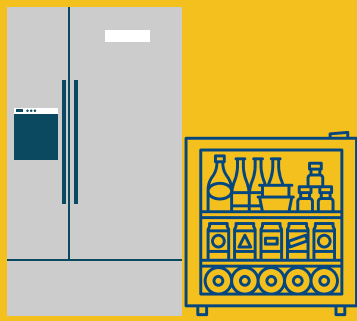
You will receive useful handouts of further information from the session.

These sessions are free to attend and can be delivered In-Person for your team at your location or on-line. We also offer a monthly session for individuals to access.

We are specifically looking to support those who work with:

Older People, Faith Groups, Black, Asian and other Minoritised Communities, Women, LGBTQ+, Single Parent Families, Young People, Carers, Care Leavers, People with Learning Disabilities, People experiencing Physical Disabilities, Mental Health Service Users, Refugees, Asylum Seekers and other vulnerable migrants with Indefinite Leave to Remain and Veterans.

To arrange a 1-hour training session for your team, please contact Julie Johns directly via email: julie.johns@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk Or **BOOK HERE** for the monthly online session – next date: Weds 18th December, 10am.



Wimborne Community Centre **COMMUNITY FRIDGE**

Food collection
from 8am
Monday to Thursday



WHAT WE OFFER:

- Free to all
- Short date or short life items
- Self-collection from our Fridge within the main seating area of our Cafe
- Preventing food waste and items going to landfill

Our community lounge
is for everyone, come
and be in it!

FIND OUT MORE:



@wimbornecommunitycentre



www.dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk/community-centre/

Dorset Community Action, The Little Keep, Barrack Road, Dorchester, DT1 1SQ.
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Resources & Extras

Click the underlined part as the link to read more.

A present for you - Discover the DCA Academy!

Have 50% OFF on three of our top courses as a present from us!

- Managing organisational risk
- Getting to grips with raising money
- Policies & procedures for working with vulnerable people

WHEN: whenever you like - the courses are pre-recorded

HOW: Click [here](#) and sign up or sign in to the Academy

COST: £40 which is less than half price! Plus we have included some Christmas bonuses just for you (Don't tell Santa!)

AVAILABLE: Until 31st January 2025.



Your Community Space -

A closed Facebook group

All community spaces are invited to join our Facebook group; [Your Community Space](#).

We post the latest news, funding links and other articles on community spaces issues as well as links to resources you can download. You can get the latest news long before you receive the newsletters. You are also encouraged to share questions and help others out. Come and join us!

Becoming Sustainable - Now available to watch!

If you missed our well-received online mini-conference Becoming Sustainable last month, you can find the recordings of talks on the Academy.

Comments from participants included:

- "Really accessible information and presentation style and such helpful information."**
"Excellent presenters who really know their stuff and I found all of it useful to our needs."



The main talks were:

- Sustainable Fundraising
- Raising money together; marketing, branding and crowd-funding
- Capital fundraising

Plus you will also find additional presentations and loads of bonus material on the Academy [here](#).

Our Training Academy requires you to set up a FREE account, once complete you'll be able to see all training available!

Resources & Extras

Click the underlined part as the link to read more.



EXCITING MEMBERSHIP GIVEAWAY for Village Halls and Community Spaces!!

TRAINING - NETWORKING - HALLMARK - EXCLUSIVES - FACT SHEETS -

DCA is thrilled to announce that starting January 1, 2025, all Village Halls and community spaces in our database will receive a new type of membership for 15 months, **COMPLETELY FREE!** You will have access to support, templates, and training valued at over £1,000, available at no cost until March 2026.

We are introducing a variety of services tailored specifically for community spaces, including:

- Monthly training programs covering essential topics
- A dedicated Facebook group offering funding updates, articles, and exclusive deals
- A members' newsletter to keep you informed
- An annual complimentary consultancy session on any topic of your choice with our consultant
- Access to the ACRE Hallmark for FREE until March 2025, then at half price, allowing you to **save up to £200** (please note that only five new applications will be accepted each quarter - see Hallmark information on page 6.)
- A pre-Hallmark bundle on the Academy for self-assessment or Hallmark preparation
- All ACRE fact sheets available free of charge - These contain detailed information on over 40 topics, **saving you more than £400**

If you are already a DCA member, these benefits will be added to your regular membership, (which includes a funding newsletter, access to the DCA members' area, discounts on training courses and more).

WHAT DOES YOUR ORGANISATION NEED TO DO:

You will be automatically included in this offer, but please ensure that;

1. If you haven't heard from us by January 6th, 2025, or if you're unsure whether we have the most current contact details for your Village Hall or community space, please email caro.hart@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk or rachel.fry@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk to ensure you are added to the list.
2. Share this newsletter with all your committee members, as we may not have everyone's email.

Please note that starting April 2026, the Community Spaces membership will only be available through subscription (unless we receive continued funding), but if you choose to take advantage of it then you will still save hundreds of pounds each year.

For any questions regarding this scheme, please [reach out to Caro Hart at caro.hart@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk](mailto:caro.hart@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk).

Sign up as a Standard Member to gain access to free ACRE factsheets, our fuller tailored funding information bulletins plus more benefits for your organisation.

Funding in Brief

News from Grant Providers

Our members gain exclusive e-bulletins with **fuller tailored funding** information. [Click here](#) if you wish to find out more about this and the other benefits of becoming a DCA Member!



Funder: BBC Children In Need Core Costs Grants

Who can apply: Registered Charities, CIC's, Social Enterprises, Housing Associations, SEN needs, Schools, Hospices, Industrial & Provident Societies, Religious Organisations, Companies limited by guarantee.

How much? Grants of up to £120,000 over 3 years.

Focusing on: Organisations working with disadvantaged children and young people aged 18 and under.

Important dates: No deadline, applications can be made at any time by submitting an initial expression of interest.

Funder: Neat Streets Grant Round 2

Who can apply: UK registered charities, social enterprises (including Community Interest Companies), local authorities, Business Improvement Districts, Owners of Public Space, Transport Hubs (such as Railway Stations and Airports).

How much? Five Grants up to £10,000 over the next 12 months.

Focusing on: Encouraging litter picking, recycling and campaigns to improve the environment.

Notes: £5000 is required to contribute to the fund to a maximum of £15,000.

Important dates: Deadline is Wednesday 8th January 2025

If you find this snapshot of our funding news useful then why not sign up as a Member to gain the fuller tailored funding information bulletins we offer each month.

Share your stories and join the conversation!

Click on the images for handy quick links to our
socials, news and jobs listings.



Did you know?

The largest gingerbread house had an internal volume
of 1,110.1 m³ (39,201.8 ft³)

**Also, you can click here to sign up as a DCA Member and
start benefiting your Organisation today!**

We'd love to know your thoughts and opinions on our service, this insight will help
shape our offering and enable us to tailor our priorities to your support.

So do get in touch and let us know what you think
info@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk

Dorset's Community News - Brought to you by Dorset Community Action

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Dorset Community Action, The Little Keep, Barrack Road, Dorchester, DT1 1SQ

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