



Allied Westminster Insurance Services (Allied Westminster) and ACRE are delighted to announce they have reached an agreement in which Allied Westminster will provide significant financial support for ACRE's England-wide information and advice service for village halls over the next three years. This vital advisory service is delivered to village hall committees by the thirty-eight county-based organisations that, together with ACRE, make up the 'ACRE Network', and which will now benefit from Allied Westminster's generous investment.

Village halls provide social activities, clubs, classes and essential services for every age group, thereby building a sense of community spirit and helping to combat loneliness. Volunteers managing the village halls need guidance and professional support with everything from licensing legislation to health and safety issues, exactly the type of assistance which ACRE's advisory service provides.

Richard Quallington, ACRE's Executive Director says: 'Allied Westminster's financial support, together with their extensive knowledge of village halls, will enable ACRE to continue delivering a high quality advisory and support service to our members. We look forward to developing this partnership further, and to working with Allied Westminster as the principal supporter of this resource.'

Gavin Mitchell, Managing Director of Allied Westminster, stated:

As the single largest provider of Village Hall insurance across the UK, we care deeply about the halls we insure. Our significant investment in ACRE supports activities that enhance quality management, promote good governance and help to mitigate risk. These key benefits underpin sustainable community buildings and protect both the halls and their trustees.

Our VillageGuard™ Policy was designed in collaboration with underwriters AVIVA, the UK's largest insurer. Our Client Support team administers all aspects of the policy, including claims handling, in-house at our Boston Spa headquarters.

While VillageGuard™ is very competitive in terms of premium and levels of cover; I firmly believe that first-class customer support, not least in the event of a claim, is what has made us the market leader. We are justifiably proud of a renewal retention rate of over 96% and our client base is growing from strength to strength. However, there is no room for complacency in such a specialised market and we always welcome feedback from Village Halls.

VillageGuard™ is constantly reviewed to ensure it is best in class and we have a team currently undertaking a major product revision. So do watch this space!

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. Further information about Allied Westminster Insurance Services can be found [here](#), Twitter @A\_Westminster, and VillageGuard [here](#).
2. AVIVA is one of the UK's leading insurance providers. As well as underwriting the VillageGuard policy they run the annual Community Fund Awards. Entries for 2018 open on 11 September.
3. Through its network of skilled advisers, ACRE supports the 80,000 volunteers who run halls and similar rural community buildings, such as church halls and community centres. These specialist advisers have local knowledge and an understanding of the issues in your area. Supported by ACRE, they help communities to manage their buildings. On the national stage, ACRE speaks up for village halls, ensuring Government policymakers are aware of the challenges faced by volunteers who are often struggling with red-tape and the demands of managing a community building. More information [here](#)