

ABOUT THE TRUST

What is the Trust?

The Trust's full name is The Gresford and District War Memorial Community Centre Trust, but that's a bit of a mouthful so it is generally known as the 'Trust'.

Yes, but what *is* the Trust?

The Trust is an area of land in Gresford bounded by the present Clappers Lane, Chester Road and High St. with a number of buildings on it and it is held 'in trust' for the inhabitants of the parishes of Gresford, Marford Hoseley and immediate vicinity.

O.K. but what does that mean?

The land and the Constitutional Club was sold on 10th May 1949, by the executors of Miss Allington Hughes of Bryn Y Groes, Gresford for £3,150.00, with certain conditions attached, to seven inhabitants of Gresford, known as the Trustees.

Why were they called Trustees?

Because they were a group of residents who were going to be entrusted with the purchase of this land for the benefit of others, not themselves.

Where did the money come from?

The records are vague on this. There had been a 'welcome home fund for soldiers' and there were probably other monies raised locally too.

What conditions were there?

First, the Trustees had to apply to the Charity Commissioners of England and Wales to have the Trust premises made over to the Official Trustee of Charity Lands. This meant that it was now a registered charity and the local residents became a Management Committee. Then there were fourteen other conditions.

What were these other conditions?

Well, the first one said that the Trust premises were to be held on condition that they were used for the benefit of local residents, and I quote here " for the purposes of physical and mental training and recreation and social, moral and intellectual development through the medium of reading and recreation rooms, library, lectures, classes, recreations and entertainments or otherwise as may be found expedient without distinction of sex or of political, religious or other opinions subject to the provisions of these presents" that is to say, regardless of what prejudices individual trustees may hold. Really this part of the Trust's Constitution was very forward thinking, even if the language does sound a bit stilted now.

But there were another thirteen conditions weren't there?

Yes and the next one said that the general management and control of the Trust premises should be organised by a Management Committee of 26 members. At the time this was to consist of twelve elected members (to be re-appointed at an Annual General Meeting) and fourteen members who were to represent affiliated organisations on a list.

What else?

Well, the Trust committee has to give one week's notice and hold an Annual General Meeting in the Spring, at which the committee has to make a report and the accounts available, and elect the twelve members.

It was also said that if a new organisation was formed in the community with aims consistent with the Trust's constitution then that organisation could have a representative member of the committee. For example, in 1995 The Charity Commission agreed that the list of affiliated organisations could be altered and the constitution currently allows for a committee of 12 elected members and 18 representative members. Elected and representative members can also be appointed during the year if a position is vacant.

The Trust was to keep a minute book and record all rules and regulations. A meeting quorum was set at not less than a third of the total number of members. All payments and donations were to go to a bank account and were to be used for all outgoings "for the upkeep and improvement of the Trust premises".

On a majority vote and with the consent of the Charity Commissioners the committee could raise a mortgage to improve the Trust premises and lastly, if for some reason a majority of the committee thought it advisable to discontinue part or all of the use of the premises according to the conditions, then the Committee was to give two weeks notice and advertise a public meeting so that a majority of the residents present could vote on the proposal to let or sell some of the property. Then the committee would have to gain the consent of the Charity Commission and any monies be reinvested in another property for the benefit of the community under the same original conditions.

Wow, that seems to ensure that the Trust runs pretty much today how the original constitution was set up in 1949.

Yes, it does. The Trustees are all local residents who volunteer to help run the Trust for the benefit of the community. We think it was assumed in 1949 that the volunteers would be adults but anyone living in Gresford, Marford, Hoseley and the vicinity can become a committee member and certainly all are welcome. A resident doesn't need to be 'invited' to be a Trustee but can visit, be shown around the premises and then join if there is a vacancy. All are welcome, especially those with relevant skills.