



## Anstice Memorial Hall

Renovating Anstice Memorial Hall, a Victorian working men's club



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Sector:	<b>Hub</b>
Location:	<b>Madeley, Telford</b>
Grant awarded:	<b>£174,750</b>
Grant date:	<b>October 2018</b>
Ownership:	<b>Charitable Incorporated org.</b>

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power to  
change

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### **Grant purpose**

The Power to Change grant will fund a lift and toilet for disabled visitors, fund staff to manage events, improve fire exits to increase capacity, and redecorate the ballroom.

### **Locally rooted**

The community campaigned to save the Anstice in 2014 and set up the Anstice Community Trust to keep it safe. Volunteers have refurbished it to preserve one of the few community spaces in the area.

### **Trading for the benefit of the local community**

The ballroom in the Anstice is hired out for weddings, functions, music events and community activities. The Trust charge premium prices for commercial events, while community events are charged at a discounted rate.

### **Accountable to the local community**

Anstice Community Trust is accountable to its members and volunteers. They have a say in the running and development of the Anstice, from the community events programme to the fundraising work.

Madeley is an old mining town in Shropshire which was absorbed by the construction of Telford New Town in the 60s. During this development, Madeley's town centre was lost, and an old working men's club, called the Anstice Memorial Hall, was one of the few community places where people could meet and had been central to the social lives of residents for years. When the Anstice was faced with closure in 2014, there was an immediate public response.

Protests were held outside the building, petitions were launched and a "Save the Anstice" Facebook page quickly gathered 900 followers. Members of the campaign established the Anstice Community Trust (ACT), approached local councillors and were eventually granted a licence to

occupy the building.

Since then, the group have developed a popular events programme to raise funds for the building's refurbishment, while local people have been volunteering to clean and paint the Anstice. Local businesses have also given support, donating time and materials to refurbish the kitchen, paint the entrance and clean curtains and carpets either free of charge or at a discounted rate.

For two years, ACT have been holding volunteer-led fundraising events in the Anstice Ballroom. Their programme has evolved in response to suggestions from volunteers and local people, and caters for a range of ages and tastes. Events like the monthly craft fair have become very popular, with stalls booked out months in advance, and hundreds of visitors attending every fair.

The commitment of the Community Trust and the support of the local community convinced Madeley Town Council to invest £1.1m into the modernisation of the building before leasing it back to ACT. This much-needed investment will pay for fitting out the ground floor, re-decorating the exterior, moving Madeley library into the building, developing a community café and setting up two commercial spaces to generate extra income.

Power to Change's grant will complement the Council's investment, with a £174,750 grant from our Community Business Fund to fund a lift and toilet for disabled visitors to make the Anstice more accessible and inclusive. It will also go towards a full-time building and events manager so the hub can be open 7 days a week. The ballroom will also be redecorated so ACT can continue to charge premium prices for commercial events, while community events are charged at a discounted rate. And the fire exits will be improved so they can legally have more people in it. This will significantly increase the Anstice's income and ensure it is preserved as a community space in Madeley for years to come.



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## Community engagement and membership

ACT membership is open to all, on completion of a short form. Membership fees are £10 per person per year. Members are encouraged to volunteer at events, serving refreshments, stewarding the door etc. They also call in to the weekly drop in sessions and help with cleaning, decorating and minor repairs to the building as well as socialising and meeting other volunteers.

Members and volunteers are encouraged to join the working groups and have a direct say in the running and development of the project. The 'Events' working group organises social and community activity in the Ballroom and many suggestions from members have been taken forward such as offering Bingo Sessions and a regular Craft Fair. The 'Funding' group deals with wider fundraising and oversees the Finances. All members are invited to attend the AGM and can put themselves forward as a Trustee. The Anstice's Trustees are all members of the local community and engage with residents every day in different ways. For example, they run an active Facebook page with over 1400 members and hold weekly drop in sessions to encourage people to volunteer, socialise, raise funds and take an active role in the Anstice. The Trust have also carried out formal consultations, community surveys, open days for young people and discussions with Local Councillors.