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Lottery funding blow for Telford memorial hall revamp

By [Toby Neal \(/news/authors/toby-neal/\)](/news/authors/toby-neal/) | [Madeley \(/news/local-hubs/telford/madeley/\)](/news/local-hubs/telford/madeley/) | [News \(/news/\)](/news/) | Published: Mar 14, 2018

A bid to win just under £1.5 million lottery cash towards a revamp for Madeley's historic Anstice Memorial Hall has been turned down for a second time.



Dot Holden, Andy Rose and Brenda Smith in the ballroom at Anstice Hall , Madeley, which is undergoing a renovation project

The Victorian building was once home to the oldest working men's club in England but closed in 2014.

It has since been bought by Madeley Town Council on behalf of the community and is being brought back to life and holding events once again while fundraising continues.

Modernisation work is expected to cost around £1.6 million.

Andy Rose, regeneration officer with the town council, said: "We have received written confirmation that our revised bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund has been turned down by their West Midlands committee.

"The response, as given last time, was that our bid was a very good one but their committee had to take decisions on more projects than the available budget would allow and the application was rejected due to insufficient funds.

"It would have allowed a full restoration in one go rather than a phased approach that we will have to consider now.

"The town council, working with the Anstice Community Trust, will now look at other funding options that might be available and the likely phasing of the works."

The town council took over the Anstice in 2015, and last year managed to get it to the point where they could hold events.

In the months since, it has hosted a number of a concerts, and couples have started to look at it as a venue for wedding parties.

Even getting to this point was a big task, with issue after issue facing the team.

Unsuitable

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When the hall closed, the building was unsuitable to be used, and despite starting a number of events, the parish council had to stop their programme.

The boiler was condemned, the electricity and wiring had to be upgraded and work was needed on the emergency lighting.

And that was without taking the look and feel of the hall into account.

Wallpaper had to be replaced, the floor had to be sanded and repolished and rotted windowpanes needed to be replaced.

Volunteers trying to clean up the hall said it was like a treasure trove being able to go thorough everything that had been left abandoned by the previous owners.

In July the venue hosted its first wedding reception since reopening.

Bride Danielle Jones said it had been a place they had both visited for birthday parties and events in the past, and that it had been nice to be able to support it themselves.

Anyone who wants to find out more about events at the Anstice, would like to help volunteering, or has memories to share should visit Madeley Town Council at Jubilee House. Alternatively visit [theanstice.co.uk](http://www.theanstice.co.uk) (<http://www.theanstice.co.uk/>).

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