

In the same year the Youth Service decided to switch the focus of its facilities solely to music with the creation of Madeley Music Project. The main aim of this was to provide support, advice, tuition, rehearsal and recording facilities for young musicians. One of the groups which benefited from this initiative was the still successful indie group *The Sunshine Underground*.

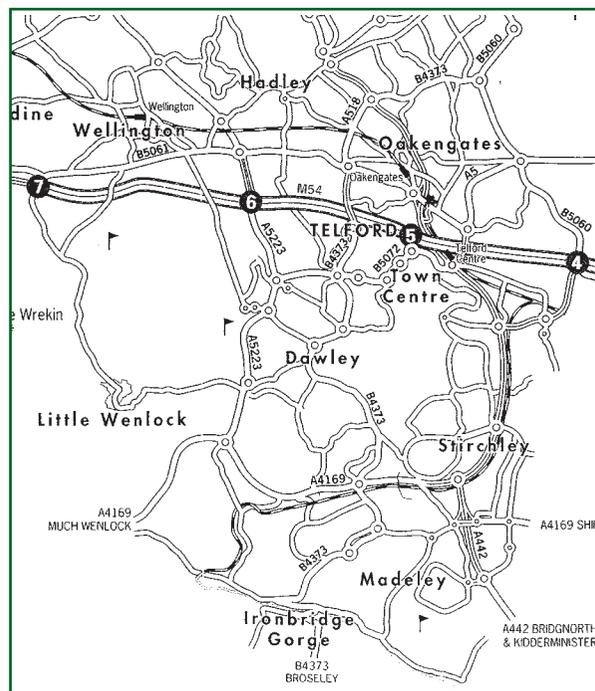
During the 1990s, apart from minor repairs, little work was carried out on the building which deteriorated rapidly and the Clubs for Young People (whose funds were very limited) began to look for a get-out. With the success of a *Single Regeneration Budget* bid in 1997 the Madeley Challenge Programme was created and allocated funds to support the development of Lumley Hall. This process included the commissioning of the Feasibility Study which made a number of recommendations regarding the long-term future of the building and of the projects involved.

As a result, the Lumley Hall Management Company was set up as a *Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee* to secure the building's future and achieve some kind of stability. The Board was to be made up of local residents, existing users and others 'with an interest in the future of the building'. The Clubs for Young People transferred ownership of the building to the new company for a nominal fee and emergency repair work was undertaken and completed.

Various attempts have been made to obtain funding to refurbish the building but, so far, none has been successful. The years have taken their toll and it is clear that this lovely building would benefit from an overhaul.

Lumley Hall is not a listed building. Although it is on the 'Buildings of Local Interest' register compiled by Telford & Wrekin this carries no statutory authority. Likewise it falls within the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site and the Madeley Conservation Area but these do not offer statutory protection either. The Management Board has recently received an influx of fresh blood and the new directors are determined to provide Lumley Hall with the future it so richly deserves.

## How to get to Madeley



This account has been prepared by the Madeley History Group with assistance from Martin Shaw and David Smith.  
The cover illustration is by Maggie Humphry.

## Parish Places No.1



## Lumley Hall Former County Court House Built 1858



## Lumley Hall

Lumley Hall was built in 1858 as the Madeley County Court.<sup>1</sup> At that time it was simply called the County Court House and did not acquire its current name until the early 1980s. People often ask how it came to be known as Lumley Hall. This happened when the building was passed to Telford Development Corporation (TDC) in the 1970s. For some time it had been owned by St. Michael's Church and was known as 'St. Mick's'. However, there was constant confusion between 'St. Michael's the Church' and 'St. Mick's the High Street building' so it was decided that the name should be changed and TDC asked the then vicar of St. Michael's, Vic Price, to come up with a new name. Vic consulted the 1849 *Tithe Map and Apportionment* and saw that the plot of land where the building now stood was owned, in 1849, by one William Lumley – presumably the last private owner of the plot - so he suggested the building be named 'Lumley Hall'.

It was designed by George Reeves of London and built by the Nevett Brothers (Timber and Builders, Waterloo Street, Ironbridge) who had also built the Anstice Memorial Centre in Madeley. Described as 'in the Classical Grecian style' it incorporated a 'large and lofty' Court Room, Registrar and Bailiff offices, a retiring room and a dwelling house for the court keeper. It was open 10am-4pm daily with Court Sessions being held on Wednesdays. The Court Officials consisted of a Judge and Clerks to deal with the proceedings and record events. A High Bailiff and Registrar was appointed and, later, Certified Bailiffs under the Law of Distress Amendments Act. The Court also appointed its own Solicitor and Official Receivers when it received Jurisdiction under the Bankruptcy Act of 1870.

The Court seems to have dealt solely with minor offences – mostly relating to unpaid debts.

It continued as a County Court until the service was restructured as a result of the County Court Districts (Misc) Order 1950 when its functions were transferred to the Wellington County Court.

<sup>1</sup> Madeley had been included in the 27<sup>th</sup> Circuit of County Court towns as a result of an Act passed, in 1846, for the recovery of debts not exceeding £20. Prior to the construction of Lumley Hall the Court was held in a room adjoining the Royal Oak Public House.

Lumley Hall has, however, been used as a wider community facility since its construction. As early as 1858 it was used as a temporary meeting place for local Baptists while the new Baptist Church was being constructed.



After closure as a court, the building was taken over by St. Michael's Church and used, until the late 1960s, as a church hall. It was used for Sunday Schools, Mothers' Union meetings etc and, around this time acquired its local nickname of 'St. Mick's'.<sup>2</sup> At this time it was also used as a base for the local St. John's Ambulance.

By the late 1960s it was falling into a state of disrepair and was sold, by the church, to Greenall Whitley Brewery who planned to knock it down and rebuild / extend the next door pub (the Royal Oak). The plans came to nothing and the neglected building became increasingly derelict and subject to vandalism.

In 1973 (after complaints from local residents and [apparently] pressure from young people) it was bought by Telford Development Corporation (TDC) with a view to setting up facilities for young people. A youth club was set up with the support of the County Council Youth Service and activities included a very popular disco.

In the late 1970s Telford Amateur Boxing Club transferred its HQ there from its former base on Woodside. It organised fitness, weight training and other related activities for its members in the centre.

<sup>2</sup> The main hall was said to have a seating capacity of 160 and some of the smaller rooms up to 60.

The Careers Service also had a presence in the building in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Around this time the building's music focus began to develop as St. Mick's had been home to a Punk Rock fanzine (fan magazine) known as *Guttersnipe*. This was produced by young people and combined music reviews with topics such as racism and unemployment. Apparently it was somewhat controversial because of the 'colourful' language employed and, as well as local notoriety, was featured on a BBC2 'Arena' programme.

The building became known as Lumley Hall Centre for Young People in the early 1980s and tried to overcome its negative image. Some of the space was converted into a soundproofed practice room and recording studio and a number of local bands began organising gigs and releasing their own records. At this time the Youth Service based a detached youth work project in the building and established a Madeley Coffee Bar as a drop-in centre for the young unemployed.



In 1988, when TDC wound up, ownership was transferred to the National Association of Boys' Clubs (later 'Clubs for Young People') for a peppercorn fee. The Boys' Clubs had close links with the Boxing Club and thought about running a Youth Club in the building so agreed to continue existing arrangements to lease space to the Boxing Club and the Youth Service.