

# Article for the West Moors Directory

## The West Moors Memorial Hall – a wonderful community facility

Did you know that the West Moors Memorial Hall will soon be 100 years old?

Like so much of the land around Verwood, Three Legged Cross and West Moors, the origins of the Hall rest with the Fryer family who owned Verwood Manor Farm and much of the surrounding land. In 1928 the family emigrated to Australia and sold off much of their farmland. The sales were managed by Woolley & Wallis, land agents, who still exist today. In Three Legged Cross there is an example of land on both sides of a farm track being sold for housing; the track today is partly unmade, is owned by no-one and has been classified by Dorset Council as a Private Street. One of the farm cottages on that track – possibly built in the late 1800's – was bought in 1928 by the farm hand who lived there, and was occupied by the same family for 90 years! This was the date it was first registered as a building. It was a cob cottage, and the pond which formed when the clay was extracted still exists.

In West Moors, land that is now the recreation ground, football pitch and car park of the Memorial Hall was Fryer land, hence the name 'Fryer Field'. The land to the west of the military base including Sarum Avenue for example was also Fryer land.

The land on which the Memorial Hall now stands was conveyed to the community of West Moors for use in perpetuity for their benefit. A charitable trust was set up which organised the building of the Hall. Thus the Hall now operates today as a charity managed by Trustees who make it available to residents of West Moors and the surrounding area for their benefit. Under the Charity Constitution it cannot be used for commercial purposes.

Since the original build, much has changed. A smaller second hall was added, plus a kitchen, additional toilets, and a projector room for the films that were popular at one time. The extensive grounds became a car park and are now home to a Bowls Club and a Social Club, both operating independently. Under the original Trust Deed, the land is for use by all the residents, provided the use is beneficial and charitable. The unused projection room is soon to be demolished and replaced with an attractive new porch.

The Hall is managed by volunteer Trustees, and is well used by the community. Activities at the Hall include dance classes, dog training, country music, painting, and art and craft classes. The Womens' Institute (WI) was one of the first local organisations to use the Hall in the 1930's, and still does so today, along with the Townswomens' Guild and Horticulture, Drama and Art societies. There are about 80 bookings a month, so it is well used.

It is available for private parties, meetings, classes, shows and exhibitions, clubs and – occasionally – for essential political reasons such as a Polling Station. The Hall Trustees do not themselves organise events for the community, since their role is to focus on keeping the Hall compliant with regulations, clean, tidy, safe and ready to use for the community.

Bookings are managed by a Booking Agent who can be contacted on [bookings@westmoorshall.org](mailto:bookings@westmoorshall.org) and there's more information available at the Hall's website: [www.westmoorshall.org](http://www.westmoorshall.org)

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