

	THE MORTIMER COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY LIMITED
	MEMBERSHIP STRATEGY

The Mortimer Community Benefit Society Limited (MCBS) was established in 2018 to buy and ensure the long term survival of the Bell. At the end of 2023, following the third tenancy failure, the community regained control of the Bell. The decision was taken to manage the pub as a community venture. This allowed people to once again enjoy the facilities and benefits of a community-owned and run village pub. The re-established the viability of the community pub business. However, the level of commitment required of the Committee to sustain a community-run business is not viable in the longer term. The Committee agreed in January 2026 to move towards a tenant model. The success of this will depend on appointing a suitable tenant.

The Membership Strategy of the MCBS is:

- 1 To increase membership to provide funding which augments income and reduces long-term reliance on loans. However, care must be taken to ensure that the share value does not exceed the property's value, considering all other liabilities e.g. loans.
- 2 To also retain existing members.
3. To engage with members to encourage active participation in the venture - from simply enjoying the atmosphere of the traditional village pub to volunteering at the pub; and
4. To ensure members support the aims of the MCBS as set out in its Model Rules.

This Membership Strategy will be reviewed annually, and if required updated.

Membership Organisation

The MCBS is a democratic organisation governed by a Management Committee who are elected by and drawn from the membership. It operates on the principle of 'one member one vote', regardless of the number of shares owned.

There are currently 244 living members (and a further 13 deceased members whose estates are not yet settled), mainly individuals and three organisations. The first Annual Members' Meeting took place in September 2019 when elections were held for continuing and new Committee members. The current Committee consists of eight members, with additional support from other volunteers.

Membership Criteria

- Membership is open to any person over the age of 18.
- Members do not need to live in the Parish, in fact, there are shareholders in many parts of the UK and overseas.
- The individual share value is £50, with a minimum holding of 2 shares (£100) and a maximum of 200 shares (£10,000).

Benefits

Membership provides the opportunity to be actively involved (either by applying to join the Committee or by volunteering) in managing this valuable community asset, which provides facilities and services for everyone.

Members can have a say in how the MCBS is managed at the Annual Members' Meeting (AMM) and they can actively shape the MCBS.

Members can influence the overall direction of the project and provide feedback on progress. Many comments were offered at the last Annual Members' Meeting (AMM). Where appropriate, these are being taken forward by the Management Committee.

All members will receive:

- An invitation to the AMM
- Invitations to member-only events
- The ability to access the Annual Accounts online

The current members are mainly those who bought shares initially to enable the purchase of The Bell in 2018 and keep it in community ownership. We would like to increase this membership.

Communications

The MCBS website can be found at <https://themortimercbs.org/>. This is where information on the MCBS, details of Committee members, key documents and much more are held. This is updated as the business evolves.

Members can contact the MCBS by emailing - themortimercbs@gmail.com

Regular articles are published in 'The Parishioner', the local parish newsletter.

Information about the MCBS is in the Village Welcome Pack, provided to new households in the Yarpole Parish.

The Bell has its own website <https://thebellatyarpole.co.uk/> . There are also regular posts on its Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BellatYarpole/>

Information about the MCBS and The Bell is also held on The Yarpole Community website <https://www.yarpole.org/>

Events are posted on Parish noticeboards and local social media

The Annual Members' Meeting has generally held each Autumn following the end of the MCBS's accounting year. However the accounting year is changing, and the 25/26 period will end 31 December 2026. The next Annual Members' Meeting is expected to be held in Spring 2027.

22 February 2026