

The Beckington Charities 204415

The Beckington Charities comprises of six different pots of money, that have been left as legacies to the people of Beckington (and in two cases Rode as well).

The first pot of money was left in 1578, the last in 1873.

Without further research, the best guess is that the forerunner to the Parish Council was managing the funds until 1894, when the Parish Council was formed. The powers of the Charity Commissioners grew under the Charities Act 1960, which established a public register of charities. All six pots of money were registered as a linked charity in 27 March 1962.

The money from all six charities have been invested in individual shares accounts with CCLA. There is a Coventry Building Society Account that has been used to collect the dividends from the CCLA shares.

Linked Charities:

The Charities Act gives the Commission the power to link two or more closely related charities.

Linking charities is intended to reduce the administrative burden on charity trustees and the Commission by allowing the charities to:

- prepare only one set of aggregated accounts
- produce only one Trustees' Annual Report
- have only one Registered charity number
- submit only one Annual Return to the Commission.

Trustees:

The Charities have two trustees:

- Simon Pritchard (Clerk of Beckington Parish Council)
- Judith Beresford (Member of Beckington Parish Council)

It seems to have always been understood that the Parish Council is responsible for the Beckington Charities. However, how it has been set up is that the Council appoints two people to the Charities. (This is not the same as the corporate body of the Council acting as trustees.)

In law, the two current trustees must put the best interests of the charities first. So, a Member of the Council who is also a trustee must put the charities interests first even when acting as a Councilor. This is clearly a conflict of interest.

Given these circumstances of incorporation, the Council is not in control of the charities, the two trustees are, and they have a legal responsibility towards the charities first and foremost.

Details of the six charities:

Charles Moody

Governing document: WILL PROVED AT CANTERBURY D.P.R. ON 5 APRIL 1848

Area benefit: Parish of Beckington

Charitable objects:

HALF THE INCOME FOR MEN'S SHOES, AND HALF FOR BLANKETS AND LINEN TO BE DISTRIBUTED IN THE LAST WEEK OF JANUARY TO THE POOR OF BECKINGTON.

Shares value left: £1528.09 (Approx.)

Grace Sainsbury

Governing document: WILL OF 1812 (U.V. 3 PAGE 315)

Area benefit: Parish of Beckington

Charitable objects:

FOR THE GENERAL BENEFIT OF THE POOR OF BECKINGTON.

Shares value left: £2,202.25 (Approx.)

Francis Skurray

Governing document: WILL PROVED AT WELLS D.P.R. ON 12 NOVEMBER 1873

Area benefit: Beckington

Charitable objects

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE AGED AND SICK POOR OF BECKINGTON.

Shares value left: £359.55 (Approx.)

Thomas Webb

Governing document: DEED DATED 6 FEBRUARY 1578 (P.R.VOL. 3 PAGE 313)

Area benefit: Parishes of Beckington And Rode

Charitable objects

FOR THE GENERAL BENEFIT OF THE POOR OF BECKINGTON AND RODE.

Money / Shares left: None

William Yerbury

Governing document: INDENTURE DATED 23 OCTOBER 1700 (U.V.3 PAGE 314)

Area benefit: Parishes of Beckington And Rode

Charitable objects

BREAD FOR THE POOR OF BECKINGTON AND RODE ON FIVE FRIDAYS IN LENT.

Money / Shares left: None

Christopher Brewer

Governing document: DEED POLL DATED 23 OCTOBER 1673 (U.V.3 PAGE 314)

Area benefit: Parish of Beckington

Charitable objects

FOR THE GENERAL BENEFIT OF THE POOR OF BECKINGTON.

Money / Shares left: None

Coventry Building Society Account

Balance: £950.42 (5th April 2018)

Total capital:

Moody: £1,528.09

Sainsbury: £2,202.25

Skurray: £359.55

Coventry B/S: £950.42

Total: £ 5,040.31 (Approx.)

Given that Webb, Yerbury and Brewer has no funds remaining, they should be considered as defunct.

Options going forward: (to take a vote)

Possible ways ahead:

- A) Give away the last of the money (to individuals as was stipulated in the original bequests) and close it all down.
- B) Close it all down and use the money for the benefit of the people of Beckington by buying something of benefit with it.
- C) Any other suggestions by the Council