

EVERY dog has its day, a truism which applies to many things.

In the late 19th century Ellendune Hall was built to fill the needs of the village of Wroughton. From 1962 it was run by a trust composed of members of local organisations and three men as the driving force — Mr Harold Rushen, chairman of the parish council, Mr Peter Elliott, chairman of the trust steering committee, and Sir Edgar (Ted) Row, secretary and founder-member of the trust.

As the village grew to 3,000 (and is still rapidly growing), it was evident the old hall was not sufficient for the

ADVERTISING FEATURE

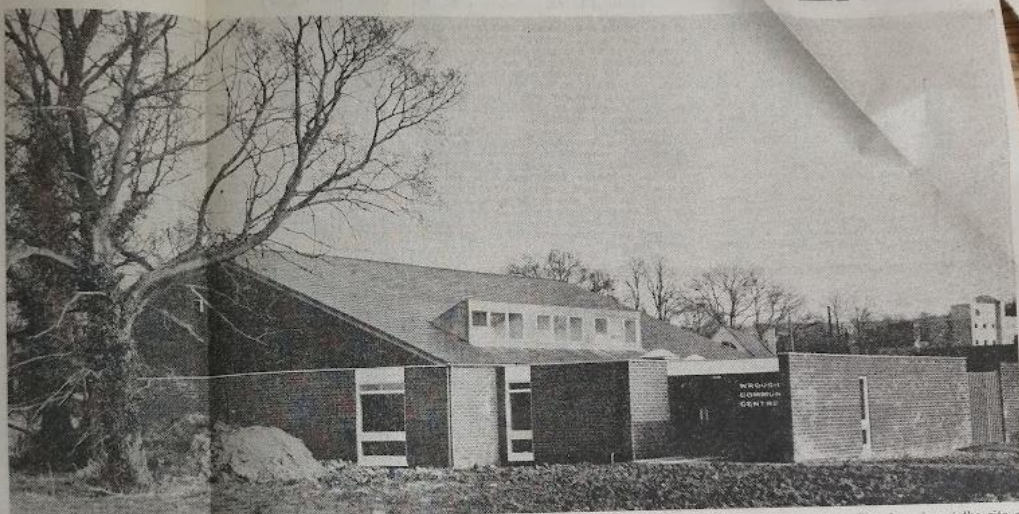
more sophisticated needs of the community and the trust formed a sub-committee to bring a new centre into being. Mr Rushen was appointed chairman of this building project committee and both he and Ted Row have worked for the centre ever since.

LARGE SITE

In 1969 a shopping area in a nine-acre site was proposed by Highworth Rural District Council and Wroughton Parish Council, and a development committee was formed to co-ordinate shopping and recreational interests.

After deciding on a site they thought of building a hall on the rates. The first costing was £60,000 and the parish council approved the scheme in spite of the fact that it would cost the parish £6,000 a year for 40 years since at a statutory develop-

A NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR WROUGHTON AT LAST



An exterior view of Wroughton's new Community Centre.

ment it could not qualify for grant aid.

After much thought it was hoped to open the hall as a trust which would qualify for aid. The parish council and the Ellendune Hall Trust jointly decided to form the trust for the new scheme to provide the centre and gave the ratepayers a vast amount of money.

The next step was to put the scheme to the grants authority (Wiltshire County Council, Highworth R.D.C., Wiltshire Community Council and the Department of Education and Science), whose reaction was that it was far too ambitious and expensive.

Back to square one, but not defeated, the trust produced a scheme costing £30,000, which the grants authority accepted.

EFFORTS

Now the village had to raise voluntarily 25 per cent of the total (£7,500) and this was done the hard way by means of sponsored walks, pram races, coffee mornings, etc., plus a certain amount of money held from the Ellendune Trust.

By the time the sum was raised and the building put out to tenders, the lowest

quotation was £64,000, this being eventually reduced to £42,000.

Now the trust had to find 25 per cent of the increase, so back to the walks, pram races, etc. A lot of people would have given up but not Mr Row and Mr Rushen. They had to put up with apathy at first, but by now village enthusiasm was behind them and the target was finally reached.

FUNCTIONS

With the centre an almost established fact, local organisations were approached to find out exactly what they wanted. The H. H. Women's Institute, Silver Threads, dramatic societies were all questioned and the result will be lavish accommodation for everyone.

As well as housing these organisations, the hall will be available for dances, political parties, weddings or any other private function.

Situated in Barratt Way, off Devizes Road, the hall is ideally located. "A natural spot," says Mr Rushen. "This area in the centre of the village was waiting for development. Usually these areas are on the outskirts. And the beauty of it is that as a non-statutory building the people of

ways through into the hall, and is ideally equipped.

Two comfortable committee rooms are carpeted and available for small meetings and if a bar is required for any function the organisation concerned can apply for a licence.

The trust needs £2,500 to furnish and equip the hall, of which the parish council has given £2,000 and money-raising events are still taking place.

It is hoped in the future to complement the hall with tennis courts and lawns around it, and the attractive, modern building will be in the centre of a green landscaped area.

Both here and in the shop-

ping centre trees have been left to give a natural look.

All this has come about because a few public-spirited people saw a need and were prepared to do something about fulfilling it.

Ellendune is not the site of the battle of Ellendune in AD828. It has been, however, the site of a modern battle for a new community centre which, fortunately, for the people of Wroughton, has been won.

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