

Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Ellendune Community Centre on 16th March 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 16th March 2024 is the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Ellendune Community Centre (ECC). Between 1970-74, Harold Rushen set up the Ellendune Hall Trust and, with the 2 other founding trustees Peter Elliott and James Brawley, negotiated a grant of approximately £33,000 towards the initial building cost of £54,000, the balance being raised by local efforts and the sale of the old hall. A planned stage extension was added in 1985 and, at this time, a new deed was created vesting the Trust in the care of the Parish Council as Custodian Trustee.
- 1.2 The ECC is the largest community building in Wroughton. It is used by 22 regular groups including Little Lambs, 2 amateur dramatic groups, keep fit groups from Tae Kwando to seated exercise, Wroughton Gardeners, the Friday Country Market, as well as various support groups such as the Stroke Club. In addition, it takes a number of ad-hoc bookings. It houses important community facilities such as the Library (also a welcome space) and Wroughton Parish Council Office, as well as providing a venue for life saving groups including the blood donors. It serves as polling stations for several polling districts, and is an integral part of Wroughton's community resilience response, being the main building which is (and has been) used in the event of an emergency.
- 1.3 In short, since it was built, it has been at the heart of Wroughton's community. You are invited to consider whether you wish to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of this Community Centre.

2.0 Report Details

- 2.1 The cost of any commemoration would necessarily need to come either from the precept (funded by the tax payer) or from grant funding, therefore it is important that it results in a meaningful/ useful and tangible outcome or asset, as well as being something which is relevant to the ECC. We are suggesting a commemorative bench for the following reasons.
- 2.2 There are three benches available in Willowbrook Gardens. However, not everyone walking to the ECC, the Ellendune shops, the Health Centre etc comes via Willowbrook, and often those benches are in use by families or groups of friends who are using Willowbrook Gardens. The plane seats are also very popular, particularly with children and families, but are not comfortable for anyone who needs back support.
- 2.3 The seat on the pavement between the Health Centre and the ECC is very popular during the day, with people walking past who want a rest, people who come out of local buildings because they want a break from their work environment or to eat their lunch or have a chat, people who are waiting for someone in the ECC, Health Centre, pharmacy etc.

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- 2.4 It is suggested that the bench should be set on the triangle of grass outside the front door of the Ellendune Community Centre, where it would be available for anyone walking past to sit and rest, to wait for someone in the Community Centre or Health Centre etc. If the Committee agrees to it being sited there, it would be set with its back adjacent to the pavement, to enable easy installation on a concrete pad. (Please see black line on photo below for suggested site.) Potentially, this bench could be joined in the future by a second bench, set at right angles, to enable a small number of people to sit down together.



- 2.5 The triangle of grass is covered by CCTV from the ECC. Please note that recent requests to view the CCTV footage by the Police have been for information about passing vehicles, not ASB.
- 2.6 The Committee could decide to allow a second bench to be purchased by a member of the public as a memorial bench at some point in the future (if one is requested) and set at right angles.
- 2.7 A new Glasdon Elwood bench costs £815.56 + VAT. A memorial plaque from Glasdon which would be the correct size and shape to fit onto the bench, would be £116.41 + VAT making a total of £931.36 + VAT. <https://uk.glasdon.com/elwood-tm-recycled-material-seat> The Grounds Team would also need to purchase materials to lay the concrete base.



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- 2.8 The Parish Council could choose to hold a public dedication ceremony on the 50th Anniversary date of Saturday 16th March, which could be hosted by Parish Councillors. The Council could consider asking Harold Rushen's wife and son to unveil the bench or cut the ribbon. The Parish Council could provide a large celebration cake, and ask user group representatives to bring some cakes/ sandwiches to help celebrate, and also ask the History Group to put on an exhibition. We would suggest asking the EHT to cover the cost of providing the cake. SBC runs a group of volunteers called Forget-Me-Not Cake Bakers, and has risk assessment and allergen forms which could be adapted to send to anyone providing food.

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 To budget £1,000 for the purchase of a bench and memorial plaque to be installed on the triangular grass area outside the ECC using the existing budget of £20,000 code 4800/550 allocated for the ECC, of which the EHT has requested £15,000.
- 3.2 To agree that the Projects Officer investigate whether there are any grants available to buy a bench, and if so provide support to the EHT to bid. If that bid were to be successful, the budget to purchase the bench would not be required.
- 3.3 To ask the EHT whether they would cover the cost of the commemorative plaque.
- 3.4 To ask the EHT to provide the main hall as a venue free of charge.
- 3.5 For Parish Councillors to host a public dedication ceremony on the morning of Saturday 16th March, inviting user groups and past EHT Trustees to attend and bring food to share.
- 3.6 To ask the EHT to cover the cost of providing a large celebration cake, similar to that which WPC bought for the launch of the Tildesley Trail. If the EHT declined, then we suggest that WPC cover the cost from the budget code 4800/550. We anticipate this would cost in the region of £100.
- 3.7 To agree the wording on the plaque:
To commemorate the 3 founding trustees of the Ellendune Hall Trust: Harold Rushen, Peter Elliott and James Brawley, who were responsible for the building of the Ellendune Community Centre in 1974, and all the trustees since who have helped maintain this building for the benefit of the local community during the past 50 years. 16th March 2024
- 3.8 WPC could choose not to celebrate the 50th anniversary and therefore no budget would be required or used.