

1964

Own hall for youth club

Tenterden Youth Club members, faced with an increase in the rent of the premises they use once a week—the Drill Hall in Church Road—have found that their financial income would not cover the increased cost.

They have sought other premises but can find none suitable, and there has been the persistent fear that the club may have to close.

But it was learned this week that they have made application for permission to erect a youth centre on land adjoining the Glebe Hall, Church Road. The application has been submitted to Tenterden Borough Council for approval.

In March, the borough council gave consideration to a letter from Dr. Hugh Gompertz and Mr. G. Miller, members of the Adult Advisory Committee of the club, in which it was stated that the Territorial authority had intimated that the rent of the Drill Hall would be increased in September.

Up to September the club is being charged a rent of £2 plus 5s. for the caretaker, and the proposed new rent is to be £5 for one night and £7 for two nights. In addition, if the club ran a dance for its own funds the cost would be between £10 and £15.

RECONSIDER?

The heavy burden of finding sufficient money to enable the club to continue was considered insuperable and efforts were made to have the Territorial authority reconsider the proposed increase.

The authority did not relent despite an appeal by the borough council, and the search for a hall continued.

Now it seems that some money for the building of a centre is available from Kent Education Committee.

If the council approves the application—and since its sympathies are with the youth club it can be reasonably expected to do so—a start on the centre may be made this year.

YOUTH CLUB—

Forty members to Tenterden Youth Club paid a visit to a similar organisation at Tonbridge last week. Transport was provided by the Adult Committee and the teenagers had an enjoyable time taking part in the many activities of the host club.

The club still continues to attract teenagers from the town and surrounding district to the one-night-a-week session but after the payment of outstanding expenses there is very little left in the "kitty", and there is the fear that if the Territorial Authority carries out its intention to increase the rent in September the club may have to close.

Since it was started in September of last year the club has provided our young people with an interest that might astonish those who think that our teenagers are all "mods" and "rockers".

—PROUD OF IT

I called at the Drill Hall and was invited to have a cup of coffee with members of the Adult Committee. From my own observation I could see that those present were proud to belong to the club and fully capable of seeing that it was conducted on proper lines.

About 70 young people were present, taking part in indoor games or dancing to a record player. There was the noise one associates with young, happy people, but there was no rowdiness.

This club deserves the support of all who live in the borough, and pressure of public opinion should be brought to bear on the Territorial Authority to review its proposal to increase the rent of the hall out of proportion to the facilities provided.

Unfortunately there is no other suitable hall in the district and if the club is forced to close the blame could be laid squarely on the shoulders of an authority which is hide-bound and not "with it".

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THREAT TO YOUTH CLUB

Might have to close

REPORTING on a meeting he had attended with the Mayor, Ald. Leslie Chalk, Mr. C. A. Saunders, Town Clerk, told the General Purposes Committee that the terms and conditions offered by the Territorial Authority to Tenterden Youth Club made it "virtually impossible for them to continue."

"The terms are", he said, "that the club would be allowed to use the drill hall for a short period after September at a rental of £2 10s. a night, plus 5s. for the caretaker."

"The conditions are that

there should be no more than 25 persons present on any one night and that the premises are not used for music and dancing".

As there are about 100 members, with a normal attendance of about 80, it means that the club cannot continue as such.

It was suggested that the club might split up, some members using the Glebe Hall on club nights, but this was considered unsatisfactory. Mention was made of applying to the education authority for permission to use Homewood School, but it was revealed that this was fully booked up.

One councillor said that the young people would not take kindly to making use of school premises; they wanted a place of their own.

The general feeling was that the club might break up during the interim period, which would occur until they had built their own club house.

Alderman Chalk said: "Not only should this council be concerned with the preservation of this youth club, it should be the concern of everyone in the town."

"We have a bunch of young people who have shown that they will be highly respected citizens of the future. It would be a great pity if the club had to close".