



Sedgley's

Diamond 60

*Sixty years, sixty people,
sixty stories about village life
since 1952.*

The last meeting of Sedgley Urban District Council

By Chris Lloyd

In the early months of 1966, with comparatively little fuss, a part of Sedgley passed away. The Sedgley Urban District Council, a regularly elected body of men who had ostensibly looked after the area since the 1860s, was dissolved by an Act of Parliament. Split into three, most of Sedgley district was absorbed into Dudley Council, whilst Goldthorn Park became part of Wolverhampton, and Gospel End was lost to Seisdon. When the Council met for the last time in March 1966, 21 of the 22 members were present and predictably most of them were unimpressed. "We are losing the local touch," declared Councillor Fithern. "Sedgley Council is dead and buried," lamented Councillor Short. Stan Dews agreed. "Sedgley Council is finishing its life - and we must look forward to the future, but not with much pleasure."

Constructed with great foresight (a Victorian trait), Sedgley's Council building, situated in High Holborn, had been purpose-built in 1882 by local builder John Hilton for a very generous price of £1,000. "It will be the flagship of a progressive council," declared the then council leader Stephen Wilkes. And indeed it was the epicentre of every major decision affecting the Sedgley area for the greater part of a century. From its chambers, decisions had been made to build schools, to construct houses and roads, and to improve sanitary conditions for all. For many years local election results were declared from its upstairs windows to large cheering crowds below, and now it was effectively redundant.

It soldiered on as the local library and home to various Dudley council departments, but in 2001, badly neglected and bedraggled, Sedgley Council House was sold and converted into apartments. Only the outer façade still remains as a reminder of a bygone age.



Sedgley Council House



The final meeting of Sedgley Urban District Council in 1966