Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall

Annual Report to Kirkwhelpington Parish Council May 2024

The Memorial Hall, together with St Bartholomew's Church provides a focus for the life of the community in Kirkwhelpington. A considerable number of groups meet regularly – the Bowls Club, the Music Group, the Youth Club, the Art Club, the Wannie Ladies, Yoga and Pilates, occasional ballroom dancing and there is a monthly coffee morning. The furniture and equipment for the Annual Village Show is stored in the hall, which also provides a venue for the catering on Show Day. There is usually a production by a visiting drama group in the Autumn. There are meetings of local statutory and non-statutory bodies like the Parish Council, the Forestry Commission, Northern Power Grid, B4N, the Ray Wind Farm, the National Trust and others. The Hall is a venue for private parties, fund-raising activities for local bodies and for gatherings following weddings, baptisms and funerals at St Bartholomew's Church. Growing co-operation between the Hall and the Parish Council has led to the installation of a generator to provide a "warm hub" for the community during power cuts.

Since a major Millennium development in 2000 the management committee have continued to invest in the hall with a high level of maintenance and re-furbishment and in 2003 it was agreed to accommodate the village post-office. The "supper-room" was re-organised for this purpose. The sub post-office run by Mrs Eileen Rogerson, who is also the Hall caretaker, has become an essential feature of the local and wider community with the closure of many post-office and bank/building society branches. The committee is in the process of planning further developments to improve the accommodation for the post-office, to rationalise storage facilities and create a more pleasant outdoor patio/garden and Summer social gathering area. The Memorial Hall has been in existence since 1924 and in November 2024 the committee is planning to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Hall's foundation.