

Whilton Village Hall
Report to Annual Meeting of Whilton Parish Council
May 2026

Governance

The Management Committee is about to hold its fourth AGM since taking over the responsibility from the committee which had been in place until 2022.

Much has changed in that time and with the support of the Parish Council, the village hall now presents a warm, comfortable and useable space for the residents of the parish.

At last year's AGM the existing Chair stepped back from the role and as there was no-one else able to take on the position, the whole committee has assumed the individual responsibilities on a sharing basis, with the chairing of meetings being undertaken on the rotational basis.

This arrangement has worked reasonably well, so far, but the committee members are aware that it's not a situation which can continue for ever and that there is a need to recruit more people to the Management Committee to provide oversight and management of the VH. We will be doing our best to address this with individuals at the next AGM, which I have described in the report to the Ordinary Meeting for May.

Finances

Whilton Village Hall has been very productive over 2025/2026 with the result that our finances are looking very healthy in comparison with previous years. As of the 11th May 2026 we have **£9622.23** in total at our disposal which means we can look forward to addressing some of the major interventions to the building and grounds that we couldn't do before. We have succeeded in reducing our annual fee for Insurance cover to £851.67 from nearly £1200.00 in 2025 and have tied the Insurance company into a five - year guarantee of price. Our running costs are high with regards to electricity, but we are monitoring this carefully and will change to a cheaper tariff if the need arises.

We should like to thank all those residents who have run or supported a range of activities e.g. Pop-Up Pub, 200 Club, The Quiz, The Creative Group and recently the Pre-Loved Sales which have ensured that the Village Hall has a useful annual income stream. Since January 1st, 2026, these have brought in of some £1300.00 for the Village Hall. In addition we have the regular hall hire from the WPC, WGA and the Book Club which contributes to our income further.

We should also like to thank the Whilton Parish Council who have been extremely generous during the last twelve months supporting the WVH with a regular income of **£2000** per annum which will ensure that we will be well prepared for any challenge that come our way.

Activities

As councillors know, there are a few regular activities in the VH which provide very successful and popular social opportunities, as well as raising considerable funds. The purchase of a dedicated art hanging system has now enabled regular exhibitions to be held and it is hoped that this use of the hall will grow in future.

The regular art group, Whilton Creative Group, has grown from strength to strength and provides a valuable regular income as do the other regular groups – Whilton Gardeners Assn and the smaller Book Club. However, the History Soc. has had to close due to the lack of volunteers, demonstrating the difficulty of maintaining such activities in a very small village, with a changing demographic.

Committee members are continually thinking about new opportunities and as councillors know, the VH and the Friends of St. Andrews are working on joint ventures – the next one being a Christmas Craft Fair.

The Future

Most of the internal improvements have now been completed and so the committee has begun to think about the external situation. The most urgent of these is the front access which we would very much like to improve, in particular providing appropriate access for anyone with mobility or other access issues. This matter will be discussed again at the next meeting.

We are also pondering on the future of the small garden at the rear of the hall. There is no access to this land as it is almost surrounded by the garden of The School House and the house High Glen; also it is sited at least 3' above ground level so its future use is a conundrum which will need a good deal of thought.

One of the other constraints which hampers our ability to expand the uses of the hall, is the lack of parking. This is sometimes very kindly provided by Gordon Emery in his nearby field, but is naturally only available when convenient to the farming year and to the state of the field in relation to the weather. Without dedicated parking and given the size of the accommodation, there will always be a limit as to what is possible in that location.

Summary

In many ways the village hall is doing well. It is welcoming and offers users most of the facilities that are required from such a building. It offers to people living in the parish of Whilton, the one and only available indoor space to socialise, but as described above there are limitations which mean that unless an unforeseen opportunity arises, there will always be limitations as to its uses.

There is also a concern about the number of people who are prepared to commit to taking on the responsibility of managing the VH and this will need to be addressed as we go forward.

AG

10/05.26