

## **MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE VILLAGE HALL...**

### **History**

Located at the top of Meadow Street in the heart of Wheelton, the Village Hall has been around in its current guise since 1983. So, how did it all begin?

Many villages have a local community centre or hall that have interesting histories and beginnings. Heapey & Wheelton Village Hall is no exception. The Village Hall started life some 130 years ago as St Paul's school built by mill owner Peter Todd. Following a bitter row with the Reverend of Heapey Church, Mr Todd and his followers (mostly his employees!) broke away from the 'Mother Church' and built the 'Free Church of England', St Paul's and the adjoining school. St Paul's church and 'Todd's Mill' were both demolished some time ago to make way for new homes in the village – Millbrook Close now stands in place of the mill which once dominated Wheelton.

As for the school it was later renamed Wheelton Council School and saw many generations of Wheeltonians and Heapeyites pass through it's doors until it's closure in the late 1960's.

In 1982 a number of enterprising villagers, worried about losing a valuable community building, set about raising funds to buy the disused school for use as a village hall. In total £20,000 was raised from donations and fundraising events and a charitable trust was formed. A year later Heapey & Wheelton Village Hall was born!

### **Who owns the Village Hall ... How is it Run?**

The Village Hall was bought and is still run by the villagers.....it does not belong to the parish or local councils – it belongs to each and every person in Heapey & Wheelton – we all have a share.

The Village Hall is run as a charitable trust and the Parish Councils of Heapey and Wheelton are the official custodian trustees of the Village Hall. As such the Parish Councils are there to ensure that the Village Hall continues to exist as a community facility for the benefit of all who live in Heapey and Wheelton.

A group of volunteers make up the Management Committee of the Village Hall (chairperson, secretary, treasurer plus committee members). It is the Management Committee who are responsible for the day to day running of the Hall, but many others also get involved in helping at events, fundraising, maintenance and other essential functions.

**Monthly meetings** are held to discuss general running and maintenance matters. Regular attendees at these meetings are members of the Village Hall management committee, plus representatives from regular user groups and a member from each of the two Parish Councils. There are also 'co-opted' members – these usually have a specific function and are co-opted for as long as the task requires. Committee meetings are held at the Village Hall (small hall) on the second Wednesday in every month starting at 7.30pm.

**The AGM** is held in June each year. By its nature the Annual General Meeting is somewhat more formal as we review the previous years accounts and committee members are nominated (always willingly!!!) and elected for the forthcoming year. To balance this heavy-going talk we always make sure there is plenty of tea, coffee and cake going spare. Everyone welcome!

### What's Planned for the Village Hall

We currently have a program of improvements, which include some remedial maintenance work and decoration. There is however a great deal more to be done and basic running costs are just about met by rents received from the user groups. The rest has to be met by fundraisers held at or for the village hall. The Parish Councils have made grants to help towards some of the costs, but we still have a long way to go.