



Space & Place funded Middletown Parish Community Hall officially opens

The new Space & Place funded Middletown Parish Community Hall has officially opened its doors providing a much-needed facility for people living in the area.

Built with a grant of over £300,000 from the Big Lottery funded Space & Place Programme, and a contribution of £30,000 from St. John's Parish Church of Ireland, the Middletown Parish Community Hall has already proven to be an award winning venue.

It is intended that the hall will encourage cross community engagement and will help to reinvigorate the area and greatly increase access to educational and social opportunities for what has been an isolated community.

The Space & Place Programme managed by a consortium headed up by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland is a £15 million, five-year capital grants project that seeks to provide an opportunity for local communities to come together to identify a shared vision for their area and work to deliver it.

The consortium also includes the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the Public Health Agency, NI Environmental Link, Rural Community Network and Groundwork NI.

Speaking about the award, Rev. Matthew Hagan, Chairman of Middletown Parish Community Hall said: "The hall committee are absolutely delighted to have been awarded such a high level of funding for the hall project and the hall will prove to be a great asset for the entire community.

"The hall is the first new building to be built in Northern Ireland by the Space & Place programme. It has already achieved success having been deemed one of the top five community focused rural innovations in Ireland at the Dairymaster Rural Innovation Awards which received entries from throughout Ireland."

Michael Hughes Space & Place Co-Ordinator, said: "The Space & Place Consortium is delighted to announce the opening of Middletown Parish Community Hall. There is no doubt this new facility will contribute towards reinvigorating the Middletown area as well as enhancing the physical and mental well-being of people living in the community.

“The new hall fits perfectly with the ethos of the Space & Place programme which is to help communities transform underused or neglected spaces in turn helping to tackle issues such as social isolation and lack of facilities and we wish the community every success with their new building.”

Joanne McDowell, the Big Lottery Fund’s NI Director said: “We understand how important good quality space is to people and communities. We are delighted to see the new Middletown Parish Community Hall opening its doors today, and we hope that this venue will make a real difference to people in the area.”

Ends

Notes to Editors

- The Space and Place programme aims to support projects to make better use of new and existing outdoor and indoor spaces in local communities, particularly those that are not used enough, are overgrown and neglected, or are seen as only for use by certain groups.
- The Big Lottery Fund supports the aspirations of people who want to make life better for their communities across the UK. We are responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised by the National Lottery and invest over £650 million a year in projects big and small in health, education, environment and charitable purposes.
- For more information please visit our website at: www.spaceandplaceni.com

For Space & Place enquiries contact:

Laura Darragh
Communications Officer
Community Foundation for Northern Ireland
Email: ldarragh@communityfoundationni.org
Telephone: 02890 245 927

For Big Lottery Fund enquiries contact:

Lucy Gollogly
Communications Manager – Press and Digital
Big Lottery Fund NI Press Office
Email: Lucy.Gollogly@biglotteryfund.org.uk
Telephone: 02890 551 432

Full details of the work of the Big Lottery Fund, its programmes and awards are available on the website: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk