

A 21st Century solution to a 17th Century problem reveals long forgotten secrets

Built in the 1620's Kiplin Hall is a wonderful example of a Jacobean house, including the many interesting alterations that have taken place during its 400 year history. At the heart of the building lies a grand central staircase. The only access visitors have to the upper stories of this historic house museum.

With no lift this has meant that wheelchair users and people unable to manage the stairs have not been able to enjoy the grand bedrooms, long gallery and special exhibitions on the top floors, until now. Kiplin Hall and Gardens have teamed up with CaptureVR LTD based in Ripon to commission a state-of-the-art virtual reality model of the whole building. Using specialist equipment CaptureVR Ltd were able to photograph Kiplin Hall in great detail, from every angle, creating an impressive virtual model which can be viewed on a touch screen tablet. Users can move through the model, navigate the rooms and change viewpoints with their finger tips. The model even captures details of artwork and views from the windows. Scans were taken of each room every 3-5ft, capturing every detail.

Director of Kiplin Hall and Gardens, James Etherington, describes how it will be used. 'The model is a really useful asset to us. It means that visitors who can't get upstairs can still have a very detailed and life like experience exploring the upper floors from the comfort of the tearoom downstairs. A lift is not an option for us at the moment as it would damage too many historic features of the building, but this allows our visitors to get as close as possible to the harder to reach parts of our building. The quality of the imagery is outstanding. Using touch screens means that visitors don't need any computer skills, they can simply swipe through spaces on the touch screen, almost walking around the screen on their fingertips.'

As well as improving access to the Hall for visitors the model has also revealed some secret spaces. Joseph Man, who carried out the work comments, 'It became clear as the images and measurements from inside the building were stitched together with those taken outside of the building that there are some unaccounted-for voids internally. When the plans of each floor are overlaid, we can see that the voids on the ground floor and top floor align with a servant's tunnel or corridor on the first floor. It seems likely that similar corridors exist on the other two floors but have been boarded up at some point in the past. Staff at Kiplin are very excited to investigate these spaces in the future. I can't wait to find out what has taken place in these spaces and feel very proud that our work has helped to reveal more of Kiplin's rich history.'

Visitors to Kiplin Hall and Gardens can make use of the tablets showing the model now, the i-pad can be collected from main reception. Kiplin Hall and Gardens is a wonderful day out for all of the family, with historic displays, children's trails, ample grounds and delicious refreshments available in the tearoom. Visitors with mobility issues can also borrow a wheelchair with heavy duty tyres to use in the grounds, simply call reception to book it on 01748 818178 before you visit (you will need someone in your party to push the wheelchair).

Image captions

1. Virtual model on the tablet screen in the actual house showing the high level of realism visitors can enjoy.
2. Screen shot of the model in plan form, showing the void thought to be part of a servant's corridor on the ground floor.
3. Screen shot of the model in 'doll house' view showing the scale of the building and detail of the images

Notes To Editors:

- Contact: Samantha Jennings (Marketing and Communications Officer) 017 48 818178 or 07811190193 marketing@kiplinhall.co.uk
- Kiplin Hall, Near Scorton, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL10 6AT www.kiplinhall.co.uk
- CaptureVR Ltd details at <https://www.capturevrltd.com/about>
- Kiplin Hall is an historic house museum set in 100 acres of grounds between Northallerton and Richmond; the visitor attraction enjoys a peaceful location with grounds comprising woodland, parkland, lakeside, and lawns.
- Open Saturday to Wednesday, 10 am (Hall 11am) – 5pm (Closed Thursdays and Fridays)
- **TEA ROOM** - free entry. Enjoy homemade seasonal specialities in the company of Kiplin's ancestor's (immortalised in oil paintings on the walls) in Kiplin's wonderful wood panelled Tea Room.
- Entry to Hall, Gardens and Grounds ticket - £10.50 adults, £9.50 conc, £5.50 child, under 5's free. £28.00 Family ticket. Seasonal passes are available.