

## Historians' meeting September 2025

### Kings Bromley Home Guard

At the Historians meeting of 26 September, Allan Howard welcomed a number of visitors who joined members to hear his talk about Kings Bromley Home Guard.

Allan had received documents relating to the Home Guard from Richard Ewing who had come to talk to the Historians about the Armitage Pot Bank in January; Richard had discovered these documents in the archive at Armitage Shanks. The link was Alan Stott (who used to live at Orgreave Hall): he was Director of the Armitage Shanks company and also Commanding Officer (firstly Lieutenant, then later Major) of the Kings Bromley Home Guard.

Allan showed some lovely old photographs of the Home Guard outside the Village Hall, with many faces recognisable to village residents. In Kings Bromley H Company there were young and older people, but all took their responsibilities very seriously; there was a great fear that England would be invaded by the Germans and it was important that the country as a whole should be protected from invasion by sea or air.

Allan had found many references to Kings Bromley during World War II, including the School Logbook and personal recollections recorded by the Historians. There were two air raid shelters, one still exists on the Showfield and there used to be another one outside the Village Hall, and bombs did fall around the village. A field in Yoxall, manned by soldiers billeted in Kings Bromley, was used as a dummy airfield to divert German bombers away from actual targets. Amongst the papers found by Richard Ewing were the enrolment form for men wishing to join the Home Guard and instructions for night training; most nights a group of 7 soldiers would be involved in guarding the village. There was a shortage of weapons, and 12 bore guns were requested. The Village Hall was used as the HQ for the Home Guard, but there was little contact with the Parish Council until the end of the war when joint celebrations were organised. The documents gave a very interesting snapshot of the timeline of the war and the locals' involvement in the defence of the village.