

The Parish of Lamplugh lies midway between Egremont and Cockermouth on the A5086 and is partly within the Lake District National Park. Kirkland village is the largest settlement and with numerous hamlets and farmsteads, the Parish has a population of approximately 800.

In 2009 the then Lamplugh Women's Institute building was handed over to the village and became Lamplugh Village Hall.

Background

The new Village Hall Committee wanted to improve the fabric and furnishings in the hall and to increase facilities, to give users a wide variety of services available to them.

Installing insulation and an improved heating system has made the building more comfortable for those using it, and cheaper to run. A full redecoration has also made the building more attractive to potential hirers.

The committee started to organise various social activities such as film nights. The success of these led to the addition of a permanent digital projector and large screen in the Hall.

The committee then looked at how to provide access to the internet in the Hall, for the benefit of those already using the building, and potential new bookings.

The Project

Consultation about the project, with those already using the Hall, was met with encouragement and a positive reaction.

Like many Village Halls there wasn't an existing phone line so the project involved installing a line, to create a wireless broadband link (Wi-Fi) in the Hall.

It was decided that a phone should also be made available for use by those hiring the Hall, with a donation box by the phone to go towards the cost.



'Online' in the village hall with Lamplugh Computer Club

The equipment consists simply of a telephone in the Hall, and a BT Router that is switched off when not in use. Users apply the router code to their laptop or tablet and they are able to connect and surf the internet anywhere in the building and even from outside the building.

At the Computer Club there are often 12 or more people using the system simultaneously, despite Superfast fibre broadband not yet being installed locally.

What has been achieved?

The village hall facility is now much in demand and the Wi-Fi used frequently by our users. Additionally, because mobile phone reception is very patchy at the Hall and the nearby public telephone kiosk was removed, the phone is used often, and provides yet a further local service.



Lamplugh Village Hall



Presentation at Lamplugh Computer Club

What has been achieved? (cont.)

A grant from Cumbria County Council's Local Members' Scheme, plus a financial contribution from the hall committee, covered the cost of: installing the phone line, the wireless router, and line rental costs for up to 2 years.

The total cost of the project was £275 for installation, plus £540 to cover 2 year's rental. The system was installed and set up without any hitches in around 4 weeks, and has operated very well since then.

The Learning

As a result of installing WiFi, a computer club has been formed, open to anyone in the community. The club has around 12 regular members who meet every other Monday in the Hall.

The Treasurer of the Village Hall Committee has found it particularly useful to learn all about using Microsoft Excel, to keep a record of the Hall's finances.

The major consideration is the running costs - can they be afforded or is separate additional charging necessary?

The monthly telephone cost for the Hall is £23 / £24 and the quarterly broadband is £86 / £87.

There is no additional charge for groups using the Wi-Fi. Instead it is included in the hourly hire rate, in the same way that heating, lighting, and other general running costs are included.

Some non-local Hall users are surprised to find such a system in a village hall and in advertising the Hall and its facilities we believe it is a positive aspect and is attractive to many prospective users.

The committee regard WiFi installation as having been relatively straightforward and extremely worthwhile, however the running cost implications need to be considered and a costing / charging policy adopted as appropriate.

Contact Details

For more information about Lamplugh Village Hall, please contact:

Bob Marshall on

Tel: 01946 861496

Email: bobnbet.64@btinternet.com

ACT champions community and rural issues

ACTion with Communities in Cumbria, Offices O - Q Skirsgill Business Park, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 0FA
T: 01228 817224 | www.cumbriaaction.org.uk | info@cumbriaaction.org.uk | Follow us @ACTCumbria
Registered in England as Voluntary Action Cumbria | Charity Registration Number 1080875 | Company Number 3957858

©ACT 2015. This publication may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as ACTion with Communities in Cumbria copyright and the title of the publication specified.