

Community Case Study



Village halls

Screen on the Green



Screen on the Green: Tewin Memorial Hall runs a successful rural cinema



RUNNING a cinema in your village hall is a great way to bring people together – and raise funds.

Tewin Memorial Hall in Hertfordshire set up ‘Screen on the Green’ in 2012 and shows 10 films a year – ranging from family favourites to latest releases.

The idea came from a resident of the thriving village, which has a population of around 2,000, who had noticed the success of rural cinemas springing up around the country.

Hall committee member Linda Adams said: “The purpose behind the Screen on the Green is to bring people together – it’s a very friendly, supportive village and we do a lot of things together.”

The hall committee invested £5,000 in setting up the cinema, with the cost being met by donations, fundraisers and a Big Lottery grant. A full-size screen was purchased, along with a projector, amplifier and a loop system for those with hearing difficulties.

The monthly screenings attract an audience of between 50 and 90 people, who are offered free tea, coffee and biscuits. The hall sells ice creams before the film starts and viewers, who sit at candlelit tables, are welcome to bring their own drinks and nibbles.

The evenings are especially popular with elderly villagers, many of whom are infirm or don’t have their own transport to visit cinemas in nearby towns.

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“The hardest part is choosing the films,” said Linda, “as we like to try to appeal to as wide an audience as possible.”

The committee buys in DVDs and choices have included everything from a singalong *The Sound of Music* to French films, classics such as *On The Waterfront* and latest releases, including *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Cinema-goers are also treated to videos of village events.

With tickets costing £4, the Screen on the Green made a profit of £1,000 over its first two years, and a further £1,000 in its third year, which was all ploughed back into the hall. Costs incurred

include the licence required for public screenings, bought from Filmbank. The cinema nights are advertised in the local shop and village magazine, and often bring in visitors from neighbouring villages.

“I would advise any village hall thinking of setting up a rural cinema to go for it,” said Linda. “It’s a fun thing to do – everyone enjoys it. It’s a very convivial way of bringing people of different ages together.”

Find out more

For more information about setting up a cinema in your village hall, please contact your local ACRE Network village hall adviser – details can be found at www.acre.org.uk