

CASE STUDY:

LISKERRETT COMMUNITY CINEMA

Liskerrett Community Cinema has been running since 2007 with the aim of showing recently released films locally in a convivial atmosphere with the added pleasure of watching and discussing a film as a group. They screen one film each month and offer a varied programme including films suggested and selected by their audience.

How did you get started?

The nearest commercial cinemas to Liskeard are all about 20 miles away. There was a lot of public support for a cinema in the town, but the chances of one being provided as a commercial venture was very unlikely, so Liskerrett Community Centre investigated how we could set up a community based one using the hall at the Centre as its venue. Looe Film Society had recently started, so we got a lot of advice from them and also at a training day run by Cinema For All South West. We had no equipment, but the Liskeard U3A had been successful in funding some cinema equipment for their own group, and they agreed that we could loan their equipment, which enabled us to get started without needing to obtain additional funding for equipment.

What made you want to screen subtitled films?

We were contacted by Peter Martin from Cinema For All because he was offering some support for film clubs to provide better accessibility for people, as part of the Reaching Communities project. Some people living near Liskeard had expressed an interest to him in seeing subtitled films because of their hearing issues.

We agreed to run a monthly afternoon subtitled film on the same day as we had our evening screening. This enabled us to double our capacity, which was sometimes full up in the evening, but also to offer full subtitles and free entry for carers. We felt the matinee screening may also be preferred by older film fans who did not want to go out in the evenings, and also people from surrounding villages without their own transport who could come into Liskeard in the afternoon by public transport.

How do you let people know about your subtitled screenings?

We collect email contacts and addresses from our audience and prior to the screenings send out a reminder with a film note and film poster. We send the details to the local newspaper who have a free community listings. We circulate bookmarks and posters around the local area. Liskerrett has a monthly newsletter that always has the film details included and we have a website with the details on.

We have also made the effort, with Peter's help, to contact specific groups that could be interested including The Echo Centre in Liskeard, Hear We Go group, and Disability Cornwall.

How do you help make audiences feel comfortable?

Hopefully our volunteers are friendly and welcoming. We serve tea, coffee and cakes. We have feedback forms to collect any comments on the screening, as well as suggesting films that they may like to see screened. We have recently been successful in obtaining comfortable new chairs from the BFI Neighbourhood Cinema Equipment Fund.

What challenges have you overcome?

The main challenges relate to the availability of films with subtitles. Most films that are out on DVD have subtitles available, although they vary in standard. How to switch the subtitles on and off can sometimes prove tricky.

We wanted to screen a locally made film by Miracle Theatre and used some of our funding to get the film subtitled especially for the screening. It is now available for all on DVD with the subtitles, so we feel that was worthwhile.

What are your highlights?

The interaction of the audience has grown as people have got to know each other, which has contributed to a pleasant atmosphere.

We recently screened our 100th film which was quite an achievement.

We have been able to invest in our own, new equipment, so the quality of presentation has improved.

For bespoke advice, get in touch with Cinema For All on 0114 2210314 or email info@cinemaforall.org.uk

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