

Village hopes for faster internet

A NORTH Tyne village could be one step closer to having fibre broadband installed.

John Cooper, from Northumberland County Council, and Simon Robinson, of BT, discussed plans for Stonehaugh at the latest Wark Parish Council meeting, which was held at Stonehaugh Village Hall.

National Government policy states that 90 per cent of premises should be connected to broadband by the end of the year.

Northumberland looks set to reach that target after the installation in a number of villages, including Wark.

It is hoped further funding will enable 95 per cent of premises to be connected by 2017.

Whether broadband will be brought to Stonehaugh depends on the cost and would mean upgrading BT infrastructure.

Mr Cooper said: "When we know what sort of funding we have, we will be asking BT to look at the communities we would like to be connected and Stonehaugh is on that list."

It is likely to be the beginning of next year before it is known how much broadband in Stonehaugh is likely to cost and whether it is feasible.

Mr Robinson said: "There are some places that are

Prison governor is sent to gaol to launch new exhibition

Beyond the Borders brings stories of Reiver inmates to life

PRISON governor Tim Allen was sent to jail last week.

The governor of HMP Durham found himself in Hexham's Old Gaol to officially launch a new permanent exhibition which inmates have helped bring to life.

Beyond the Borders is an innovative new digital exhibition created for Hexham Old Gaol.

The Heritage Lottery funded project tells the stories of three Reiver prisoners who once languished in the oldest purpose built prison in the country.

It previewed to the public

By PAULINE HOLT

pauline.holt@hexham-courant.co.uk

on Saturday, November 21 for one day only, but will be open again on the town's Christmas market day, Saturday, December 12.

Mr Allen said inmates at his prison had gained a lot in terms of literacy and numeracy from the Dilly Arts project founded by Alison Redshaw-Boxwell of Allendale.

"I think this type of project is essential to support the education that we do in prisons," said Mr Allen.

"It's not lost on me that this is the oldest gaol in the country and I probably run the oldest operating prison in the North of England and the pains of imprisonment now are still as important as they were years ago.

"Obviously conditions are a lot better but prisoners come from a lot of vulnerable backgrounds and there's a lot of work we need to do to get them back to being good citizens.

"Unlike in the 13th century, pretty well everyone is going to go back into the communities they've come from and we know that if we give people skills to engage in society and to gain employment, they should then be able to lead a fulfilling life."

Historian John Sadler and creative writer Sheree Mack worked with men in high security HMP Frankland and HMP Durham and with women inmates at HMP YO1 Low Newton.

Animator Nick Lewis, from Arcus Animation Studios, brought the prisoners' stories to life in moving pictures that visitors can watch



At Hexham's Old Gaol, from left, John Sadler, Anya Kovalieva, Nick Lewis, Lalya Gaye and Suzy O'Hara who were involved in the creative side of the exhibition. *Photo: K481587

on handheld tablets.

"Everyone had quite clear opinions about the way they wanted the characters to look and behave," said Nick.

"The women at Low Newton said one of the things they missed was knowing their children were growing up and not being there to teach them things they were taught when they were children and

this is reflected in the story of the woman Reiver on the top floor of the gaol."

Anya Kovalieva and Lalya Gaye, of Attaya Projects, have ensured the new additions to Hexham Old Gaol work well with the existing displays, even down to creating bespoke leather, wood or embroidered casing for the different storytelling tablets

or 'time windows'.

Lalya said: "We want visitors to feel like they have a personal connection with the person telling the story."

Janet Goodridge, from Hexham Old Gaol, said: "We felt we needed the actual prisoners' voices coming out into the gaol and this has given us a window through time on to these stories."

New bus stop eases the load

SHOPPERS in Hexham will find life a little easier now that many of the town's bus services stop close to the popular Aldi, Next and Tesco stores.

The town service 682 between Beaumont Park, Hexham and Acomb will call at a new bus stop in Haugh Lane, providing a useful hourly link most of the day.

Buses from Allendale, Corbridge and Stamfordham will serve the stop on a daily basis, and the Venture bus 689 from Slaley will call there every weekday.

The installation of the bus stop has been funded by Northumberland County councillor Terry Robson.

Coun. Robson said: "The new bus stop will save many people the walk up the hill to Priestpopple just as the winter arrives. This new link should encourage more people to use the bus, and leave the car at home."

Development manager at bus company Go North East, Mark Ellis, said: "The new stop makes it easier than ever to visit Aldi, Next and Tesco especially in the run up to Christmas.

"Jobseekers will also benefit as the stop is convenient for the Jobcentre Plus office."

Timetables are available at simplygo.com, on board buses and at the bus station.



Governor at HMP Durham, Tim Allen, tries out the new interactive exhibition at Hexham Old Gaol. *Photo: K481586

Durdhae petition fails to provoke

Scenic Flights Air Charter Aerial Photography