

The Slingsby Website and Newsletter Group AGM

Webmaster's Report : October 2011

General information

The Slingsby website went live online on March 1st 2011, and has developed extremely well since the launch. A magazine layout style was chosen to create a familiar 'magazine' feel and offer viewers a concise and intuitive viewing experience. A static homepage was introduced to create a introductory page with information about the village, the role and features of the website, and admin contact details.

The structure of the website has gradually developed since the launch of the site back in March. The website currently features 33 pages and 86 posts. A drop down menu offers a structured, easy to use navigation system to viewers who can access 99% (excluding the news and event posts) of the website from the menu.

A website search function, local news (provided by the Gazette and Herald) and BBC North Yorkshire news feed, and an events calendar are provided in the sidebar along with other additional content features.

WordPress

A PHP/MySQL powered, open source content management system (CMS) called WordPress has been used to power the website and this has been performing brilliantly.

The CMS allows multiple users to access the website at varying levels from administrator to contributor. This enables the group to add new editors or contributors in the future. Posts and pages can be added via the online dashboard, making admin access to the website easy – all you need is a computer/iPad/iPhone etc connected to the internet.

The website can be expanded using various downloadable plugins to give added functionality to the website. The Slingsby Village website currently uses 15 plugins that power the events calendar, backup and photo gallery systems.

The website is currently running WordPress 3.2.1 with a new update (3.3) due in late November that will include a better media (photos, video, audio, documents) uploading system. WordPress usually release three or four significant development updates a year.

The website has an extremely, secure, stable and flexible base to develop and expand on.

The Slingsby Website is just one of thousands of websites to use WordPress to power their website. Other WordPress websites include Number 10 Downing St, The New York Times, Tom Jones, Ebay, Stephen Fry, Le Monde, BBC Top Gear and many more.

Website Usage

The website has had a total of 13,108 page views (15/10/11) since the launch.

The average number of daily page views is currently 66.

The highest number of page views was 176 on May 1st.

Visitors to the website are mainly from the UK but we also have visitors from the USA, Australia, Turkey, Germany, South Korea, Canada, China, India and Dubai.

Website Hosting

Bandwidth usage is around 10% each month. Plenty of room for more visitor numbers
Amount of server space used - 23.8%

Search Engines

The website Search engine optimisation has gone well with the website ranking high on Google, Bing, Ask and Yahoo. The percent of traffic from the big search engines since March 1st is as follows - Google (91.3%), Bing (4.9%) and Yahoo (2.9%).

The website is now ranked second in Google when the search term 'slingsby' is used and first with the term 'slingsby village'.

The website is getting a good number of visits from search engines enquiries thanks to the diversity of its content. The website has also established an excellent weblink network.

Additional websites

Alongside slingsbyvillage.co.uk there are two other satellite websites:-

Twitter.com/slingsbyvillage – the Twitter page has developed well with posts from the website being linked there to encourage new viewers. Other tweets include local news or village related items. The current number of followers, many of them Ryedale or North Yorkshire based villages, businesses or people, comes to 193.

Flickr.com/photos/slingsby_village – A relatively new website established in August. This website is an online archive for photography from around the Parish which currently features 50 images. Over the next year it is hoped that this superb resource can be expanded out to include a good cross section of old and new imagery – much of it, hopefully, coming from the residents of the parish themselves.

A Wikipedia entry for Slingsby is also being revised and updated.

Email Systems

The Googlemail (Gmail) E-mail system is functioning well.

Technical Issues

No serious technical issues have been encountered so far.

The website was offline for a period of around 36 hours in mid September due to a hack. The MySQL Injection hack was, however, not aimed specifically at the website (no files or data were damaged) and the situation was resolved quickly by the hosting company.

The WordPress.com based admin training website has been an extremely useful tool for familiarising administrators with the WordPress system. It will remain an extremely valuable resource for training those who wish to contribute to the Slingsby Website.

Richard Flint - Webmaster