



COUNTY DURHAM TALKING NEWSPAPER

CIO Charity: Registered No.1159940

Unit 1, City West Business Park, St John's Road, Meadowfield, Durham, DH7 8ER

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR PERIOD JANUARY 2023 - DECEMBER 2023

Trustees: Stephen Prior (Chair); Alice Severs; Linda Johnson; Leita Prior (Managing Editor/Administrator)

Charitable Objects:

"To relieve blind and partially sighted people, or those labouring under some temporary or permanent incapacity or disability which makes reading a strain, in County Durham and the surrounding areas by the provision of audio resources in particular, but not exclusively, a talking newspaper."

A FREE RESOURCE FOR 100 VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE in COUNTY DURHAM

CDTN provides a free, regular audio package of local news and features for people with a visual impairment in County Durham. The news content is sourced mostly from The Northern Echo and covers County Durham only. The 40-minute 'magazine' section of our 80-minute recording comprises a quiz, history/nostalgia features from (mostly) local and regional papers, VIP-specific notices and our own interviews or locally relevant packages such as coverage of the Durham Miners' Gala. Recordings are supplied on CD or memory stick and delivered by Royal Mail free of charge under the 'Articles for the Blind' concession. We send around 90 recordings to listeners every week.

Our charity is run entirely by a small group of unpaid volunteers.

The charity has this year (2023) completed its ninth year. CDTN was set up to maintain a long-running service that was about to end when its former charity provider—VIPs in County Durham—closed with very little notice.

Most of our listeners are around 85 years old. Most lost their sight later in life with many saying they miss reading their favourite paper. These might include The Northern Echo, the Sunday Sun, the Teesdale Mercury, the Chronicle and the Sunday Post (English edition).

In 2020 Covid restrictions did not cause a break in the service, but it meant the loss of around 14 volunteers. We continue to work remotely, meeting only (in a smaller office) to copy and dispatch the recordings. We now have around eight volunteers filling the roles of editor, writer, reader, sound technician and dispatch. The team is led by our managing editor who holds an NCTJ (MA) qualification in bi-media journalism.

CDTN is a member of the Talking Newspaper Federation—a source of ideas, advice and a comprehensive and heavily discounted insurance package.

THE FINANCES

(See Receipts & Payments Accounts in Appendix below)

Our service is completely free to our users, and we never ask them for donations. Recordings are carried in reusable heavy duty 'wallets' by Royal Mail under the free-of-charge 'Articles for the Blind' concession; listeners also return their postal wallets free of charge.

Our operating costs include office rent, blank CDs, replacement postal wallets, insurance, newspapers, USB sticks, USB players, office supplies and TNF subscriptions. Only two of our volunteers ever claim expenses (other than where such amounts are donated straight back to the charity).

We receive no grant aid. Our costs are met by (a) the remains of a legacy from former charity VIPS in County Durham which closed in 2014; (b) public donations. In 2023 we received donations from the F.P. Moore legacy, Rotary Durham, Fred Henderson Ltd, The Shakespeare Temperance Trust and Forest Carbon Ltd.

With respect to reserves: we have no employment obligations but our reserves policy states that we should keep at least 6 months' running costs in reserve (to serve notice on our rented accommodation and pay any outstanding volunteer expenses, newspaper bills, etc.). At present this figure would be around £3,000.

Trustees declare they have approved the trustees report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Prior', with a horizontal line underneath.

Stephen Prior (Chair of Trustees)

25th October 2024

APPENDIX: RECEIPTS AND PAYMENT ACCOUNT
(January 2023 – December 2023)
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NB All figures to nearest £.

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Endowment £	Total £	Last year £
Receipts					
Donations	4,000	-		4,000	4,346
Legacies	-	-		-	
Recording Income	1,773	-		1,773	937
				-	
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	5,773	-		5,773	5,283

Payments					
Office (includes rent, insurance, communications)	3,886	-		3,886	3,938
Recording (includes distributed consumables)	148	-		148	479
Recording and reproduction equipment	-	-		-	
Advertising	-	-		-	
Volunteer expenses	1,770	-		1,770	1,630
Newspapers	408	-		408	196
				-	
Sub total	6,211	-		6,211	6,243

Net of receipts/(payments)	- 439	-	-	- 439	- 960
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	7,347	-	-	7,347	8,307
Cash funds this year end	6,908	-	-	6,908	7,347

Cash funds			Endowment £	Total £	Total £
CAF Bank Account	6,908	-	-	6,908	7,347
		-	-	-	-
Total cash funds	6,908		-	6,908	7,347

Assets retained for the charity's own use			Endowment £	Total £	Total £
4 x PCs	-	-	-	-	-
Recording equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Audio reproduction equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Furniture	-	-	-	-	-
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-



Signed by Chair of Trustees: Stephen Prior, 25th October 2024