



Talking News Federation

TALKING NEWS FEDERATION CIO

REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

PERIOD FROM 1 APRIL 2021 TO 31 MARCH 2022

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Legal and administrative information

Registered office
and principal address 145 Victoria Road
Swindon
SN1 3BU

Charity number 1185913

Trustees
Amanda Reed (Chair) (elected 9 October 2021)
Heather Bolton (Secretary) (elected 9 October 2021)
Richard Black (Treasurer) (elected 9 October 2021)
Alan Dunderdale (elected 9 October 2021)
Paul Ramsden (elected 9 October 2021)
Tim Baty (elected 9 October 2021)
Michael Lewington (resigned 9 October 2021)
Catherine Sexton (resigned 9 October 2021)

Independent
Examiner Gerald Bygraves
GB Accounting Solutions Limited
Millennium Studios
Bedford Technology Park
Bedford
MK44 2YA

Bankers	CAF Bank Limited 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ	Shawbrook Bank Limited Lutea House, Warley Hill Business Park The Drive, Great Warley Brentwood, Essex CM13 3BE
	NatWest Bank Plc 30 High Street Chippenham SN15 3HB	

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From the Chairman

Amanda Reed writes: I was privileged to have been chosen as TNF Chairman at our Annual General Meeting held in Cardiff in October 2021.

In the year since I took over from retiring Chair Mike Lewington, I have seen a new changing world emerging, not only for Talking Newspapers, but for everyone. We all find ourselves in uncertain times as we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has affected Talking Newspapers in different ways. Some Talking Newspapers lost everything, including access to their premises, and so were forced to stop production. Some managed to access their equipment and change their operations so that they could follow government guidelines and work from home. Other TNs adopted new recording methods, setting up new systems to record and distribute everything remotely so they were able to continue to provide a service to listeners. A few TNs were lucky and managed to carry on.

Sadly, we are aware that some Talking Newspapers have unfortunately ceased to exist during the pandemic, leaving gaps for listeners. But as the world emerges from Covid-19, we need to try and get back to business as normal, to start over, or rebuild.

Now is the time to share our pandemic experiences – what went well, what went wrong, what we have done differently and what changes we have made. Most importantly, we need to support each other locally and nationally and get back to providing normal service for our listeners. It is so important to keep the conversation going, whether in person or online, so that together we can make the TN voice heard once again.

TNF's strategic plan has seen changes due to the pandemic. What we historically delivered is not necessary what is wanted now. Following this year's conference, we will be re-writing our strategic plan with your support, according to your wants and needs in a post-pandemic world. For example, during the pandemic, TNF switched events to an online 'Zoom' format when we couldn't meet and network face-to-face. TNF members welcomed initiatives such as our successful programme of Winter workshops in 2021-22 and indications are that many TNs are happy to continue online get-togethers. We will aim to build on this success and offer more online events in the coming year. We will also continue the popular TNF Soundings service, providing additional TN content to supplement local news and features.

So now is the time for you as members to tell us about your wants and needs, your dreams and aspirations for the future of your TN, and what we can do to help and assist you. I cannot promise miracles, but we will do our very best for you.

We are here to help. Just ask!

About the Talking News Federation

The Talking News Federation is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, run entirely by volunteers, with work overseen by a board of elected trustees. TNF's objectives are:

- to promote good practice and the efficiency and effectiveness of its member organisations for the benefit of blind or partially sighted people or those labouring under some temporary or permanent incapacity or disability that makes reading a strain
- to support, represent and develop the work of Talking News Organisations which undertake the systematic provision of news and other material by digital or analogue transmission throughout the United Kingdom
- to promote and assist the formation of Talking News Organisations throughout the United Kingdom.

Our service

The Talking News Federation exists to support and assist some 300 local Talking Newspapers throughout the United Kingdom to deliver local news and information in audio to blind, partially sighted and print disabled people.

Our impact

Local TNs and their listeners are at the heart of everything we do at the TNF. We endeavour to ensure the best quality service is delivered to our members.

The diagnosis of a print disability, such as macular degeneration, can be disempowering. Many sufferers speak of the condition as isolating and upsetting, similar to a bereavement. Many listeners regard the service provided by TNs as a way to counter loneliness and an opportunity to continue to keep in touch with local news and information. The TN service impact across the UK can be summarised as:

- 1,054 newspapers and magazines are recorded
- 25,000 listeners receive a regular local TN or magazine
- 10,000 volunteers deliver the service.

Independent Review

A TNF Independent Review is a friendly assessment of a TN's selected recording. The experienced review panel comprises the TNF review administrator, an audio technician, and two teams of four visually impaired listeners. TNF's aim in offering reviews is to act as a 'critical friend' to support TNs to provide consistently interesting and engaging local audio news to a growing number of listeners.

An Independent Review provides feedback on a TN's recording, as well as ideas and examples of great practice gained from reviewing other TNs. Working together in this way contributes to the achievement of TNF's aim.

Governance and Management

The charity was formed as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) numbered 1185913 on 21 October 2019 and the Activities, Assets and Liabilities of the previous Unincorporated Registered Charity number 1108294 were transferred with effect from 1 April 2020. This Report covers the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

There are currently 6 TNF Trustees who meet at least quarterly to administer the charity. Every year one third of the Trustees is required to resign. However, Trustees may be nominated and elected for a subsequent term.

The Trustees are responsible for the process of succession planning to ensure that the Committee is always composed of members with the requisite experience and skills necessary to contribute to the life of the Charity and with the interests of Charity always in mind.

None of the Trustees has any beneficial interest in the Charity, nor receives any remuneration. The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity and are satisfied that systems are in place that offer reasonable mitigation of the major risks.

Trustee indemnity insurance is included in our insurance policies and has been in place throughout the year.

Social investment

All income received by the Charity is used solely for the benefit of members. The Trustees do not provide any social investment loans to individuals, charities or organisations.

Grant Making

No grants were awarded during the year.

Remuneration Policy for Trustees

The Charity's Trustees give of their time freely and none received remuneration in the year. Details of Trustees' expenses are in accordance with the TNF Allowances Policy on the TNF website.

Fundraising Statement

TNF does not currently conduct any proactive fundraising activity. We have never employed third party fundraisers nor engaged with commercial partners, bought or sold lists of personal data or mailing lists from any source.

Public Benefit

The Charities Act 2011 requires all charities to meet the legal requirement that its aims are for the public benefit. Two key principles should be met in order to demonstrate that an organisation's aims are for the public benefit: firstly, there must be an identifiable benefit and secondly that the benefit must be for the public or a section of the public.

The guidance issued by the Charity Commission includes "promoting the relief of those in need by reason of disability, financial or other hardship" and "the provision of leisure-time occupation in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving the conditions of life for the persons for whom they are intended".

The Trustees confirm they have given due consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and are confident that the Charity has complied with these. The Federation's charitable objects fall within subsection 3 (1) of the Charities Act 2011 relating to the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. The Trustees ensure these are carried out for the public benefit, through delivery of the Talking Newspaper service delivered by some 300 local Talking Newspapers for visually impaired and print disabled people within the United Kingdom.

Conflicts of Interest

As part of our governance process, Trustees are required at the end of our accounting year to confirm whether they or any close member of their family has any business interests in any company, where an expenditure in excess of £1,000 is incurred, which may result in a conflict of interest.

Reserves Statement

The Annual Conference, which includes the Annual General Meeting, is TNF's major financial commitment. The maximum liability could be up to £25,000.

To meet this potential liability, a designated fund of £10,000 is held alongside a similar level fund relating to the development/rescue of Talking Newspapers in the UK.

The Trustees consider a level of unrestricted reserves amounting to 50% of annual expenditure is realistic. The reserves level as calculated has increased substantially this year because of increased Legacy income and the reduction in expenditure during the Covid-19 pandemic on trustee meetings, Conferences, promoting TNs at trade/charity events and hands-on TN support. TNF currently has over 1½ years Reserves. This expected to decline as many items of Expenditure return to pre-pandemic levels.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces
- the establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate or remove those risks identified in the annual review; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise

Major risks are:

- a loss of confidence in the Federation resulting in a reduction in membership.
- the continued closure of local and regional print newspapers, bringing additional challenges to those providing local TN services.
- the closure of local TNs as a result of either/or the demise of the print newspaper or the difficulties of recruiting volunteers.

The risk is managed by maintaining close links with TNs, the provision of a Federation website to attract listeners and volunteers and contributing to the TN Talk chat forum where questions on technical, governance, copyright and related subjects may be posted and advice sought.

Financial Review

The accounts for the year under report – 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 – have been Independently Examined and the Certificate confirms that the Accountant was satisfied with our record keeping and transaction evidence.

Income is mainly derived from Membership Subscriptions from local Talking Newspaper organisations in the UK. This year, several fewer TNs renewed their membership than for the previous year. This reflects closure/mergers of TNs but the National Lockdown around Covid-19 disrupted administrative and financial procedures for many TNs and some failed to complete the renewal procedure.

A major source of income this year was from the closure of member Talking Newspapers. Cynon Valley and Leeds closed and donated almost £10,000 to the Federation. Whilst the funds are very welcome for TNF going forward, it is unfortunate that member TNs are closing, often through lack of volunteers as well as VIP Listeners.

Other income was a legacy of almost £7,000 which the Executors have agreed can be used to support Talking Info. This is a new project to help bring TNs to areas not currently covered by a local service. There was also Commission from the Brokers handling the TNF Insurance Scheme and Bank Interest.

Total Income for the Year was £29,404, excluding Conference Booking Fees.

Expenditure reflected the partial reinstatement of physical Trustee and Strategic Planning Meetings which the Trustees have decided should alternate with virtual meetings. Expenditure supporting TNs fell by 15% due to Covid-19 travel restrictions and the temporary closure of many TNs. The reduction also reflected the reluctance of many TN volunteers to attend large gatherings, a continuing feature of the current year with planned regional gatherings cancelled due to lack of sufficient delegate registrations. Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind delivered administrative support both to TNF and to TN members during the period.

The first 'in-person' TNF AGM and Annual Conference since 2019 was held in Cardiff in October 2021. Although attendance was well down on pre-Covid levels the Event was considered successful by attendees. An innovation this year was to make the Event accessible online via by Zoom and 18 TNs joined that way.

No awards were made under the TNF Member's Grant scheme.

Looking forward, it is probable that several TNs have not survived the Covid-19 Closures and Subscription Income for 2022-2023 may be impacted adversely.

Talking News Federation Accounts 2021-2022

The period covered is from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 Excluding National Conference

1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022

2022
£

2021
£

Receipts

Membership

Membership Subscriptions for the year 2020 - 2021		13,188.00
Membership Subscriptions for the year 2021 - 2022	10,119.00	2,050.00
Membership Subscriptions for the year 2022 - 2023	1,815.00	

Donations

Donations - General	16,652.86	10,046.21
Donations - Restricted	0.00	0.00

Other Income

Service Income	516.00	550.00
Bank Interest	303.40	486.53

Total Receipts

29,406.26 26,320.74

Payments

Administration

Office Administration Costs	2,167.06	2,809.12
Office Equipment	0.00	0.00
TNF Insurance	1,401.32	1,366.89
Finance Charges	96.00	130.00
Trustees Meetings	1,702.10	67.50
Archiving	346.20	0.00
Outsource Costs	1,500.00	1,200.00
	7,212.68	5,573.51

Services

Direct TN Support	2,400.00	2,100.00
Local Conferences	0.00	0.00
Exhibiting at Events	414.00	0.00
Representing TNF	0.00	0.00
TNF Soundings	27.74	1,640.55
TNF Talking Info	10.79	0.00
TNF Website and Social Media	1,552.94	1,458.00
Promotional Material	0.00	0.00
TN Development and Training	535.10	680.30
	4,940.57	5,878.85

Governance

Independent Examination 2019-20	96.80	94.10
Strategic Planning Meetings	0.00	0.00
	96.80	94.10

Total Payments

12,250.05 11,546.46

Surplus for the year

17,156.21 14,774.28

**Talking News Federation National and Regional Conferences
Cardiff AGM & Conference 2021 (2020 Event cancelled due to Covid-19)**

**Accounting Period
1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022**

	2020 £	2020 £
Receipts		
Delegate Fees	£11,880.00	
Exhibition Stands	£310.00	
Raffle	£108.00	
Regional Conference Delegate Fee	£50.00	
Total Receipts	£12,348.00	0.00
Payments		
Venue Account	£13,605.70	
Speakers Gratuities	£299.00	
Stationery/ Telephone/ Postage/ Travel	£295.05	
Audiovisual Systems	£0.00	
Planning & Oversight	£435.00	£844.65
Total Payments	£14,634.75	844.65
(Deficit) on Conference for the year	(2,286.75)	(844.65)

	2021 - 2022			2019-2021	
	£	Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	£	£
	General Fund			Total Funds	
Total incoming resources					
Membership Activities	22,421.90	6,984.36		29,406.26	26,320.74
National/Regional Conferences	12,348.00			12,348.00	0.00
	34,769.90	6,984.36	0.00	41,754.26	26,320.74
Total Resources expended					
Membership Activities	11,687.21		562.84	12,250.05	11,546.46
National/Regional Conferences	14,634.75			14,634.75	844.65
	26,321.96	0.00	562.84	26,884.80	12,391.11
Net incoming/outgoing resources	8,447.94	6,984.36	(562.84)	14,869.46	13,929.63
Fund Balances B/fwd 1st April 2021	35,035.75	20,000.00	23,751.78	78,787.53	64,857.90
Fund Balances C/fwd 31 March 2022	£43,483.69	£26,984.36	£23,188.94	£93,656.99	78,787.53

Summary Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2021

Funds	2022	2021
	£	£
Unrestricted funds	43,483.69	35,035.75
Designated Funds	26,984.36	20,000.00
Restricted	10,757.12	11,319.96
Restricted	12,431.82	12,431.82
Accumulated Funds	26,984.36	93,656.99
	43,483.69	78,787.53

Note 1

- Ronald Sturt Fund
- TNF Development
Fund

Note 2

Represented by:

Cash at Bank

CAF Bank Cash

CAF Bank Gold

NatWest Bank

Shawbrook Bank 60 Days' Notice

Prepayments

Conference in advance

	2022 £	2021 £
CAF Bank Cash	£2,457.95	£900.49
CAF Bank Gold	£29,003.89	£8,001.44
NatWest Bank	£10,545.27	£3,536.67
Shawbrook Bank 60 Days' Notice	£51,649.88	£66,348.93
Prepayments		
Conference in advance	£0.00	£0.00
	<u>93,656.99</u>	<u>78,787.53</u>

Note 1

Designated Funds

- a) £10,000 to underwrite the National Conference as large deposits are now demanded by the venues.
 b) £10,000 to support our TN development / rescue role.
 c) £6,984.36 to support Talking Info.

Note 2

Restricted Funds

The Trustees have clarified the potential uses of the Ronald Sturt Fund with the Donors and it will be used to support the establishment of TNF Soundings and Training delivered to member TNs.
 The TNF Development Fund has been created from donations by the Sussex Coast Talking News and Wigan Metro Talking News to fund the creation/rebuilding of TNs in areas where there is a need but where there is no local TN.

Trustee



Trustee



Date 25/8/22

Date 24 August 2022

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF TALKING NEWS FEDERATION

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022, which are set out on pages one to four.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act
- have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Teal Bygrave FMAAT for

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Bedfordshire
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Date: *26 August 2022*