



FORTH VALLEY TALKING NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION [FVTNA]

Known to our Listeners as **NEWSLINE**

Management Committee's Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2016

Scottish Charity Number SC014778

Management Committee

Christine Moroney	Chairperson
Betty Sutherland	Secretary
Moira Dobbie	Treasurer
Duncan McVicar	
Finlay Nicolson	
Brian Sharp	

Contact Address

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Recruitment and appointment of the Management Committee

All of the Association's Management Committee are appointed or reappointed by the members at the annual general meeting which is held in May each year.

Governing Document

The Association is a charitable unincorporated association and the purposes and administration arrangements are set out in our constitution.

Charitable Purposes

Our purposes, as recorded in our constitution, are: -

The object of the Association is to relieve the blind, or partially sighted, or those labouring under some temporary or permanent incapacity or disability which makes reading a strain, by the provision of digital media i.e. recorded USB Memory Sticks and Players (if required by the Listener).

Currently, for the benefit of the blind and visually impaired in Falkirk and surrounding areas, we record an audio version, weekly, of the local newspaper, the **Falkirk Herald**. The audio version is distributed on USB Memory Sticks. Monthly, we produce a magazine which is also sent out on USB Memory Sticks. In addition we record the quarterly Falkirk Council Newspaper for the Council and distribute it to approximately 120 Listeners.

At 31st March 2016 we had 191 Listeners receiving our service summarised below with comparative figures: -.

31st March	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
CD			151	169	172
Tape			12	19	27
USB Memory Stick	191	166			
Total	191	166	163	188	199

As a result of visits to various organisations and continuing relationships with the Forth Valley Macular Society, RNIB representative at Forth Valley Sensory Centre, RNIB funded nurse at the Eye Clinic at Falkirk Community Hospital, Falkirk Council Social Services and applications through our own website we have been able to increase the number of Listeners over the last year. During the year we had 52 new Listeners and 27 cancelling our service through, death, dementia, etc. making a net increase of 25 Listeners.

Forth Valley Sensory Centre have informed us that 892 people living in the Falkirk Council area are registered blind. Therefore, there is further scope to increase our number of Listeners which we will endeavour to do through the relationships mentioned above and further advertising of our service.

Cost of Equipping a New Listener

As our recordings are distributed on USB Memory Sticks, which are reusable, we require to equip each New Listener with a USB Memory Stick Player *, four USB Memory Sticks (two for the weekly newspaper, one for the magazine and one for the Falkirk Council quarterly newspaper), four Looped Keyrings to assist locating the memory stick should it be dropped on to the floor, four coloured Mailing Wallets complete with Address Cards and Card Holders all at a total cost of £58.74 per Listener.

* Very occasionally a new Listener will not require a player as they have a computer or other equipment which will play USB Memory Sticks.

The Players are 'gifted' to our Listeners as we don't want to be responsible for PAT testing and the logistics of visiting their home to undertake this testing. Any Players that are returned are checked over and issued to new Listeners. We are unable to insist players are returned from Listeners cancelling our service because they have been "gifted" to them for the reasons above. We do, however, endeavour to recover USB Memory Sticks and Mailing Wallets from Listeners cancelling our "free" service.

We are also extremely grateful to the **NEWSLINE** Volunteers who deliver and demonstrate the Players to new Listeners. Most Volunteers find it an enjoyable and rewarding experience which is greatly appreciated by our new Listeners.

Premises

We moved into our current premises in Falkirk on 30th April 2007 following extensive alterations to accommodate three recording studios and ancillary equipment and facilities. Prior to April 2007 we entered into a 10 year lease for the premises with the Rosehall Property Company which is due to expire on 30th September, 2016. Rosehall Property Company are willing to give us a further 10 year lease from 1st October 2016 at an increased rental cost of £25 per month. In addition we have to meet the cost of Electricity, which amounted to £649.89 in 2014 / 15 covering the period from 20th June 2014 to 16th December 2015 i.e. eighteen months. 100% charitable rates relief has been granted by Falkirk Council for these premises from 1st October 2006. We have exemption from Water and Sewerage Charges under the Scottish Government Scheme. We, however, consider it prudent to hold reasonable cash reserves, circa £8,000, should, for any reason, we vacate the premises as we are required to leave them in an 'as was' condition i.e. demolish the studios and make safe the electrics, etc.

Chairperson's Review of our Activities and Achievements in 2015 / 16

A special welcome to Sandy, Sylvia and Phil who have joined us on a rota basis since this time last year. Also thanks to Marion and Samantha who joined us in 2015 but due to other commitments had to hang up their headphones during the year. We are grateful for the time they gave to *NEWSLINE*.

As reported above, we had 166 Listeners on our database 31st March 2015. Whereas on 31st March 2016 we had 191 Listeners. We had a steady increase of Listeners but of course we always lose some over the year (see above). The number of copies of *NEWSLINE* we send out each week varies between 140 & 150 so somewhere along the line we lose wallets or they are just not returned to us.

We are keeping an eye on our record cards each week and contacting people when they have a gap in wallets being returned to us. Hopefully this will help to recover missing wallets and USB Memory Sticks.

Some USB players have been returned to us during the year when they are no longer required but we have also had to purchase 24 new players. We have purchased six of the previously purchased Sovereign players and also eighteen Sonic Players - Kings Audio's latest model which is considerably smaller but easier to operate.

As mentioned above our current 10 year lease with Rosehall Property Company ends on 30th September this year. Brian has been in contact with the owners and they are happy for us to have a further 10 year lease. The only condition is our rent will increase by £25 a month but as we haven't incurred a rent increase over the last 10 years we are happy to go with it. [The current lease has a clause in it for an annual review of the rent and we are grateful that this has never been applied]. This new lease will take us to 2026 and who can tell what format a Talking Newspaper will be then. Will there be a paper copy of the Falkirk Herald or will we all be turning to the cloud (or maybe even swallowing a pill and the Herald news flashes into our brain)!

Once again we have received a grant for £2,000 from Falkirk Council to help with our running costs for the year. Recently we received a letter telling us our Council Grant for next year could be reduced by 15%. As you will see from our Accounts and as mentioned under Premises we have ring fenced £8,000 from our cash reserves which we would need if we did have to vacate the premises and put it back to how we found it. This should clarify our cash

reserves position and help when applying to other sources for funding. You will see from other notes Brian has attended a funders meeting and has some new ideas for raising money. Fingers crossed we may benefit from this.

Jacque Winning, Manager of Forth Valley Sensory Centre since June 2015, has started coming along and reading the centre newsletter so this can be added to our recording and all our Listeners are able to hear what is happening in the Sensory Centre. This recording is sent electronically to the Stirling Talking Newspaper (Rocktalk) so that the Listeners in that area also know what is going on. Jacque also reads items for *NEWSLINE* and the magazine while she is here.

Brian and Finlay represented *NEWSLINE* at the Scottish Talking Newspaper Group conference in the Inchyra Grange Hotel, Polmont, in October. Some of the content was of interest but there is still room for improvement to make the day more applicable to Talking Newspaper organisations.

A big thank you as always to our Listeners who have sent donations over the past year and to the family of the late Edward Munro, Denny, who gave *NEWSLINE* half of the retiral collection from his funeral and for the donation in memory of Mrs Lindsay. Often the donations are sent with a letter telling us how much people enjoy listening to our recordings. Thanks to former Treasurer and Founder Member, Margaret Harvey who continues to support *NEWSLINE* through a Charity Aid donation, also to Grangemouth Rotary who give us a donation each year from their Santa Sleigh and to the Square Men from Edinburgh who gave us a donation this year. These donations along with the others detailed in the Accounts are all very much appreciated.

Many thanks for the extra help we receive with reading and other work from Grangemouth Rotary who attend fortnightly, Soroptomists International of Falkirk who attend on the alternate week to Grangemouth Rotary and to Falkirk Rotary who have continued to help us, weekly, throughout most of this year.

A big thank you to my fellow Management Committee Members. Without their dedication and hard work my position would be much more difficult and of course wearing my Listener hat a huge thank you to you all who turn out on a Thursday in all weathers to keep all us VIP's up to date with the local news and entertained listening to the magazine. It is all very much appreciated not just by myself but many other Listeners I have contact with in other places. If it is going to rain, it sure rains on a Thursday. Thanks to you all for your dedication.

Management Committee remuneration and expenses

None of the Management Committee received any remuneration or expenses during the year.

Reserves

As a result of the surplus of £737.15 for the year the balance at 31st March 2016 was £9,979.77 of which £8,000 is set aside for returning our present premises to an 'as was' condition should we vacate them (see above).

Approved by the Management Committee and signed on their behalf.

C. Moroney, Chairperson
19th April 2016