



Community Radio

Key commitments annual report form

Publication date: March 2011
Issue 5

Contents

Section

Page

Section 1

Report Form

.1 Community Radio Annual Report Form: Year Ending 31 March 2010

Station details

Licence Number

CR168

Station Name

Gravity FM

Launch Date

15th December 2008

Web address where you will publish this report

[please say if the report has already been published, and if not, when]

This report will be published on the company website at www.gravityfm.net, and will be available from the 1st July 2011. Paper copies will be available by request from the office.

PLEASE NOTE: Each section can be expanded to take as much information as you need to provide.

.2 The year in numbers

| Please specify the station's achievements in the 10/11 year in numbers as follows: | |
|--|--|
| Average number of live hours per week | 119 |
| Average number of original programming hours per week (this may include pre-recorded as well as live material but should not include repeats). | 119 |
| The percentage of your live daytime output that is speech | 17% |
| Number of people trained over the course of the year | 30 |
| Number of volunteers involved over the course of the year | This has ranged from 60 to 86, with an average of 40 regularly active volunteers |
| If appropriate, a list of languages you have broadcast in | English |

(Please also include this information in the following sections where relevant)

.3 Key commitments: Programming

| |
|---|
| <p>-Weekday daytime output will typically comprise 80% music and 20% speech. We estimate that this will rise significantly as the station expands. ('Speech' excludes advertising, programme/promotional trails and sponsor credits).</p> <p>-Music output will typically comprise of light popular music from the past and present, with more specialist genres featuring in evening programming.</p> <p>-Speech output will include magazine-style programming with studio and telephone guest interviews, documentaries, local news round-ups, village reports, sports coverage, weather and traffic information.</p> <p>-Output will be generally be in English, other community languages may feature from time to time depending on community demand and the availability of volunteers.</p> <p>-The service will typically be live for at least 12 hours per day. (Live programming may include pre-recorded inserts, if applicable.) The majority of the output will be locally produced.</p> |
|---|

[Report back on your key commitments in relation to programming achievements over the past year here.]

Although we broadcast for 24 hours a day the service is typically live for 17, after which time the output is auto-generated. Our service is therefore usually live for 120 hours per week (of which typically 3 to 4 hours of this will be pre-recorded) We do not repeat shows throughout the schedule. Our core programming is set amongst popular light music ranging from the 1950's to current chart material. After 7.00 pm our evening shows cover more diverse music genres in specialist programming such as;

Soul and Motown
Classic Country and Western
Love Songs
60's and 70's
Christian music,
House and trance
Rock and metal
Disco
Golden Oldies

Over the last year our average output will have been approximately 17% speech to 83% music. Our spoken content is spread across the schedule within all core shows and typically includes:

- Hourly weather updates
- A magazine style afternoon show
- Dedicated live traffic and travel updates including roadworks and where applicable alternative routes.
- Local sports information including news, fixtures and results updates (during seasons)
- Regular health information
- Weekly news discussion on local issues with the editor of local newspaper The Grantham Journal
- latest advertised job vacancies (daily excluding weekends)
- Monthly Legal Slot with information and advice provided by a local solicitor
- Showbiz and entertainment news
- Guest speakers from community organisations, charities and interest groups.
- Local performance artist interviews
- Daily guide to “what’s on” in the local community
- Information on local services – for example school closures, changes to refuse collections, and alterations / delays to local bus services during inclement weather

We have historically broadcast entirely in English, although with an increasing polish population within the community we are currently researching whether there would be a demand for broadcasts in an alternative language, and are exploring the opportunities to work with our local Polish Society to cater for this section of the community, potentially within a regular specialist show.

.1 Key commitments: Social gain objectives

a) The provision of sound broadcasting services to individuals who are otherwise under served

- Gravity FM will be targeted at the people of Grantham. Specific target groups within the wider community include young people, home workers, house parents, people with specific local interests (sports, history etc.), people in isolated rural locations, employees and owners of local businesses, the elderly and vulnerable and migrant workers.

b) The facilitation of discussion and the expression of opinion

- Programming will include the facilitation of discussion and expression of opinion via phone-ins on e.g. discussion programmes, recorded debates, vox pops and output featuring local commentators, authors, poets and journalists.

c) The provision (whether by means of programmes included in the service or otherwise) of education or training to individuals not employed by the person providing the service

-Training will cover programme making, programme editing, presentation skills and studio equipment. Refresher training will be provided for experienced volunteers. Training will be provided by local individuals with the ability to pass on their broadcasting skills.

- Gravity FM expects to train and support 10 additional regular presenters per year. - Gravity FM will develop training facilities at the studio and will also explore the potential to share training events and facilities with other community stations in the area and will examine ways in which it can work with local educational providers to ultimately provide vocational qualifications as well as appropriate support for post 16 & Job centre Plus participants.

d) The better understanding of the particular community and the strengthening of the links within it

-Gravity FM will maintain awareness amongst its audiences through public meetings, providing speakers for meetings, maintaining links with local businesses, mail outs, etc. Gravity FM will provide opportunities for organisations, businesses and groups to come and discuss their perspectives on air.

-Gravity FM is developing links with local musicians and will be connecting with other cultural organisations. There will be close cooperation with Grantham Police to promote public order initiatives and with Lincolnshire Health Board and local surgeries to promote health care information. Social activities for community cohesion will be promoted, such as involvement with the annual Grantham Carnival.

[report back against your key commitments here]

a) Gravity FM exists to provide a locally focused radio broadcasting service for Grantham and the surrounding villages. Commercial radio stations cannot provide our town and surrounding villages with the local news, information and features provision due to the large geographical location that they cover. Reporting at either a regional or national level totally misses local issues unless deemed “newsworthy” on these scales, meaning that the community we cover would otherwise be excluded. Our programming is aimed to promote inclusion for all groups within the wider community with “something for everyone”, either through the broad appeal of our daytime programming or in specialist shows, for example the young are catered for through the “Gravity Youth Project” which addresses pertinent issues and music is made by and for local young people.

b) Through our programming we have sought to prompt and facilitate discussion and debate on issues that we feel are of interest or importance to the local area and our listeners.

For example;

- Interviews and telephone debate regarding the desecration of the local cemetery (and listener opinion on other criminal activity reported locally.)
- Debate and information on the proposed and eventual closure of the local museum
- We were the only community station to be granted an interview from Andrew Sentance from the bank of England to discuss current policy position, the factors influencing interest rate decisions and uncertainties and risk in the economic outlook.
- Local Arts and Crafts
- Local parking schemes, and issues such as costs and imposed fines
- The impact of funding cuts on local VSO's.
- Town centre planning consultation and decisions
- Interviews and debate with all local candidates in the run up to the election (Gravity FM was the only local media to include all candidates and parties)
- interviews with local resident groups
- Weekly local round up and discussion of main news stories with the editor of Grantham's newspaper
- Editorial content provided by Grantham's newspaper The Journal, local sporting groups such as Grantham town football club and Lincolnshire Police.

c) Within the limits of our current facilities (see section .6- significant difficulties) we have provided a programme of training workshops for our volunteers. These have been predominately aimed at presenting and production / editing skills and have ranged from in house volunteer delivered training sessions to workshops run by media professionals - all have been provided without charge to our volunteers.

Volunteers have attended workshop based training sessions throughout the year, (numbers in brackets are volunteers attending) these have covered ;

Presentation Masterclass(es) (13)

Writing For Broadcast (4)

Compiling Radio features (4)

Guide to the Ofcom Broadcast code (7)

To improve the experience for newer presenters we established a dedicated one hour training slot into the schedule where each presenter has one to one training with a consistent trainer covering all aspects of broadcasting a show; including the pre - planning and show development as well as learning the practical skills of physically using and co-ordinating the equipment within a controlled environment. Since these training slots were established at the beginning of the year six new presenters have been trained using this method, giving a total of twelve over the course of the reporting period. More established presenters receive feedback and refresher training (with the assistance of other volunteers) as and where appropriate. For self study we have a small amount of relevant reference material which can be freely loaned by our volunteers.

We have also developed the skills within our management team, with the following business related training courses (numbers in brackets denote total attendees, the bold being the number of which were paid employees)

CIEH Health and Safety level 2 (4,**2**)

Sustainability and Business Growth (4,2)

Marketing (1)

COSHH within the workplace (1)

Managing and retaining Volunteers (1)

Volunteers have the opportunity to work towards a recognized qualification, GNVQ qualifications are available through an outside learning provider, including Adult literacy and numeracy as part of a level 1.

The station has built strong links with education providers, with the Station Manager sharing skills with pupils from three local schools through creative media workshops and careers advice sessions. We have also increased the work experience placements we have hosted to 10 covering 5 secondary schools in the surrounding area. Gravity FM CIC was recognised as an organisation which provided exemplary support to the employee whilst taking part in the Gecko Programme (part of the Future Jobs Fund which aims to provide skills which improve employability amongst the long term unemployed aged 18-25) which provided us with two six month funded placements up to October 2010. As such we were chosen to receive further funding for our third placement which commenced in January this year.

d) We have provided support for local artists promoting the areas vibrant music scene, this has included promotion and coverage of live music events such as the Valefest and wintervale music festivals(covering the town and local villages), and in interviews and live performances with local artists and bands such as Abbey Moore, Will and the People, and That Sunday Feeling, also providing airplay to unsigned artists.

We have provided local organisations, charities and leisure groups with a further outlet to promote themselves, their work or appeal for assistance and new volunteers or members. This has included speakers from organisations such as; local schools, Woolsthorpe Manor, the Samaritans, Grantham ROCK, Ropsley & District Womens Institute, Grantham Now magazine, and the National Apprenticeships service. We have promoted local events through our whats on guide, and further through interviews with the organisers and groups involved. In addition within the last twelve months we have attended nearly 30 outside community events both in the town centre such as the Carnival princess competition, Grantham carnival, Dysart Park Funday, Its a knockout tournament, Gifts hospice gala, Christmas Funday, the big hoop, the George centre fundraisers and music days, and in many of the villages for example skillington Gala, Colsterworth Gala Day, and Woolsthorpe village fete enabling us to meet community members and raise the station profile promoting our services to a wider audience. This has been further enhanced by our volunteers sharing their skills and assisting organisations by “hosting” for and commentating at a charity fundraiser with local band Will and the People, and at the Carnival princess competition. We have also spoken publicly about our organisation and what we do within the community at meetings for the Grantham Round table and Forty Plus.

.2 Key commitments: Access and participation

-Any member of the community will be able to volunteer at Gravity FM. Volunteers will be members of Gravity FM (thereby signing up to its values).

-The studio will be located near the centre of Grantham. The studio reception will

maintain an open door policy throughout the day when there are live broadcasts.

- Gravity FM expects to have around 30 active volunteers at any one time.
- Membership is open to anyone that shares and values the aims of the station. Our membership application gives each person an opportunity to say what role they would like to be come involved in, whether it be presenting, technical, management, administration or fundraising. The decisions participation in these roles are made by the directors according to need of the station, ability of the prospective member and or training available to help bring the member up to a standard to be able to function effectively in that volunteer role.

[report back against your key commitments here]

- We welcome all members of the community in to the station and have found roles for all those who have wanted to become involved, in the areas which interest them. In line with our objective of a truly open entry policy all membership applications considered have been approved, and membership has remained stable following huge growth in the previous year. We have encouraged our volunteers to progress, with one being awarded a position on the Management team overseeing programme quality and control, and other volunteering on the board as a Director.
- The station remains within the same premises situated within a close walking distance to the town centre and abundant parking (although restricted parking is available on site). We have maintained our open door policy.
- The modifications to the building for disabled access have now been completed and the ground floor (including toilet facilities) is fully wheelchair accessible. Completion of the second studio has been much slower than originally envisaged due to a lack of volunteer resources and skills (or the available funds to purchase these) and technical issues with the equipment and software installation, however huge progress has been made and at the end of this reporting period it is expected to be completed within two months. Once our volunteers are trained with the new equipment we intend to open the studio for general use (ground floor accessible and specifically designed to be user friendly for the less able bodied) and already have interest from local disability support groups.
- We have now begun renovations to what will become the editing and production area which we hope will provide a dedicated and well equipped suite in which those interested in pre-production can learn the required skills to take a more active role in this aspect.
- As a few volunteers had expressed an interest in fundraising for the station we wanted to provide a meaningful volunteering opportunity in this area which would harness these interests and skills and so encouraged the development of a sub committee. Unfortunately take up was poor and this did not work first time around. However with the arrival of additional interested volunteers, a regular committee is in the process of being formed as of the end of this reporting period. It is expected that the committee will (with the help of our other volunteers) research, plan and undertake fundraising for the station throughout the year. We hope to support these volunteers with improving their skills in this area through peer skills sharing and outside training provision where suitable and available. (the training we have undertaken for our volunteers is discussed in more detail within section .1 Social Gain Objectives)
- Whilst our membership has remained relatively constant following huge growth in

the year 2009-2010, the number of active volunteers has increased to an average of forty. spanning a diverse age range with volunteers from 14 to 78 all making an active contribution, our younger volunteers predominantly becoming involved through the youth project.

.3 Key commitments: Accountability to the target community

- Gravity FM will establish a diverse listeners' panel, meeting quarterly, to discuss such issues as programming, involvement by members of the target community and to discuss and suggest general activities of the station.
- Meetings, including an AGM, will be publicly advertised via community information points located in community centres, on line and via the radio and, where facilities are available, will be held in Grantham at various times.
- Gravity FM has a published complaints procedure.
- Gravity FM will develop a website with an on line forum which will be open to any member of the local community and encourage debate about all matters relating to the station.
- Gravity FM will conduct an annual survey in Grantham and its satellite villages to ascertain listener views and opinions on station output.

[report back against your key commitments here]

- We have sought to set up a listener panel to meet regularly to give their views on the station output. This has not been without difficulty – recruitment has been difficult despite advertising on air, through our website and through external agencies/ organisations such as South Lincs CVS. However we now have five independent panellists in place aged from 19 to 60 plus , and although the first meeting had to be postponed due to ill health and prior commitments amongst the volunteers we hope the listener panel will flourish over the coming year.
- Aside from the listener panel, we conduct an annual survey to canvas our listener's opinions. These are conducted either in person whilst at key community events, and online (It is permanently accessible from our website). Following our analysis of the surveys and feedback received last year we consulted with two industry professionals to utilise this information in refining our music policy and in determining the station direction, imaging and strategy.
- Our AGM was open to all and was held in a central location for access. It was publicly advertised at information points within the town, and within the local weekly newspaper. In addition we have held general volunteer meetings, and volunteer focus groups. To further keep our volunteers informed we have set up a quarterly newsletter - the Gravity Grapevine.
- We established the online forum in February of 2010, and whilst this worked well initially it was apparent that it was not attracting the feedback and interaction with the listeners and wider community that we had hoped, with the main debate on the site coming from within our volunteers. After consulting with the volunteers through a dedicated focus group we elected to close the forum and utilise the networking site Facebook to create a Gravity FM page where the station can interact with our listeners (this is sign posted from our website) and to date we

have 181 members. Presenters currently use this page to inform listeners of upcoming show content and interviews, take requests and gain feedback.

- The station Management have worked to develop a comprehensive package of policies, including a published external complaints policy which is available by request from the office, details of which are also available on the website, and for our volunteers we have a clear internal complaints and grievance procedure. Copies of all policies are made available within the station and we are currently in the process of issuing personal hard copies of all relevant company policies to our volunteers.

.4 **Volunteer inputs** (see the separate guidance notes)

Number of volunteers:

Throughout the year we have had between 60 and 86 volunteers, of this number approximately 40 would be involved in regular volunteering at any one time throughout the year. For the purposes of the figures below the capacity in which the person predominantly volunteers has been used, although many of our volunteers will often perform multiple roles. Therefore a volunteer may be listed as a presenter but may also assist with technical duties, housekeeping or with fundraising, likewise categories may not have any volunteers listed against them as they are performed by volunteers whose main role is categorised elsewhere.

What roles are performed by volunteers:

We have a diverse selection of roles which are performed by our volunteers, these include:

- Administration (1)
- Promotional and marketing activities (1)
- Music library cataloguing, conducting and compiling listener surveys
- Note taking / minute taking
- Production such as conducting, recording and editing interviews and features (4)
- Fund-raising (6)
- Presenting: to include research and show preparation, (30)
- road shows and outside broadcasts in the community – compeering at community events, representing the station, meeting the public and talking to our listeners
- Developing, organising, or delivering training (3)
- Working with Young People; supervision and developing skills; (2)
- Engineering and IT assistance; (2)
- Building Works (1)
- Research and information sourcing and compilation;
- The Board of Directors and Management (3)
- Housekeeping and cleaning duties – All volunteers

Approximate number of hours worked on average per volunteer per week:

The approximate number of hours worked on average per volunteer (based on average of 40 active volunteers) is five and a half per week. Although it should be

noted that there are huge variations between the amount of hours that our volunteers give to the Station depending on their role and their time and availability. This will then vary further throughout the year; for example those involved with fundraising will have more sporadic activity than say regular presenters who may give anything from one hour up to fifteen hours a week of airtime (not taking in to account the preparation / research time spent outside of the show) but then they may also give time for attending community events which peak during the summer months and other activities such as cleaning and attending training.

.5 Significant achievements

Our benefit to the community has been recognised by both Grantham Business Club who presented Gravity FM with an award for services to the community, and listeners who nominated a volunteer for a South Lincs CVS's volunteering recognition award. We were also delighted when one of our volunteers was recognised in a national award when he was presented with the Diana certificate of excellence which recognises the outstanding contribution of young people who work together in groups to improve their communities, organisations or schools.

Progression with training – We have continued to offer a selection of training courses / workshops for our volunteers, but in addition have sought to improve the “hands on” training new presenters receive. From the beginning of this year we introduced a daily one hour slot into the schedule on weekdays specifically for training purposes. This has meant that despite us still having to train within a live studio, that new presenters have had consistent and dedicated one to one training within a manageable slot. This has worked excellently with the first presenters training in this slot having progressed in to covering longer shows, and a second wave of new presenters beginning their training.

Election coverage – we are proud to have been the only local media to interview **all** local candidates in the run up to the general election last year, thus providing a truly balanced debate for our listeners. Furthermore we also covered the local counts and results live giving complete coverage for the town and surrounding villages.

.6 Significant difficulties

Do you wish this section to be kept confidential? Yes/ No

-The notification from Lincolnshire County Council earlier this year that the ring fenced funding available for Community Radio in the county had been removed (as part of a wider campaign of government funding cuts) has and will have significant ramifications for the organisation. The realignment of the funding to “Culture and Adult Education” objectives means that whilst we are still eligible to apply, this will now be into an already oversubscribed arena, which effectively has fewer available

funds. Previously the grants awarded had made a significant contribution to the running costs of the station, and therefore to our match funding. The removal of this grant in particular and the increasing scarcity of other funding opportunities within the current economic climate has cast doubt over the station's future ability to retain two paid employees in the roles of Station Manager and Station Co-ordinator (1.5 FTE). This has generated uncertainty regarding the future running of the station and low morale. Our volunteers are fully informed of the funding difficulties we are facing as we explore alternative options.

- Whilst we have made a huge amount of progress with the second studio this has been a lengthy process due to lack of volunteer resources with the appropriate skill set. Although our volunteers have been extremely patient, this has been dispiriting and has meant that new volunteer presenters have had to learn “on the job” whilst using the live studio.

.7 Audience research

Please provide a summary of any audience research/ data you have collected during the year.

Our annual survey was utilised by the board of Directors and station Management along with two industry professionals to inform the future direction and music policy of the station. There have been three consistent threads in the responses across all of our surveys. These are that:

- Our listeners prefer the wider choice of music that Gravity FM provides over “play listed” commercial station provision
- Our listeners like the fact that our Traffic, Weather and local news reports only cover the immediate area where they actually are
- They identify with the fact that Gravity FM is their “local” station .

Feedback from our volunteers tells us that they benefit from the project by having a role to play in the community. It has increased their confidence and at the same time they have gained new transferable skills, new friends, new support systems and a sense of purpose.

Here are just a couple of examples of feedback we have received from guests in the studio:

“Gravity FM is a great asset to promoting the community of Grantham and surrounding area..

Me and my band, That Sunday Feeling, have been a guest on your show a few times and you have played our single, You're So Vain, several times for us. You always show a keen interest in both our music, local bands and many local topics. You made us welcome and interviewed us in a professional yet relaxed way. With your chilled out vibe and well-informed questions, you helped me to promote our music with a combination of fun and your desire to let the listeners find out as much about possible about what was going on. You work hard keep to keep the show and the music flowing -

Gravity FM is a great boost to our town and the community.

That's why so many Grantham people tune in in a regular basis. It's always a huge pleasure coming into the Gravity FM studio. Without its presence, Grantham would be a much poorer place.” (Pete)

“One of the key subject that we broadcast was the work of the Grantham Events Group. At the time, I was its Chairman. Two main events put on for the town were the Christmas Market held in late November and the St. George's Day celebrations held in late April. With your easy-going manner and well-informed questions, you helped me to promote these events with a combination of coffee-time chat and a sincere desire to let the listeners learn as much about what was going on as possible. No one listening would have had a clue how hard you were working behind the scenes to keep the show and the music flowing - a veritable master class.

In addition to the work of the Events Group, you've also been invaluable in letting our community know about the Grantham Carnival, organised by Roy Wright and his team. This event is a much loved one, organised as our events are by Grantham volunteers. Without such occasions being broadcast by yourselves, the turnout would not be so great as it is, Truly a boon to our town.

The other topic we shared with Grantham through Gravity FM was the illustration and design work I did on the Tourist Trail Plaques; commissioned by the Grantham Civic Society that are dotted around town. The feedback we got from your programme when we talked about them was fascinating. I'm sure that's why so many Grantham people, and in turn our welcome visitors got to find out about them, and were able to discover things about Grantham's past that they never knew. A third one is currently being prepared, and I can't wait to come and tell you all about it.” (Richard)

Section 2

I hereby declare that the information given in this annual report is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true and correct.

Signature

A P WALTERS

Name

ALAN PHILIP WALTERS

Position

STATION MANAGER

Station

GRAVITY FM

Email address

admin@gravityfm.net

Telephone number

01476 573300

Date

28th June 2011

Section 3

Please ensure that you have done the following:

- Read the Guidance Notes.
- Checked that all sections of both forms (i.e. this document and the accompanying spreadsheet) are completed.
- Ensured that the declaration is signed and dated by a member of the board of the corporate body which has been awarded the community radio licence, and that the person has the authority to act on behalf of the board.

Then

Submit your form by email to community.radio@ofcom.org.uk and send one signed hard copy to

Community Radio (5th Floor),
Ofcom
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road,
London
SE1 9HA.

Annual report forms must be returned to Ofcom by Friday 25 June 2010.

March 2011 – Issue 5