

Newsletter – July 2009

Welcome to the latest Redstone FM newsletter. We have recently completed our latest temporary broadcast and are now in a state of limbo as we wait for news from Ofcom on our application for a full time community radio licence.

The 2009 broadcast was the 6th operated in the past 4 years. When the station was planned towards the end of last year, two main events were scheduled to be covered – Volunteers' Week and the Redhill and Reigate Carnival weekend. After the application was submitted to Ofcom, we received news of funding for a training course for visually impaired people. This became a third activity for the broadcast.

This newsletter looks at the recent broadcast and associated training course. We also look ahead at plans for the autumn.



The Broadcast (27 May to 15 June 2009)

This year we secured premises in Tower House, part of the Belfry Shopping Centre complex. We took possession a week before going on the air. Whilst coming on the air on the 27 May, the full weekday schedule started from Monday 1 June. This allowed time for technical issues to be ironed out before the first weekend.



The temporary studio at Tower House (Belfry Centre)

The first event we covered was Volunteers' Week, a national event organised by Volunteering England and involving volunteer centres across the country. We worked closely with Janet Rimmer and the Reigate & Banstead Volunteer Centre and featured interviews which covered a wide range of organisations and voluntary activity.



Volunteers' Week flyer and Natalie Osborne interviewing Janet Rimmer from the Volunteer Centre.

We also secured an exclusive interview with the Minister of the Third Sector, Kevin Brennan (before his move in the recent Government reshuffle) and worked with the Borough Council in launching the 2009 Mayor's Community Awards live on air.



The Mayor of Reigate & Banstead Cllr. Richard Mantle with Steve Burge at the launch of the 2009 Mayor's Community Awards on Tuesday 9 June.



In association with Surrey Involved and Reigate College, we welcomed a number of new young faces (and voices) to Redstone.fm who all featured interviews with young people who are involved with local voluntary work.

Right: Adam Coumas with guests from the Reigate & Banstead Youth Council.

The second event we covered was the **Redhill & Reigate Carnival** which took place over the weekend of 12-14 June. Redstone.fm featured interviews with those organising the weekend, some of the benefiting charities and some of the musicians and performers taking part.

Over the weekend itself, we were out and about with a hired 'Vortex' kit. This box enabled us to send digital quality audio via the G-mobile network direct to the studio. It was very portable thus not tying us down to a specific Outside Broadcast studio unit. On the Saturday, we broadcast contributions from the Redhill and Reigate street theatre activities.

On Sunday, we joined forces with Radio Redhill and rebroadcast their live coverage of the carnival procession.



Later that afternoon, we broadcast live from the Memorial Park Fun Day event featuring a wide range of interviews.

Over 65 interviews were broadcast – an average of 4 guests per day. Details of guests who were interviewed can be found at

www.redstone.fm/schedule

Left: Natalie Osborne interviewing Crispin Blunt MP.



We are grateful to le barbe (Bell Street, Reigate) for again sponsoring the morning East Surrey Talks programme and Metrobus for sponsoring the travel bulletins.



The management of the Belfry Shopping Centre were very supportive – even to the point that they arranged their weekly fire alarm drill when our microphone would not be live!

We also acknowledge the support of Surrey Community Foundation for funding from the Grassroots Grant scheme and the Gatwick Airport Community Fund for their generous support.

Volunteers.

The radio station operated with a record number of volunteers – 37 in total. We had the benefit of 5 new radio students plus a group of youngsters from Reigate College.

The tasks undertaken included presentation and production plus providing sighted assistance to many of our visually impaired presenters. Following the experience of last year, daytime shows had a daily person in charge plus up to two production assistants, primarily offering sighted assistance.

Of the 37 volunteers, 27 were involved in presenting programmes. Key facts are:

- 10 volunteers (including our new students) were visually impaired (28% of total number of volunteers). They presented **43%** of live and original pre-recorded shows.
- 13 of our volunteers were visually impaired or otherwise disabled (36% of total number of volunteers). They presented **57%** of live and original pre-recorded shows.
- All weekday daytime shows after breakfast (10am-6pm) were presented from a rota of 11 presenters, all being visually impaired or otherwise disabled.

Recognising potential and developing that talent is part of the station's remit. Whilst broadcast quality is important, we are taking a calculated risk in the balance between new, untried broadcasters with those who are experienced. The five new students on the radio course demonstrated a level of life skills, personality and a willingness to learn which gave us the confidence to try them out on air. This demonstrates our commitment to offering continued opportunities to blind and partially sighted persons plus those with other disabilities. Likewise, the seven new young presenters were given the opportunity to broadcast for the first time.

Training Course

An unexpected bonus was the receipt of a grant from the ESF Community Grants Programme, administered by Surrey Community Action.

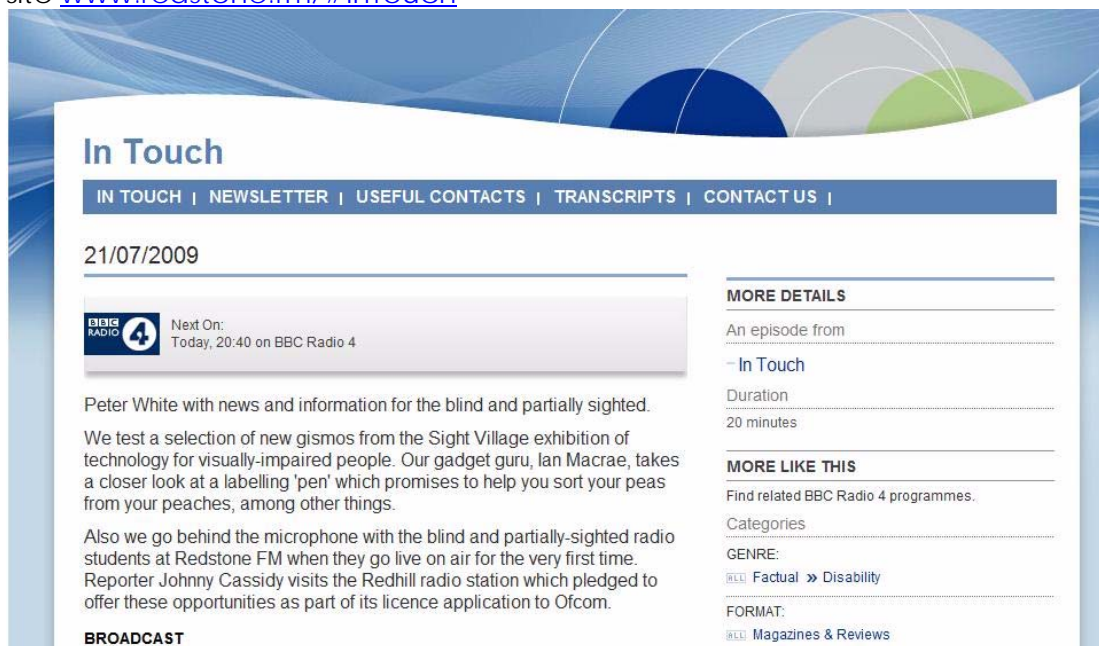


The students before their first shows live on air.

The course, funded by the ESF (European Social Fund) and the Learning & Skills Council is aimed at those with disabilities and focuses on training that helps with a return to work. The title of the course was 'Broadcast Opportunities' and was based on the training materials developed by Broadcast Training Ltd. Training took place at the new Merstham Community Facility.

All eight students had an opportunity to broadcast their own shows during the RSL broadcast, thus achieving one of the main outcomes. The course ran from March until June this year and whilst organised by Redstone.fm, was delivered in conjunction with East Surrey College. The course got some good publicity. Nick Owen (BBC newsreader and Reigate resident) wrote a piece in the Surrey Mirror following his interview with Steve Burge.

We also received coverage on BBC Radio. Radio 4's In Touch programme broadcast two features about the training course and the broadcast (9 June and 21 July). Both pieces are available to listen to (or download) via the web site www.redstone.fm/#InTouch



Other News



Ofcom are expected to announce a decision on our licence application in November. We should know by the end of the year whether we have a full time community radio license or not.

Meanwhile congratulations are in order to Meridian FM (East Grinstead) and Uckfield FM who were both awarded their community licences on 20 July.



Anne-Marie Evans.

We are pleased to announce that Anne-Marie gave birth to her second child, Annabel Jasmine, on Friday 24 July at 8.47am. Anne-Marie has been a regular broadcaster on all Redstone.fm's broadcasts and was elected to the management board last September. Both mother and child are doing well.

This newsletter is published by Reigate & Banstead Community Radio Ltd. The views expressed in this document are not necessarily those of the company or its management.

Redstone FM is the trading name for **Reigate & Banstead Community Radio Ltd**

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