

87.7

Redstone.fm

Press File – Summer 2009

Nicholas Owen



Tuned into the joy of radio

TELEVISION is a marvellous medium for entertainment, sport, and the business I am in, news. Yet many TV people will tell you that the most satisfying way to communicate is using the radio.

A few years ago, I watched BBC Radio 4's Today programme go out. The combative John Humphrys was one of the presenters. Spotting me sitting in the control room beside the studio, he strolled out between items to say hello. "Radio is the place to be, Nick," he said. "Much better than telly. No make-up...and no graphics!"

Earlier this month I again experienced the pleasures and, you might say, the pur-

ity of radio. This time it was in an unlikely location – the Belfry Centre, in Redhill.

For a couple of weeks one of the offices at the top of the centre was converted into a radio studio. From it, the temporary community station Redstone FM operated.

The broadcasting regulator Ofcom grants short-term licences for such set-ups. Redstone takes its name from the now-closed RNIB school in Redhill, where Redstone FM used to be based.

As the station director Des Shepherd explained, it has been the only station to concentrate on having visually impaired and blind presenters and producers.

I was asked along to be

interviewed – always fun and challenging for me since I usually ask questions rather than answer them.

My interviewer was DJ Steve Burge, who is blind. Lack of sight doesn't prevent him from being a very good broadcaster. He had got himself well briefed about my history, and it was enjoyable to spend 15 minutes or so chatting with him.

Being there in the studio amid all the activity reminded me that many years back I fancied a job at the BBC's first local radio station, in Brighton.

I went to see the bosses there, and I think my journalistic credentials were fine. The trouble was, unlike

Steve, I was useless at working "the desk". The technical side of radio eluded me.

I have done a good deal of radio since. Technology makes the business amazingly flexible. After I did a recorded interview one morning with the You and Yours programme, I was amazed later to hear how the digital editing equipment had enabled the producers to swap my words around.

So did I sound better with the finished product? To be frank, I wasn't entirely happy with what they did.

I was much more satisfied when I hosted a series for Classic FM. I like classical music, and it was such a thrill to introduce pieces that

mean something to me, and pay tribute to the marvellous artists who compose and perform them.

One very pleasing thing when I meet people is that quite often they say something on the lines of "We know you are on the television, but it is your voice we recognised at once." I think that's the best tribute any broadcaster can hope for.

Another great treat has been hospital radio. I spent a terrific day going round the Royal Marsden, in Sutton, getting patients' requests to be played later. Because I am a classical music person in the main, I was sure I would be baffled by some of their choices. I was surprised to be

familiar with every one.

Talking of hospital radio, it has been a great pleasure to be interviewed now and then by the kindly and knowledgeable Irwyn Davies at the Easy Surrey Hospital radio service.

One show we did was the East Surrey version of Desert Island Discs. What a struggle to find eight pieces.

How frighteningly well Irwyn had done his homework, even recalling my amateur theatrical days, and showing me an old programme from the Miller Centre, in Caterham, featuring a play I had been in.

What fun radio can be, and not a trace of make-up required!



Summer 09 Newsletter

Surrey Mirror



the centre of the park. Craftwork and other wares were on sale at stalls throughout the park, with raffles and games with prizes to be won.

Redstone FM, a station presented and produced by disabled people, was set up after gaining a temporary licence to transmit.

Partially sighted presenter Tess Lewsey, 38, said: "It's been great being able to cover the event – being able to do this gives me real confidence."

The event drew to a close at 7pm after performances in the central arena including a troupe of belly

Also during Volunteers Week Anne, the Volunteer Co-ordinator, and Virginia, one of ESDAS volunteers did a live radio interview on Redstone FM. This gave us an opportunity to talk about the work of ESDAS as well as how volunteers are involved with us. Redstone FM currently has a temporary licence to broadcast – they have applied for a permanent licence which would enable them to be on air full time. We wish them well with their application. Having our very own local radio station in Redhill, at the heart of the community, would be a great asset.

Licence to thrill

BROADCASTING the big event, redstone.fm have acquired a licence to cover the carnival.

The community radio station based in the Belfry Centre, Redhill, gained their sixth temporary licence on Wednesday last week to last until Monday, June 15.

The station is the only one in the UK to have visually

impaired and disabled presenters and producers.

Station director Des Shepherd said: "This broadcast is one of our most ambitious yet and we are proud to offer genuine opportunities to visually impaired broadcasters to get on the air."

Listeners in Reigate, Redhill and Horley can tune in on 87.7fm.

87.7

Redstone.fm

Community News

What's going on? ...cont from pg 3

Making Waves again

Redstone FM returns to the air on Thursday 27 May with its 6th temporary broadcast. This year, Redstone FM will be covering the Redhill & Reigate Carnival as well as highlighting the valuable work of volunteers during the Volunteers' Week celebrations (1-7 June). One of the features that week will be the official launch of the Mayor's Community Awards 2009. Apart from the broadcast, Redstone FM is running a training course for blind and partially sighted students who will get a chance to contribute on air. The training will be taking place at the new Merstham Community Facility. Looking to the future, Redstone FM have recently submitted a bid to Ofcom for a permanent broadcast licence, the result of which should be known later in the year. If successful, Redstone FM will launch next year as the permanent, full-time radio station for the borough. www.redstone.fm (87.7fm).



Redstone.fm presenter, Natalie Osborne, Mid-broadcast - Redhill Memorial Park in 2007.

Issue No. 54
April and May 2009

the event

over 1000 local events

Redhill • Reigate • Merstham • Nutfield • Bletchingley • Godstone • Smallfield
Salfords • Horley • Charlwood • Leigh • Betchworth • Brockham • Dorking

BACK ON AIR
May 27th 2009
Redstone.fm
87.7

REDHILL & REIGATE
CARNIVAL
2009
is on for June!!

87.7
REDHILL & REIGATE LIVE
local bands & pubs!!
raise money for charity

Photograph by Oliver Lawrence

the event is Produced by SBS (UK) Ltd in association with www.dontjustsitthere.co.uk
the national and local online events directory & www.rh123.com the local community website

Issue No. 55
June and July 2009

the event

over 1000 local events

Redhill • Reigate • Merstham • Nutfield • Bletchingley • Godstone • Smallfield
Salfords • Horley • Charlwood • Leigh • Betchworth • Brockham • Dorking

Carnival Time
12th - 14th

WIN A PAIR OF TICKETS FOR
Griffest 09

BACK ON AIR
til 15th June
Redstone.fm
87.7

87.7
REDHILL & REIGATE LIVE

Photograph: Sophie Dorrington in her Carnival Mask

the event is Produced by SBS (UK) Ltd in association with www.dontjustsitthere.co.uk
the national and local online events directory & www.rh123.com the local community website

Community News

Final Bid for Redstone.fm?

Yes they're back for the last time on a temporary licence (fingers crossed!) Des Shepherd, Adam Coumas, Steve Burge, Natalie Osborne, Paul Barnett, Anne-Marie Evans, Tess Lewsey, Mell Ellis, Robert Gibson, Jeff Nunn, and others bring you a romping 3 week temporary broadcast from 27th May in their final bid to secure a permanent licence. The Schedule ranges from a light-hearted breakfast show, with community talk programmes through the day time and a play list of music designed to appeal to a broad local audience, handing over to cater to niche genres for younger people in the evenings. Just like our philosophy at 'the event', Redstone.fm's remit is to bring you content of genuine interest to the local community. In line with this policy they will be providing extensive coverage of the events leading up to and across the Carnival weekend, even broadcasting live on-location interviews, from events including the Street Theatre, Parades, Fun Day and R+R Live, using the latest satellite technology.



Year 9 Broadcaster Anne-Marie Evans

87.7 Redstone.fm

87.7 Redstone.fm

On the Air on 87.7fm and on-line from 27 May until 15 June 2009

Redstone.fm is the local radio station for the Redhill and Reigate area. Established in 2005, the station has broadcast with a number of temporary broadcast licenses issued by the media regulator, Ofcom.

This year, Redstone.fm has broadcast special programmes as part of the national Volunteers' Week celebrations and will be covering the various activities surrounding the Redhill & Reigate Carnival weekend.

Listen On Line at
www.redstone.fm

About Redstone.fm ...

Voice of the Borough.

Redstone FM is proud to broadcast to the borough of Reigate and Banstead with news, opinion and information of specific interest and relevance to those who live in the borough. Redstone FM regularly promotes local events in the borough.

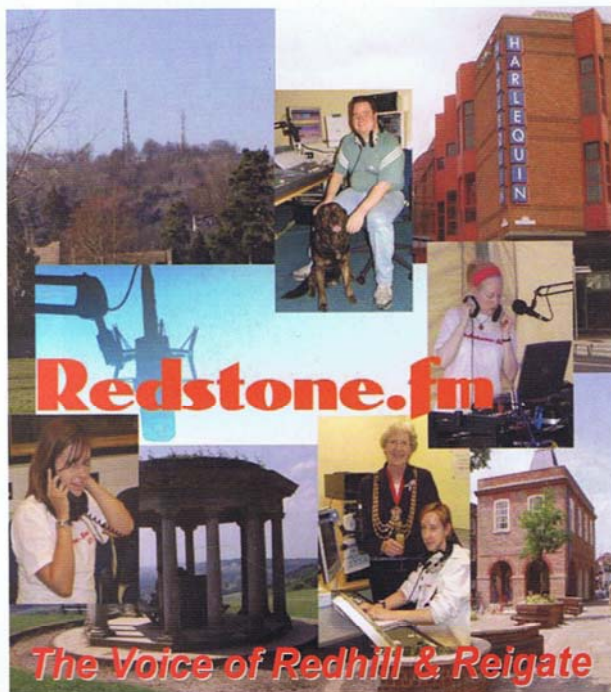
Offering Opportunities.

Redstone FM developed from the radio training courses run at the recently closed RNIB Redhill College and continues to offer opportunities for visually impaired and disabled persons to produce and present radio programmes. The station also offers opportunities for young people to get involved with programme making. Local people are encouraged to get involved, either as a contributor to a phone-in show or as a volunteer presenter or producer. Local organisations are encouraged to publicise their activities and reach an otherwise untapped audience.

Going Full Time

Looking to the future, Redstone.fm has applied to Ofcom for a permanent broadcast license which, if awarded later in the year, will see Redstone.fm, launch as a full time, permanent radio station for the borough of Reigate & Banstead.

To find out more – visit our web site at www.redstone.fm



Redstone.fm acknowledges the support from:



Gatwick
Airport
Community
Trust

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Redstone.fm

BBC Radio 4 broadcast two features about Redstone FM on their 'In Touch' programme.

ON RADIO 4 NOW | File on 4

BBC RADIO 4 Home Programmes

In Touch

IN TOUCH | NEWSLETTER | USEFUL CO

09/06/2009

Next On:
Today, 20:40 on BBC Radio 4

Mani Djazmi sits in for Peter White with news and information for the blind and partially sighted.

Why underground is better than overground when it comes to trains.

Why, despite the recession, 20,000 people with severe sight loss could be better off.

Could a community radio station unearth new talent that could give our presenters a run for their money?

RELATED LINKS

- Redstone FM (www.redstone.fm)
- Unseen Britain
- East Midlands Trains Assisted Travel (www.nationalrail.co.uk)

BROADCAST

Tue 9 Jun 2009 20:40 BBC Radio 4

In Touch

IN TOUCH | NEWSLETTER | USEFUL CONTACTS | TRANSCRIPTS

21/07/2009

Next On:
Today, 20:40 on BBC Radio 4

Johny Cassidy (centre) with radio students Chris Wilsdon and Mike Scholes. Johny is a Redstone FM presenter and former student who now works for BBC News.

- In Touch

Duration

20 minutes

MORE LIKE THIS

Find related BBC Radio 4 programmes.

Categories

GENRES:

[Factual](#)

[Factual](#) » [Disability](#)

To listen to the two features, go to www.redstone.fm/archive-2009 and follow the links.

Peter White with news and information for the blind and partially sighted.

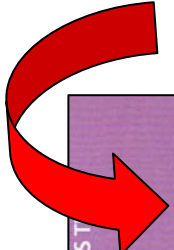
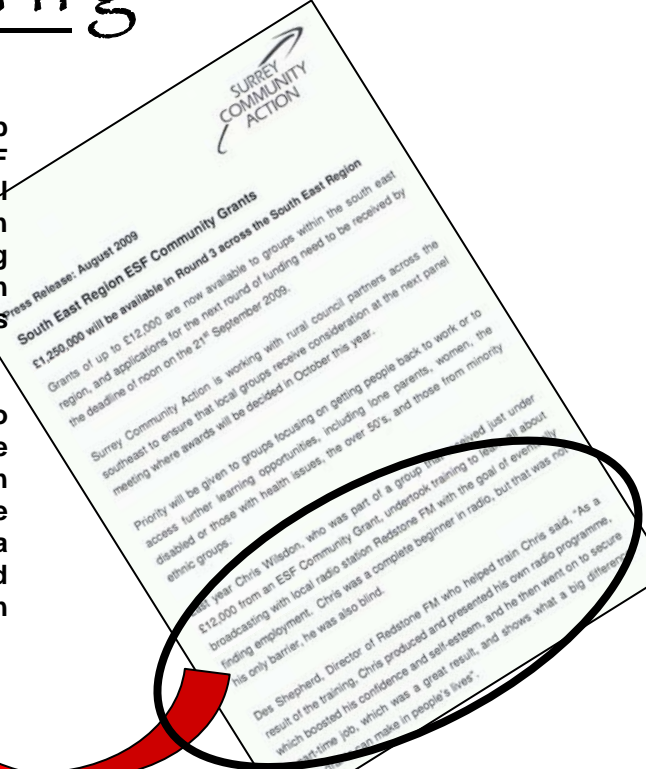
We test a selection of new gismos from the Sight Village exhibition of technology for visually-impaired people. Our gadget guru, Ian Macrae, takes a closer look at a labelling 'pen' which promises to help you sort your peas from your peaches, among other things.

Also we go behind the microphone with the blind and partially-sighted radio students at Redstone FM when they go live on air for the very first time. Reporter Johnny Cassidy visits the Redhill radio station which pledged to offer these opportunities as part of its licence application to Ofcom.

Redstone.fm Training

Last year Chris Wilsdon, who was part of a group that received just under £12,000 from the ESF Community Grant, undertook training to learn all about broadcasting with local radio station Redstone FM with the goal of eventually finding employment. Chris was a complete beginner in radio, but that was not his only barrier, he was also blind.

Des Shepherd, Director of Redstone FM who helped train Chris said, "As a result of the training, Chris produced and presented his own radio programme, which boosted his confidence and self-esteem, and he then went on to secure a part-time job, which was a great result, and shows what a big difference these grants can make in people's lives".



286 groups received
£1.5 million in
Local Network Grants
between 2003 & 2007



Community Grant recipient – radio station Redstone.fm

£355,000 of South East
Region ESF Community
Grants awarded in
December 2008

ORGANISATIONS T

Local Network Fund

Led by Graham Phillips

Ensure the successful
Annual Review
of the LNF grants
received on 31

South East Region ESF Community Grants Programme

Led by Graham Phillips &
Allison Enenche working in
partnership with:

- Action in rural Sussex
- Community Action Hampshire
- Community Council for Berkshire
- Action with Communities in Rural Kent

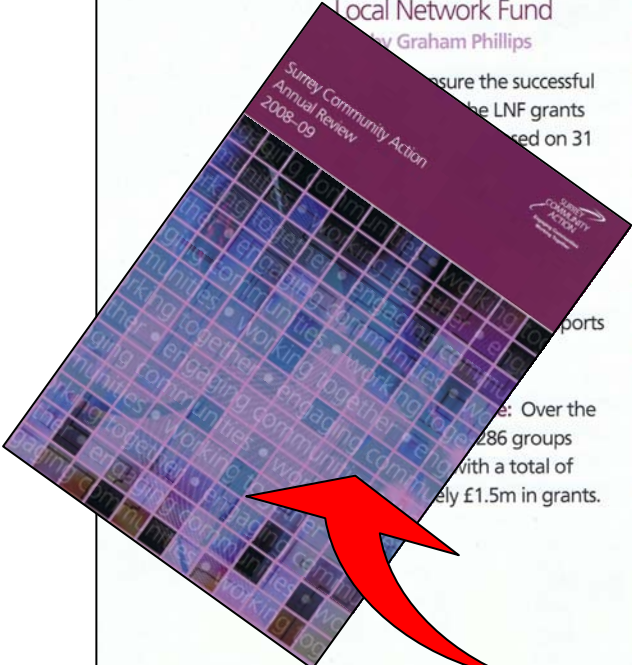
Aims: To deliver the ESF
Community Grants programme
across the South East Region by
December 2010.

Outputs: 136 applications
were received and processed in
December 2008.

Successful Outcome: 37 groups
received ESF Community
Grants in the first round of
funding in December 2008. A
total of £355,000 in grants was
awarded.

Funders: European Social Fund
and Learning and Skills Council

Quote from a User: "The Radio
Broadcast Opportunities Course
is giving the chance for eight
visually impaired persons to
learn the necessary skills to take
to the air on Redstone.fm's
summer broadcast in Redhill.
The skills learnt are transferable
and will enable students to
gain in communication skills
and confidence. This course is
the only one of its kind in the
country and has attracted the
interest of Radio 4's *In Touch*
programme."



ESF community grants

ESF community grants are small grants of up to £12,000 which are made available to voluntary and community organisations to reach out to some of the most disadvantaged groups.

The grants support a wide range of activities including:

- initial help with basic skills
- taster work experience, including voluntary work
- training, advice and counselling
- confidence-building.

Because of the nature of the target groups, project outcomes usually involve progression towards a job or further training, rather than the immediate achievement of a job or qualification.

Case study: Chris Wilsdon



“I hope to have my own drive-time radio show one day”

Chris Wilsdon was working as an IT consultant when he started to experience problems with his eyesight.

Within months his sight had become so poor that he had to give up his job.

“My eye condition started three-and-a-half years ago,” said Chris, 43. “I had both my corneas replaced due to infections.”

“I was hospitalised for a week and from then on it was operations and more visits to the hospital. I’m now partially-sighted.”

Chris got in touch with an employment adviser at the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) who referred him to an ESF supported radio skills project in Reigate, Surrey.

The three-month scheme, run in conjunction with local radio station Redstone FM, gave participants a chance to learn about scriptwriting, production techniques, media law and how to present a show.

Continued on next page/

The European Social Fund in England

Improving people's lives

A former BBC journalist delivered the legal training to the students – including the laws of contempt and libel that journalists must adhere to – while voice training was provided by a professional voice coach.

At the end of the course, each participant delivered a live broadcast themselves.

“I’d never worked in radio before but because my sight had deteriorated I thought it was an avenue to explore, where I could use my other senses,” said Chris, who lives with his partner in Sidcup, Kent.

“I’d expressed my interest in radio to my advisor at the RNIB and he put me in touch with the project. Having been out of work for a while it was good to be back amongst people, learning a new skill.”

“The voice coach was excellent – she made us think about how we speak, and taught us how to project ourselves better than we normally would.”

“At the end of the course I interviewed the chairman of a local business live on air (see photo above) and that came across well. I got some good feedback and I really enjoyed it.”

Since the project ended, Chris has been working three days a week as an administrator for the Kent Association for the Blind while he gains further work experience in the media.

“The course definitely helped me with my confidence and I think that helped me get this job,” he said. “I’ve since been looking around to do community radio stations in my local area. There is a community radio station in Bromley, near to where I live, so I’m going to get in touch with them.”

Chris now has ambitions to have his own drive-time show or to become a sports reporter and is emphatic in his praise for the ESF-funded course.



“The thing that stood out the most was seeing people with different impairments approaching the course in different ways and for their own benefit – but we all came together as a group. It’s a great project.”

Chris Wilsdon, administrator, Kent