



# Community Radio

Key commitments annual report form

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Issue 5



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## Section 1

# Community Radio Annual Report Form

## 1.1 Community Radio Annual Report Form: Year Ending 31 March 2010

### Station details

#### Licence Number

CR039

#### Station Name

UnityFM

#### Launch Date

19/09/06

#### Web address where you will publish this report

report will be published on [www.unityfm.net](http://www.unityfm.net) by 31/07/2011

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

## 1.2 The year in numbers

<b>Please specify the station's achievements in the 10/11 year in numbers as follows:</b>	
Average number of live hours <b>per week</b>	60
Average number of original programming hours <b>per week</b> (this may include pre-recorded as well as live material but should not include repeats).	80
The percentage of your live daytime output that is speech	85%
Number of people trained over the course of <b>the year</b>	50
Number of volunteers involved over the course of <b>the year</b>	Around 200 volunteers in total over the year. Of these around 80 were new volunteers (out of a total of approx. 140 people who expressed an interest to get involved).
If appropriate, a list of languages you have broadcast in	English, Urdu, Mirpuri, Bengali, Arabic, Somali, Pashto, Farsi, and Malay

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

## 1.3 Key commitments: Programming

- Between 0600-1900hrs on weekdays (0800-1400hrs at weekends), the balance between music and speech will typically be 20% music and 80% speech ('speech' excludes advertising, programme/promotional trails and sponsor credits).
- Speech output will typically include the following: news and current affairs; local and community news; features on various topics, such as health, education, social, spiritual and cultural matters; debates and discussions; interviews and panel discussions; stories and plays; quizzes.
- Music output will comprise of cultural and spiritual songs in various languages, poems, 'world music', folk music and a cappella. Asian film music will not be featured.
- The majority of the output (around 75%) will be broadcast in English, but other languages in current use within the local Muslim community will also feature,
- particularly Urdu. (Punjabi, Mirpuri, Bengali, Arabic and Somalian should all be in regular on-air use by the time the station has been on-air for six months; one year after launch, Pushto and Bosnian should also feature). The range of language groups featured may change over the term of the licence, so as to reflect the languages in use amongst members of the community at any particular time.
- The service will typically be live for around 7 hours per day (although in the first few months of broadcasting it will be less and gradually increase). (Live programming may include pre-recorded inserts, if applicable).

UnityFM continues to broadcast 24hrs per day. On average live output per month is 240 hrs. The remainder is made up of pre-recorded output – some of this is repeat broadcast of shows that have previously been live. Approx 70 hrs per week is repeat shows.

In an average week we play 25 hrs music (< 15% of our output); the remainder is spoken word.

**Speech output:** This remains varied. Many of our volunteer presenters discuss current news events and encourage community discussion on these issues. There is also discussion on local issues (e.g. crime and jobs) as well as specific shows for kids, comedy, politics, arts (presented by Muhammad Ali, an internationally renowned graffiti artist and winner of the South Bank Show award), and poetry (presented by an ex-Birmingham Poet Laureate) We have also continued our regular spiritual shows and shows on health matters.

**Music:** We continue to offer a range of cultural and spiritual songs in various languages (mainly English). We have songs interspersed in our shows as well as one or two specific music orientated shows. This coverage of music includes Naats (aimed at older listeners) and Islamic Hip-Hop/rap which is preferred by our younger listeners. We do not play Asian film music.

**Languages:** Output is 30% in community languages over a typical week the remainder is in English. We are pleased to be continuing a proportion of our output in Urdu, Punjabi, Arabic, Somali, Bengali, and Pushto. We have offered airtime to other communities (e.g. Bosnian) but no volunteers from this community have taken up the offers. We wish to continue to expand our range of language offerings whilst maintaining a majority English output.

#### 1.4 Key commitments: Social gain objectives

“(a) the provision of sound broadcasting services to individuals who are otherwise underserved”

- There is currently no service for the Muslim community in Birmingham, and Unity FM will be providing a service catering to the needs of this community.
- There is currently no radio output available in Arabic, Somali, Bengali or Bosnian. Unity FM will aim to provide output in these community languages by the end of year 1.

“(b) the facilitation of discussion and the expression of opinion”

- Output will be speech-dominated and feature phone-ins, debates with audience participation, panel discussion and interviews with key members of the community (e.g. MPs, councillors, services providers, educationalists, scholars, singers), opening channels of communication between service providers (e.g. police, LEA) and the community.

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

Unity FM will

- Link up with local educational establishments
- Provide programme production training to around 50 volunteers per year
- Provide training on presenting shows for around 20 people per year
- Provide studio management training to 2 people per year
- Provide IT/equipment training to 20 people per year
- Encourage volunteers to take up further appropriate training

“(d) the better understanding of the particular community and the strengthening of the links within it”

Unity FM will:

- Aim to be inclusive and build partnerships with appropriate organisations that cater for the various needs of the target community.
- Promote cohesion and community spirit by involving community leaders to come together to promote tolerance and understanding within the target community and society in general.
- Promote tolerance of other faiths through an inter-faith dialogue.

Additional social gain objectives.

Unity FM will:

- Promote citizenship and voluntary work for the good of the community.
- Aim to raise awareness of the plight of people in the third world and work with UK charities on such initiatives, promoting regulated charitable local and international causes.
- Promote the aims of its partner organisations and service agencies working with the target community.

We have a full programming schedule (available online: [www.unityfm.net](http://www.unityfm.net)) catering for all the needs of our communities. These shows cover many issues from social to entertainment. Unity fm is proud to be working with members from all faith backgrounds (both as volunteers presenting shows and guests etc).

Some of our shows focus particularly on the needs of the Muslim communities and have a more spiritual content. At Unity FM we feel we are successful in being inclusive of ALL denominations within the Muslim communities. This is demonstrated by our increased coverage of spiritual matters during key events in the Islamic calendar during the year. In Ramadan for example we have managed to broadcast prayers from mosques across the city and across denominations. We also specifically invite in scholars from all denominations to deliver key messages/talks during spiritual events (e.g. Ramadhan, Muharram, Ashoorah, Hajj, Eids etc). We also play call to prayer (adhans) to signify start and end of fasting times during Ramadan and have specific shows at dawn and dusk during Ramadan.

Although some of Birmingham's radio stations broadcast in one or two community languages Unity FM is still the ONLY station in Birmingham that broadcasts such an array of language shows (English, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Somali, Arabic, and Pashto, Farsi, and Malay). We are still trying to increase this range.

We have encouraged discussion and expression of opinions in most of our live shows. Presenters encourage listeners to call in and contribute to the shows. This occurs in English as well as community language shows. Some shows are clearly able to engage listeners (e.g. behnu ki mehfil – a show in Urdu for women, police show, youth shows, etc.) better than others. Some shows may receive up to 10 phone calls in a one hr show whilst the youth shows tend to focus on SMSs and can receive sometimes over 200 SMS in a 2 hr show). We also have a discussion forum on our website and intermittently have polls taking place. We also receive emails from listeners. Some of our shows use face book/twitter. We use all these various methods to engage with our listeners and provide them with opportunities to discuss current issues.

We have continued to bring in key members of the communities for interviews and discussion as this allows our communities the opportunity to hold such figures accountable and to contribute to discussions on issues that affect them. We have also had numerous Islamic scholars on various shows during the year.

### **Links with educational establishments**

We continue to have links with local schools and we continue to take on Year 10 and Year 11 children for their work experience placements at Unity FM.

### **Training for volunteers**

Over the last year 50 volunteers have proceeded to attend for training. We continue to keep our volunteers apprised of any further media opportunities via our e-groups. Presenters from 2 of our shows continue to do shows on another local radio station, and several of our presenters now have their own shows on satellite TV channels.

### **Partnerships:**

We continue to have good links with the city library and the city council. Local health authorities also appear regularly on Unity FM.

### **Cohesion within the community:**

We have continued to strive to represent the whole of the Muslim community and encourage participation from all denominations. We strengthen links within this community by encouraging discussion on common themes of agreement and covering issues that are important to all the denominations. We provide a 'full Ramadan' service (Sehri and iftar shows, live evening prayers from mosques around the city from all denominations, adhans to signify the start and end of fasting, music appropriate to the spirituality of the month and encouraging all scholars from different denominations to come in to give their messages of peace across the city) as well as special features for other key events in the Muslim calendar. Our spiritual lectures are aimed at promoting tolerance between denominations and improving understanding amongst followers of all denominations etc.

**Cohesion with other faiths:** This is a key area of work for Unity FM. We encourage inter-faith discussion as this, we feel, leads to a better understanding amongst various faiths. We have had contributions from scholars especially from Christian backgrounds as well as Jewish rabbis. We have also had presenters from other faith groups whose shows encourage collaboration between Muslims and non-Muslims e.g. Out and About Show, Book Show, Poetry Show etc.

In our fifth year on air we continue to regularly attract new volunteers. Their work with UnityFM is a reflection of our commitment to volunteering and citizenship. We encourage our volunteers to undergo training and to produce shows that will be of benefit to our local communities. We continue to encourage very young presenters and this year have trained up several more under 16s.

We have worked with various charities this year (our policy is to only work with charities that are regulated by the charities commission). Charities included: Islamic Relief, Interpal, Muslim Hands, Islamic Help, and Families Relief.

We have worked with various organisations this year including: Birmingham City Council, West Midlands Police, Various PCTs, The Bordesley Centre, etc.

## **1.5 Key commitments: Access and participation**

Community Radio Order 2004: "It is a characteristic of every community radio service that members of the community it is intended to serve are given opportunities to participate in the operation and management of the service."

- Local mosques, schools and other educational establishments will be invited to participate in the service.
- Links will be established with other appropriate bodies, such as interfaith dialogue group, Bosnian UK network, community centres.
- The focus group (see below) will guide the direction of the station and encourage community dialogue.
- Volunteers will be actively recruited through community liaison.
- Training will be offered to take on management roles within the station, and routes provided for people to approach the station.

Participation: The station remains open to volunteers from all backgrounds to join the project. As part of our work particularly in Ramadan we have worked with several mosques. All the major mosques in the city contribute to the broadcast particularly at key times of the Islamic calendar. We make regular announcements during Ramadan inviting all mosques who wish us to broadcast their prayer services to contact us. Many mosques take up this offer. Unity FM is proactive in encouraging this participation.

We have also encouraged regular work with schools, including providing opportunities for work experience for Year 11s.

We attend various community events to engage with our listeners and to encourage more volunteering and participation. We were media partners at the Eid Mela in Birmingham last year and have been invited to do the same this year. This is a major community fun day organised by the City Council.

Our training and choice of studio equipment is designed to facilitate not impede participation. We thus have children as young as 10 years old single-handedly running live shows with live calls from listeners (studio managers supervise but rarely have to intervene). We encourage volunteers to take on management roles as soon as they are able to.

Many of our volunteers approach us through word of mouth or personal recommendations. We do however have an all year round automated announcement to encourage volunteering as well as provide an application form on the web. We attend community events and often are approached by people wishing to join the project.

## 1.6 Key commitments: Accountability to the target community

Community Radio Order 2004: "It is a characteristic of every community radio service that, in respect of the provision of that service, the person providing the service makes himself accountable to the community that the service is intended to serve."

- A focus group of local leaders will be formed, and community feedback to this group will be invited and encouraged
- A programme to air listeners' comments and feedback on the service will be broadcast regularly
- Feedback will also be encouraged via webpage, email, suggestion boxes and occasional questionnaires.
- An annual report for community groups will be produced.

We continue to take advice from community leaders on the direction of the station. We have also made presentations to community groups and attend community events. These interactions with the community always provide opportunities for discussion and feedback. We ask people from the community to fill in questionnaires to provide feedback to the station. We take feedback also via telephone, email and SMS. Our advertising-in-charge is regularly out and about meeting people and takes note of any advice and criticism given.

We have a robust complaints procedure.

Our presenters regularly ask for feedback for their shows and studio managers make announcements to encourage listeners to contact with their feedback. Our annual report is available on our website.

### **1.7 Volunteer inputs** *(see the separate guidance notes)*

Number of volunteers:

Around 200 in total over the year. Approx. 75 at any one time.

What roles are performed by volunteers:

The only paid employees we have are our sales-in-charge, our studio manager, and the cleaner. Everything else is done by volunteers: volunteers produce and present shows, man the phones, check emails, man stalls at outdoor community events, deliver promotional leaflets, put up posters, carry out basic DIY work, provide input for our website, maintain our Facebook page, sit on our committees, etc.

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

3

Additional information:

Since launch we have been approached by several hundred people wishing to volunteer their time and effort to help serve our communities. Clearly the amount of time these volunteers stay with us varies on their personal circumstances. Some fail to complete the full training whilst most go on to start their shows and tend to stay for prolonged periods. At any one time approx 75 volunteers will be actively working on Unity FM. Their roles vary. The vast majority of volunteers work as part of small teams which produce shows. These small teams include presenters, researchers and phone operators etc. The teams will all share in these tasks and move from role to role as the need arises. Some shows have had quite large teams – e.g. youth shows such as Generation X have at times had 10 or more people in their teams. Other shows might be composed of a single person or a pair. We have a few shows being run by families e.g. the “Varsani Crew” consists of Mom and her 3 kids.

We have approx 240 hrs of live shows per month hence volunteer time input is very significant. We also have 'producers' – these individuals manage a group of shows and their

teams. Some of the producers may spend the equivalent of a 0.5WTE employee in some weeks. Finally we have heads of each of our departments – their roles are more strategic and they attend board meetings and also regularly discuss management issues via email.

## 1.8 Significant achievements

We held a successful live hustings in our studio for the 2010 General Election with the three main political parties being represented and also the Respect party which has significant support within our broadcast area. The hustings were conducted by the producers of an established youth show on our station, and their average age was 17 years. Similar hustings took place prior to the 2011 Local Council elections.

We are proud to have participated in the campaign to remove 200 spy cameras which were erected in the Muslim areas of Birmingham as part of the Government's Prevent agenda.

UnityFM's professionally produced drama *Breaking The Silence* was completed in June 2011. This has been a 3 year project and has been an immense learning opportunity for all those volunteers that were involved.

From the experience gained in the above drama we have produced another 30 minute drama – this time exploring issues around Depression in women of the South Asian Community. **Speak Up** was distributed free to other stations.

## 1.9 Significant difficulties

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

We continue to experience great difficulty in obtaining funding and we have regrettably come to the conclusion that there is widespread discrimination against Muslims and Muslim-run projects amongst funders. This is most likely because of perceived links to terrorism. We know that other Community Radio Stations receive considerable funds via the National Lottery for comparatively little social gain; however Muslim radio stations are prohibited from accessing this source of funding owing to their faith. With the recession upon us, we fear that our financial difficulties will only get worse.

## 1.10 Audience research

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

Our listenership is usually much greater during Ramadhan. However our online listening

figures show that our monthly hit rate is now the same as that in Ramadhan 2 years ago, i.e. our audience figures have been steadily increasing, and we are also keeping hold of the extra listeners that we gain during Ramadhan.

We continue to carry out surveys via street questioning and at various community events. The findings indicate that over two-thirds questioned had listened to the station. The majority gave positive feedback on the station and its performance and some gave constructive feedback on areas needing improvement.

We have also held several workshops with dozens of people to collect views that we then used in shaping the creation of our radio dramas. This method has ensured that the issues raised in the dramas are indeed those that the community feels are important.

## Section 2

# Declaration

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

### Signature

### Name

### Position

### Station

### Email address

### Telephone number

### Date

## Section 3

# Checklist

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](mailto:community.radio@ofcom.org.uk) and send one signed hard copy to

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

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

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