

**This handbook remains the property of the  
Darlington & District  
Talking Newspaper Association P.O. Box 14  
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## **Introduction**

The Darlington & District Talking Newspaper Association  
is a Registered Charity – No. 700129

It was established in 1979 to provide a taped news service for the visually impaired in the Darlington area. The service is available to anyone who cannot read because of difficulty. However, the free post is only available to the visually impaired.

We are one of over five hundred such organisations in the country. Each Talking Newspaper is independent but may share the services and information provided by Talking Newspaper Association of United Kingdom (TNAUK).

Each Association, large or small, has its own way of arranging for the service to be provided to its own town. What evolves in this handbook is a description of the way we met at Darlington, having evolved with our own style and methods. We are particularly lucky to be able to run our own studio with very good equipment.

From the volunteers, we are able to operate a rota which allows us to provide a weekly tape. The rota informs the volunteers when they are needed.

All members should be in possession of an I.D. card which must be carried whilst on the Newsquest premises.

The Talking Newspaper starts on Wednesday evening when the master tape is recorded. Editing and other preparations are done during the preceding week to be ready for the recording. The tapes are copied and despatched on Thursday and the returning tapes are cleared.

Each group includes people with specific tasks. It is very important that all members of the group turn up to share the work since it is quite difficult to produce the TN should members fail to attend.

Any member who cannot attend can call another volunteer to arrange for a substitution. The policy of the Association is determined by its constitution which is implemented by a committee elected at an Annual General Meeting.

The rooms at the Northern Echo are to be unlocked and locked by the first to arrive and the last to leave after signing in and out in the register.

### **Duties of the Chairman/person**

The Chairman/person will be elected annually, first serving one year as the Vice-chair.

To attend all committee meetings, except in extenuating circumstances.

To conduct all said meetings in accordance with the constitution.

In matters where voting is required, the Chairman/person will have a second or casting vote in the event of a tied vote, providing he/she has used their vote first time around.

The Chairman/person will represent the Talking Newspaper at events when so requested.

To undertake other committee duties when necessary.

To chair the Annual General Meeting, also any sub-committees.

### **Duties of the Vice-chair**

In the year following election, he/she will deputise for the Chair in their absence.

To attend all committee meetings, except in extenuating circumstances.

## **Duties of the Secretary**

To arrange all committee meetings.

To book room at the Town Hall when required.

To inform all committee members of meetings, dates and venues.

Minute all meetings.

Deal with all correspondence.

Buy all stationery and paper supplies when necessary.

To purchase any other items when so requested.

Visit the studio at least once a week.

Arrange talks when requested.

Arrange the Christmas “get together”.

Organise and co-ordinate fundraising events.

Produce handbook for new members and all necessary paperwork required.

## **Duties of the Treasurer**

Maintain accurate accounts of income, expenditure and accumulated reserves.

Prepare annual accounts and arrange that the committee approve these for audit.

Following approval by the committee, to submit annual accounts and appropriate records to the Charity Commissioners.

To attend all meetings, prepare and present periodic accounts and reconcile against bank statements.

Receive any monies from whatever source and send appropriate receipts. In addition, arrange to bank monies received to the Association's bank account at the earliest opportunity.

Arrange payment of duly authorised invoices. "Duly authorised" means that the invoice has been signed by the person authorised by the committee to do so. This will usually be the person who placed the order and therefore responsible for checking for receipt and quality of the items ordered.

Assist in fundraising activities, collect, count and bank all monies received.

When on extended leave, holiday or illness, please ensure that the cheque book and all documentation are left with one of the other signatories for full records to be maintained, together with full responsibilities.

## **Duties of Committee Members**

Committee members are elected annually to operate within the guidelines of the Constitution.

All members must familiarise themselves with section 4 of the Constitution.

Members must attend all meetings as defined in the Constitution.

Members must notify the Secretary of non attendance, or ask another member to pass on their apologies.

The Committee is responsible for the running and decision making of the Talking Newspaper.

To help with all fundraising activities.

To listen to at least one edition per month and bring constructive criticism to the committee when appropriate.

## **Duties of Admin Team**

### **Object**

To ensure the information on the computer regarding listeners' details is up to date. To prepare the computer for the scanning of the wallets for the copying teams, referring to the Aide Memoir.

### **New Listeners**

Transfer information from the amendments sheet, telephone book, BT answering service or correspondence to a New Listeners Report – enter the information onto the computer and complete the Report.

### **Withdrawals**

Transfer information received as above to a Withdrawal Report. Enter this onto the computer and complete the Report. If the withdrawal is temporary, collect the listener's wallets, note the withdrawal dates and place the wallets into the Temporary Withdrawal Box. If the withdrawal is final, withdraw the listener's wallets and remove the address labels for shredding. The wallets can be re-used if in good condition. If the withdrawal is due to the death of a listener, ensure that the details are noted on the Producer's Report.

### **Change of Address**

Ensure the information is correct and complete change of address report. The old labels to be removed for shredding.

### **Final Check**

On Wednesday of each week check the amendments sheet, telephone book etc., and bring new listeners and withdrawals up to date. Check the temporary withdrawals box, put wallets back into circulation if the date has expired. Remove temporary withdrawal report from the file.

### **Copying Team**

Prepare the computer for scanning "Weekly Wallets" or "Town Crier" and assist the copying team.

Stand by to act in case of a fault occurring in which case refer to the Aide Memoir.

Finally, note the total output figures into the Register and make back up discs.

Complete the Computer User's Log.

## **Duties of a News Editor**

The task of the Editor is to select and present cuttings for the readers in such a way that they are used efficiently. The week should run from Thursday to the following Wednesday whenever possible. The news should be at the studio before 5.00pm on Wednesday evenings.

### **Discipline**

A newspaper is intended to relay information to a listener without the unnecessary intervention of a third party's opinion, so there should be **no personal comments**.

This intrudes between the written word and the listener and takes up space more beneficially used for extra news items. It can also irritate if the listener does not agree and can leave the TN open to being sued if a libel writ is taken out against the ink print newspaper. There should be reasonable steps taken to secure this and to prevent this from happening.

### **Source Papers**

The main source will be the Northern Echo with possible **additions** from the Darlington & Stockton Times and the Advertiser. To avoid repetitions it may be necessary to edit some items to make them more suitable for audio.

### **Balance**

Balance the selection of news so that coverage is given to the different communities in the area, reflecting the full range of news in the newspaper.

Our readers are mainly elderly, but this must only affect selection in a limited way. The key reason for which many may want the service is to feel in touch with the outside world. We have an obligation to give the spectrum of human behaviour, from the horrible to the saintly, as reflected by the newspaper. Any personal strong likes or dislikes in news may need more counterbalancing effort in editing.

### **Full Awareness**

The Editor should be aware that some stories may continue for a number of weeks and a link may be necessary with a possible comment "as we reported last week". This will require the Editor being aware of the previous week's news.

**It is recommended that all Editors listen to the tapes as this will also ensure that news items are not repeated.**

Awareness can be extended to the Editors knowing when information in a story is incorrect e.g. the wrong telephone number in a news item or if an

item refers to a visually impaired person who may be one of our listeners i.e. “the next item is about one of our listeners Mrs X who has celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, happy birthday to you Mrs X.

### **Number of Stories**

Sighted people can obtain a lot of news. Blind people are limited so try to give them as many stories as possible. Remember, as with interviews it is your job to select the most interesting bits, not to churn it out as you have received it. As long as the story does not leave any questions unanswered the listener will be highly delighted with the two extra stories included by cutting down on the first one

### **Alterations**

Remember that if you choose to edit, do it to improve the story’s impact. But beware; **do not change** the aspect of the item. **Do not add** comments or a personal bias, news items should be read as printed, apart from editing out any repetition. However, if a local paper does have a libel writ on it and the TB has included the offending article then a writ can also be served on the TN. To have read the article without modification would assist the TN’s case.

### **Running Order**

All major stories should be the first items on the tape as this is our front page. Then other stories in order of importance and interest ending the news with lighter stories and the sport.

Any telephone numbers reported on the news will be repeated at the end of side one.

### **Finer Points**

Remove all date references to ‘today’ ‘next week’ etc., and encourage the readers to take out those which may be missed. Ensure personal comments, quips etc are not added (see **alterations**). Watch out for tenses as many will need to be changed.

### **Taboos**

There should not be any taboos on stories. Our listeners are not children and we are not their guardians, but care must be taken with accident stories, crime, court cases etc. The dangers are twofold. Events can overtake time and a crash victim may die before the TN drops through the letterbox; or the critical case might make a rapid recovery and be back home while our tape may still have the victim still fighting for life. If possible telephone the paper and check whether it is safe to run with whichever line or whether it should be toned down.

### **Concise Details**

There will never be enough space on the cassette for everything but something to consider when cutting stories down to the interesting bits is that they have to answer six questions – Who, What, Where, Why, When, How. That is all the reader needs, or wants, to know. When you have told them that, move on to the next story.

### **The Rota**

Editors will be notified in advance of the dates for which they are required to provide the news. If, for any reason, the Editor cannot undertake the role on the allocated date, he/she is to change with another Editor or call the number on the rota sheet for advice.

The Editor has a long job and the Association is very grateful for the way it is completed each week. Any suggestions on improving the service or easing the task will be welcomed. If any comments or requests are received please take them in good part and accept everyone's best intent is to improve the TN.

## **Duties of a Magazine Editor**

Please refer to the duties of the News Editor for information concerning the task and work for others. With the exception of the sections that refer to source papers and the number of stories, the advice to the Magazine Editor is the same.

### **Source Publications**

The choice of material will be up to the judgement of the Editor, subject to the laws of copyright. However, when compiling the magazine you should ensure the contents meet the following requirements:

- a) there is sufficient material to fill at least 30 minutes of tape
- b) each item should be a maximum of 6 minutes. Cut and edit if required (see Concise Detail in the news editors section). Items should be of general interest to keep the listeners interest throughout the recording
- c) there should be a balance between lighted-hearted and the more serious items, fact and fiction
- d) try to find some item that may be useful e.g. information
- e) popular items with listeners are the consumer spot, poetry, interviews, talking books, reviews, local history, short stories and anything local.

### **The Rota**

The rota is the same as that for the News Editors. If for any reason you cannot collect the items on your allocated date please change with another editor or call the number on the rota sheet.

The editor has a long job and the Association is grateful for the way it is completed each week. Any suggestions will be welcome which will improve the service or ease the task. If you get any comments or requests please taken them in good part and accept everyone's best intent to improve the Talking Newspaper.

## Reading for the Talking Newspaper

### **Part One**

The aim is to provide the listener with the impression of local news as if they are reading it in the newspaper. The standard must be such that the listener can easily understand – remember, many of our listeners are **elderly**.

One essential difference between a printed newspaper and our service is that we do address the listener by talking to them and we are usually speaking to an individual in their home, probably alone; we are not broadcasting to a crowd, we are speaking to one person

We are amateur readers and do not expect to be perfect, we make little mistakes and errors, or fluffs, and we talk around them in a way that we should do if we were in the room with the listener. Some mistakes can be re-recorded. Our listeners hear the radio, so they have a standard of comparison and they expect something similar. Our standard of reading should not distract the listener from the news itself. The better we are the less we get noticed.

### **Auditions**

All potential volunteer readers will be asked to record a short reading at our studio. The committee will decide suitability and notify the volunteer of its decision.

Successful volunteers will become reserve readers until a vacancy exists on the reading team.

### **Reading Rota**

The production rota will be published at regular intervals. If a reader is unable to attend he/she should contact a reserve reader or a reader from another team to read for them, or contact the alternative number on the rota list to seek advice. It is essential that readers follow this procedure, as the collection of news compiled is for four readers. Should a reader be unable to attend it can disrupt the recording.

### **Part Two – Discipline**

A newspaper is intended to relay information to the listener, without the unnecessary intervention of a third party's opinion so there should be **no personal comments**.

This intrudes between the written word and the listener, it takes up space more beneficially used for extra news items, can irritate if the listener does not agree, and leaves the TN open to being sued if a libel writ is taken out against the ink print newspaper.

### **Personal Involvement**

Where an item alludes to the TN, it is in order to give additional information or explanation if appropriate.

### **Photographs**

A photograph accompanying an article can briefly add to the listener's interest but it should be verbally described.

### **Technique**

Do not turn your head away from the microphone or sway towards or away from it whilst reading; keep a constant distance (about 6 inches is a good compromise). Do not fiddle with the microphone stands, the microphones themselves, or the cables, as any contact even the edge of the script will make a distracting noise on the recording.

### **Noises Off**

Microphones are very sensitive. Extraneous sounds such as rustling paper (usually when a reader is awaiting their turn even at a distance), the odd sniff, the nervous cough, the surreptitious throat clearing can sound like a burst water main or quarry blasting when played back. Pencil tapping can sound like a secret message being sent by morse code.

### **Part Three – Handovers**

Good visual handovers are essential. As a reader comes to the start of the handover they should raise their hand and drop it as the last item finishes. This will give the sound mixer time to partly fade up the incoming reader's microphones, then do a cross mix between the two readers when the item finishes. The new reader should have a brief pause before starting their item, which will ensure that the listener does not think that it is a continuation of the previous item.

### **Are we News Readers?**

We are not BBC newsreaders, nor should we try to adopt their style. We are not reading items of news in a way which requires us to sound like them.

### **Is Variety Enough?**

For all the variety in our voices, if we simply read through bits and pieces from the newspaper, the results can be dull. Read a serious piece one way, a humorous piece in a lighter way – try smiling, a smile can be heard.

### **Avoiding Monotone**

A droning monotone will automatically be avoided by using some expression relating to whether the piece is about a disaster or good news.

Certainly getting a variety in the tone of your voice is important but avoid an over-enthusiastic sing-song style.

### **Pitch and Pace**

Varying the pitch makes our voices easier to hear. In an echoing hall, putting a different tone into the voice can overcome some of the problems of hearing, e.g. a monotone is harder for a listener to hear.

### **Part Four – Physical Factors to Help Clarity**

Warm up your voice. The recording usually commences at 6.30pm, so you should be at the studio 10 minutes prior to that time. You will have the chance to warm up your voice during this period when your recording levels are taken. Exercise ahead in reading aloud and also clear your throat if necessary.

### **Annual Review**

For the guidance of readers an annual review of all readers will be carried out. This will be done in the Autumn session and undertaken by the 'listening group'. The Association is very grateful to all our readers, and any suggestions will be welcome which will improve the service to all listeners. If you get comments or requests please accept them as being in the best interest to improve the Talking Newspaper.

## Duties of the Clearing Teams

**Object:** to prepare wallets and tapes for recording and issuing to listeners

**Wallets:** remove damaged wallets from service. Transfer address labels to new wallets

**Cassettes:** to be inspected when received; old and damaged ones removed from the service. They have to be re-wound where necessary and cleared on the bulk eraser. At least 10% of cassettes are checked for satisfactory clearing and then placed in the drawer. The wallets placed on the shelf are periodically checked to equate the number of tapes to the number of wallets. Cassettes to be correctly labelled and dated. Cassettes over 18 months old to be discarded.

## OTHER DUTIES

- a) Receive any telephone messages and take action
- b) Place any cash/cheques received in wallets by post in the appropriate box and make a note in the relevant book
- c) Changes of address of listeners to be entered on amendment sheet
- d) Temporary absences of listeners due to illness or holiday to be entered on amendment sheet
- e) Check tapes reported as faulty – if so, discard
- f) Deal with queries and messages from listeners
- g) Help with fundraising
- h) Listeners who borrow a cassette player must have their name shown on the white board

## **Duties of the Copying Teams**

The copying team will attend each Thursday morning, except for any summer or Christmas breaks. The copying team will start work at 9.30am. Volunteers should sign in and out in the registration book, and are requested to carry their I.D. card.

A copy team should have a minimum of three people who should agree to share the following duties –

- a) operating the high speed copiers
- b) checking the copy tapes
- c) checking the scanning
- d) handling late arrival mail
- e) checking the 1471 last caller and the 1571 BT answering service for recorded messages
- f) entering the details in the telephone message diary
- g) taking action on messages and record action taken in diary
- h) entering appropriate information on the ‘producers current sheet’
- i) checking the whiteboard for details affecting the posting out of recorded tapes

### **Copying continued**

- 1) Remove all covers from the high speed copiers and store them in a safe place
- 2) Plug in the multi socket extension lead for copiers and tape players
- 3) Check the first and second master tapes are in the place marked “ORIGINAL” (should have been done by the recording team)
- 4) Check each master tape in turn by playing them on the Saville tape recorder (normally located in the control room of the studio). For the Saville recorder the tape reel should be on the left ‘note the arrow direction on the play button’. Listen for the date of receipt by the listener.
- 5) Clean the record and ‘guide roller heads’ using good quality cottonbuds dampened with the isopropyl alcohol at the tape positions – the more thorough this cleaning is the better the copy tape quality.
- 6) Inspect all tape positions for debris such as broken pieces of shell from tapes. Remove debris with utmost care.
- 7) Replace master tapes in “ORIGINAL” positions on the master fast copiers with the tape reel on the left hand side.
- 8) Load appropriate blank shell colour tapes on all copying positions with the tape reels on the left hand side

- 9) Press 'copy' button. Sound levels, as indicated on the instrument at the top left hand corner of the master copiers, should not need adjustment from the levels preset by the recording team. Look at the indicator lights at the bottom left corner of each copier – red light indicates the tapes not recording. Press 'stop' button. Remove and examine tape not recording for evidence why it is not recording - if the tape is damaged in any way, scrap it. If the tape is undamaged then replace it correctly (tape reel to the left) – then press 'rewind'. After all tapes have re-wound press 'copy' and see if the problem tape records. Should the tape still not record press 'stop' and then 're-wind'. After re-winding is complete scrap the problem tape and use another tape.
- 10) When copying is complete, indicated audibly, tapes may re-wind automatically. However it is usually necessary to press 're-wind'.
- 11) When re-winding is complete, indicated audibly, remove the copy tapes and place them at the checking position.
- 12) In the event of failure to produce, consult the equipment handbooks, advise our technical volunteers and, if appropriate, the equipment servicing company's representative.
- 13) Check the quality of the first batch of copy tapes by playing the master tape and any of its seven copy tapes on the Saville tape recorder. Note the volume setting; remember to check the second master-and-the-slave copy tape quality. If the quality of the tape is acceptable then replace the master tapes on the master fast copier at the 'ORIGINAL' and continue copying.
- 14) If tape quality is not satisfactory then repeat cleaning of heads as in Item 5 and follow on with de-magnetising heads at all tape positions as set out below.
- 15) Note the position of the sound volume control at the top left hand corner of each master copier. Then fully turn down control to zero. Remove the master tapes. Place de-magnetising tape at "ORIGINAL" position (battery of de-magnetising tape visible in the top right hand corner of shell). Press 'copy' button. Within 5 seconds a red signal light will show at the centre top of the de-magnetiser showing process complete, press 'stop'. Place de-magnetiser on next position AND a good quality blank tape at the "ORIGINAL" position. Press 'copy' button and when red signal shows de-magnetising is complete press 'stop' button. Move de-magnetiser to each tape position in turn and repeat the above procedure. Re-wind the blank tape used in the process. After all tape positions have been de-magnetised replace the master tapes in the "ORIGINAL" positions and restore the volume controls (upper left corner of each master copier) to their original settings. All is now again ready for copying.

- 16) Copy another batch of tapes and repeat the copy tape quality check as in Item 13.
- 17) If tape quality is still poor then (PANIC) report this as soon as possible to our technical volunteers for investigation and action. Poor quality tapes will still have to be issued so copying should proceed.
- 18) At any change of copying teams then the copy tape quality should be checked as in Item 13. If the tape quality is significantly decreased then repeat the head cleaning and de-magnetising procedure as set out in Items 5 and 15.
- 19) Check the quality of the last batch of copy tapes as in Item 13.
- 20) Record in the general diary any fall in quality of copy tapes and details of any remedial action (if any) taken.

### **Checking the Tape**

As in the next two instructions (A1) (A2)

- 1) Press 'eject' button to open the cassette deck
- 2) Insert tape, uppermost and the reel on the left side to feed in direction of arrow on a play side
- 3) Press 'fast forward' button for 3-5 seconds
- 4) Press 'stop' button
- 5) Press 'play' button for 1-3 seconds. If recorded quality is acceptable then –
- 6) Press 'stop'
- 7) Press 're-wind' to beginning of tape
- 8) Press 'stop'
- 9) Press 'eject'
- 10) Remove tape from player and pass it to scan and despatch position
- 11) For one in 7/10 check the second side for closing music as follows-
- 12) Insert tape into player with tape uppermost and tape reel on the right side
- 13) Press 're-wind' for 10-15 seconds
- 14) Press 'stop'
- 15) Press 'play' for 1-3 seconds. If recorded quality is acceptable then-
- 16) Press 'stop'
- 17) Press 'fast forward' to end of tape
- 18) Press 'eject'
- 19) Remove the tape and pass to scan and despatch

If a fault is detected at stages 5 or 15 then attempt to diagnose the problem and advise the operator of the fast copiers.

## Registration and Despatch of Tapes

- 1) Select the correct colour wallets from the shelves
- 2) Attach a mail sack to the wheeled frame (sack barrow) to contain the filled wallets
- 3) Check the 'hold' box for listeners requiring tapes to be re-issued after a period of rest from receipt of tapes. This is most important during the summer holiday period
- 4) Check the 'white board' for address changes, or requests to withhold tapes, or requests to resume sending tapes
- 5) Start with the 'post paid' wallets. Open the Velcro fastening of the wallet, insert tape, then close Velcro fastening securely. Scan the 'post paid' wallets
- 6) Place 'post paid' wallets in mail sack and close sack with a rubber band. Complete the Royal Mail dockets for direct debit payment of postage charges in quadruplet, tear out the white and yellow copies of the postage docket, insert in the supplied Royal Mail docket envelope and then attach envelope to the mail sack containing ONLY post paid wallets, via the special clip. If a mistake is made on the post paid dockets **DO NOT ALTER THE ERROR**, but write across it 'CANCELLED'.  
Send the white and yellow copies of the cancelled docket(s) with the correct dockets to Royal Mail in the same envelope attached to the mail sack
- 7) Open each wallet in number order, insert a tape, then secure the wallet before checking name and number against the entry in the register  
For new listeners, ensure they are sent an 'information tape' with their first newspaper tape
- 8) Scan and put the filled wallet in the postal sack
- 9) There are 4 mailing sacks, to be equally loaded -  
**DO NOT OVERFILL THE SACKS**
- 10) Keep a running total of wallets despatched – to be entered on register
- 11) At a convenient time deal with the late arrival mail; process any wallets of the colour being despatched that day and put other wallets where clearing teams can deal with them

All equipment to be switched off at the wall, mixer covered, heater and lights switched off and the room locked.

Likewise, the workroom copiers switched off and unplugged, lights switched off and the room locked.

## **Technical Duties**

### **Aim**

To provide technical support for the Darlington & District Talking Newspaper Association.

Duties include recording and production of master tapes, the care and maintenance of recording equipment and obtaining information concerning technical supplies which will allow for replacement of tapes and equipment, also repair when required.

### **Recording and Production of Master Tapes**

With the exception of a two week period during August, and at Christmas, recordings will take place every Wednesday evening at 6.30pm. The duty technician should try and attend at least 30 minutes before the start of the recording to allow for time to set up the equipment. On arrival at the studio any mail and news/ magazine material should be collected from the workroom. Check the telephone (1571) for any messages that have not been picked up. Check the diary for any times to be included on the instruction sheet (see list of Contents).

## **Setting up the Equipment**

Details of how to set up the recording equipment can be found in the user handbooks, kept next to the control desk.

However, always clean the tape heads and remember that the mixer should be switched on first and switched off last.

Use the Sony deck to record the master tape and the Technics for any pre-recorded tapes.

Insert the master tape and carry out a check list of all microphones. Prepare the introduction (see list of Contents).

Ensure the news and magazine material is available.

Note that the Editors may attend and bring the material.

Collect a jug of water and ensure there are glasses available. A helpful reader may do this.

## Contents Of The Tape

### **Side One**

Introduction or information, which is usually recorded by the producer and consists of the following format for a maximum 5-6 minutes –

Music, 30 seconds of a signature tune to be played, then faded, after which should be a ‘welcome from Darlington’ and the date. The producer should check the diary and use any information that may be relevant for this section, for example new listeners, donations, deaths and any other information.

Note that for security reasons, listeners’ addresses should not be used on the tape but left for the duty producer. End this introduction by an acknowledgement of the Talking Newspaper Duty Editor, the source of the news (normally the Northern Echo, The Darlington & Stockton Times, The Advertiser) and that you are listening to a tape from the Darlington & District Talking Newspaper.

### **News**

#### **(Recording Procedure)**

The Duty Editor will ensure that the news is available for the recording. The news should be divided equally between four readers who should be allowed at least five minutes to look at the items. During this time sound checks can take place, when attention should be paid to the position of the microphone – remembering that the reader’s mouth should be 6-9” from the microphone. The producer should ensure that readers maintain this distance to avoid fluctuations in recording levels.

The producer should ensure that everyone present during recording is aware that external noise can distract the listener, this means that the producer should only hear the reader’s voice in the headphones.

Recording of the news can now commence with each reader introducing themselves before the first item. Each reader will read one item, then indicate by raising and lowering a hand that they have completed their item. This will allow the producer to operate the mixer in a way that ensures there are no detectable change levels between readers; this is achieved by a smooth fade in and out, and always having the controls at the correct settings.

Should a mistake occur it should be rectified by re-winding the tape to a suitable point and be re-recorded.

At 43 minutes and 45 seconds the news should end and the producer should repeat the telephone numbers including the studio number (465101). The listener should be advised to allow the tape to run forward and then turn over for the magazine.

A suitable choice of music will end Side One.

## **Side Two**

### **The Magazine**

45 seconds of music should be used before the editor or producer introduces the magazine.

If a pre-recorded item is to be used on the magazine the producer should check the recording quality of the tape. If it is of poor quality it should not be used and the person who submitted it should be advised accordingly.

The recording of the magazine differs slightly from the news in that 10-15 seconds of music should be used to separate each item, unless advised otherwise by the editor. At the end of each item the music should be faded in and out.

To avoid switching the Technics deck on and off the pre-recorded tape should be allowed to play throughout the recording with the control off and fade in and out when required.

At approximately 38 seconds a check should be made of the remaining items to be read and the contents adjusted if required to ensure the recording is complete by 44 minutes.

At the end of the magazine the producer should advise the listener that we would welcome their comments – this is possible if they contact the duty editor. Hence the editors phone number should be given, as well as the studio number. Finally, thanks should be given to everyone who has helped to produce the tape before fading into the signature tune.

The producer should label the tape, to indicate that this is the master tape and the date. A second master tape should now be copied on the high speed duplicators, along with copies for the readers (check the handbook for detail of operation). As with the cassette decks the tape heads should be cleaned prior to copying.

The copied master tape should then be labelled 'second master' and checked by means of a cassette player that a copy has been made. The start of Side 1 and the end of Side 2 will indicate that copying has taken place.

The copied master should then be placed into the second high speed master unit ready for the copying team.

The recording is now complete, however should a problem occur during the recording the problem sheet should be consulted.

All the equipment should now be switched off, unplugged and covered, with the exception of the telephone. The diary signed, all lights turned off, and the door locked.

## Technical Support

Companies who can service and provide help for high speed copiers are –

Bridge Audio, 170 Manchester Road, Accrington,  
Lancashire BB5 2PD

Main Sony Rep in Britain –

David Horn, 01532 490300

Or contact TNAUK, 01435 8666102 for advice

The studio and associated equipment was installed in February 2002 by –  
MT Audio, 01325 252106 for help and advice

Cassette suppliers-

D & B Tape Services, PO Box 155, Orpington, Kent,  
BR6 7WQ, 01689 860608

Or contact TNAUK, 01435 866102 for advice

Tactile Discs supplied by-

TNAUK, National Recording Centre, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8DB

Wallets supplied by-

Action for Blind People

Sales Department

14 – 16 Verny Road

LONDON SE16 3DZ tele: 020 7635 4922

Copier maintenance-

Technocopy Limited

106-108 North Road, Darlington DL1 2EQ

01325 365403

Computer-

Access Solutions

6 Willow Lodge, Roe Green Avenue, Roe Green, Worlsey M28 2SA

0161 7902080

Updated 140404

### **Problem Sheet For Producers**

Advice on suggested action to take if there is a problem during production of the tape –

a) No news or material available. First check at reception, then check the workroom, if the news is still unavailable and there is no alternative way of providing the news, then try to arrange for another recording to take place the following evening. This will mean contacting another committee member to seek advice about news collection. If the magazine is not available extend the news and check the spare magazine items in the workroom.

b) Mixer fails to operate. Is it switched on? Check or change fuses in the plug and on the mixer. If still not working try the spare small mixer from the store cupboard in the workroom. It may, however, be easier to postpone the recording and carry out a cancellation procedure as stated above.

c) High speed copiers fail to operate. Are they switched on? Check the extension leads. If one master unit is faulty then use the other.

d) Master tape breaks before a copy is made. The only action would be to arrange another recording as soon as possible.

In the event of a power failure, follow the procedure outlined above to arrange for a new recording night.

### **Issue Of Cassette Players** **For Listeners**

A number of cassette players are available for loan to listeners (free of charge). These are issued when required by means of a visit to the listener's home by one of our volunteers. The listener will then be asked to sign for the machine to indicate that they acknowledge it is the property of The Darlington Talking Newspaper Association. Should a loaned machine become faulty, this would be repaired, if possible, or replaced if necessary.

All machines are to be returned to the studio when they are no longer required.

## **General Information**

### **New listeners**

Our service is available to anyone who cannot read because of a disability, although only the visually impaired can use the free post service. Information concerning new listeners is usually provided by the social worker for the blind or representatives of disabled groups. However, anyone can request our service on behalf of the new listeners. This could be a friend or relative and, of course, the listeners themselves. The TN also publishes information to attract new listeners. This information will be on display at the eye clinic and other relevant places.

### **Feedback**

The TN welcomes any feedback concerning any item included on the tape; this can be made via the telephone or by letter. At the end of each edition listeners are asked to contact the studio with their comments.

### **Calls to the studio**

The number is 01325 465101. To check for messages dial 1571, enter the details of all incoming / outgoing calls in the telephone book. Please do not use the studio telephone for personal calls unless it is an emergency.

### **Messages**

Please enter details of messages in the telephone diary book. New listeners, withdrawals, address changes etc., should also be entered on the amendment sheet. Make use of the white board for urgent messages.

### **Donations**

All donations which arrive at the studio should be put in the treasurer's box (located in the treasurer's drawer). The details should then be entered in the diary and in the treasurer's book.

### **Fundraising**

We are a self-funding organisation and rely on donations, flag days and other events to ensure the continuation of the TN.

### **Music**

The PO regulations allow us an introduction and closing jingle, and similar interludes between sections of recording. In practice this should not exceed 30 seconds.

### **Purchases**

Any purchases made for, and on behalf of, the TN to be made by telephone, and followed up by writing to the supplier.

## **Health & Safety**

An annual safety check of all electrical equipment is to be undertaken.

Fastcopiers are to be serviced annually.

All tapes to be checked annually and keep a check on tapes which are 18 months old for replacement.

A Health and Safety Handbook for Voluntary & Community Organisations can be found displayed in the office.

The Norquest Health and Safety representative will carry out an annual inspection of our facilities.

## Copyright For Local Talking Newspapers

If your group uses articles from a local newspaper you should have explicit written permission or a general agreement with the publisher allowing you to use this copyright material. The 1988 Copyright, Designs and Patents Act contains rules that govern copyright. There is no formal procedure for registering copyright. It arises automatically and generally lasts for 70 years after the death of the author. Therefore you should assume that any written work or recording is covered by copyright unless you have definite information that it is not. You should also be aware that the author might not be the owner of the copyright.

### **Can you use extracts from national titles used by the Association ?**

Unfortunately, our agreements are specific to the National Service and the formats we produce. We cannot authorise a member group to use any copyright material from these publications. You must seek permission from the publisher. Our trustee insurance package includes cover for accidental infringement of copyright but like all insurance schemes it assumes that you are aware of the law and work in good faith taking care to avoid unauthorised use of the copyright.

You should also remember that “Articles for the Blind” free postage is not for sending recordings of music or tapes that include a significant music content.

Andrew Ledward TNAUK

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**Signed on behalf of  
Peter Barron, Editor**

Secretary has the original signed copy in the files