



## **Association of Talking Newspapers Northern Ireland**

### **Annual Report 2023**

#### **2023 Committee**

Chair	Patricia McGuinness
Secretary	Julie Russell
Treasurer	Marion McLaughlin

#### **Committee members**

- Jackie Cotton – RNIB Representative
- Margaret Davidson - Listener Representative
- Andrew Gribben – Technical Officer
- Jennifer Loughridge – Volunteer Representative

# **Association of Talking Newspapers Northern Ireland**

## **(ATNNI) COMMITTEE REPORT 2023**

The Committee of the Association of Talking Newspapers, Northern Ireland (ATNNI), is pleased to submit its Annual Report for 2023 to its members.

The committee met 4 times in the year (in September and November 2023 and in February and May 2024) and we continue to have our meetings in Portadown thanks to the hospitality of St Mark's church.

Committee officers took advantage of free training offered by NICVA and attended awareness courses on good governance in the voluntary sector and on financial management. These highlighted some important issues and, as a result, changes were made to the way the ATNNI bank account is managed including drawing up a policy. The ATNNI Constitution was reviewed and some small amendments will be proposed at the 2024 AGM.

Expert input from Andrew as Technical Officer has set out new aims for the ATNNI website

- Use the site to better effect
- Make the site accessible and easy for the public to use
- Make the site easier to update
- Bring down costs

A change to the provider has brought the annual cost down from over £140 to only £8. Changes to the site itself and to how it links us together are still in the pipeline.

The Talking NewspapersNI Facebook page continues to promote Talking Newspapers to the public in general and to create a social media community for our volunteers across NI.

Some TNs continue to feel the pressure after Covid and a few are in a precarious situation. During the year, both Armagh and Banbridge decided to close for good. ATNNI is supporting them as they complete the necessary formalities. In Ballymena a change in library staff is worrying for the 3 TNs who have their copying done there. So far all is going well and the TNs have each written to Libraries NI to underline the importance of this long-term partnership.

Marion was able to attend the conference of the Talking News Federation and brought back stories of inspiration from TNs in GB and many ideas especially around use of technology. She also attended an RNIB Technology event in Belfast.

Patricia, as Chair of ATNNI, was invited to be a guest speaker at a celebration of 40 years of Sound Around Ards in March 2024. This was a very positive and enjoyable evening and the Association presented the TN with a certificate to mark the milestone.