

# Vale of Glamorgan Broadcasting CIC (Bro Radio)



Vale of Glamorgan Council

Deed of Grant Report

June 2013

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## Bro Radio background

Bro Radio launched at midday on the 31st of March 2009 and has come a long way in a very short amount of time. The station aims to offer an alternative to commercial, national and BBC Radio, by educating, entertaining, informing and engaging with the community it serves that other media services cannot.

Now in partnership with Barry YMCA and based in their building in Barry, Bro Radio broadcasts locally produced programmes, created by predominantly volunteers from the local area the radio station serves.

It's the only radio station broadcasting from Barry, to Barry and parts of the Vale, keeping listeners updated with the local information that matters to them.

## Objectives

- Create a sense of social identity and pride within a pan generational and economically diverse Community
- Offer the community a two way conduit for the exchange of information and ideas, with a particular focus on those groups and individuals who are currently under represented
- Provide value for money opportunity for local businesses to promote their products and services to the community and therefore increase economic activity
- Work with and alongside various local groups, thereby enabling them to meet their social objectives
- Develop highly listenable radio programmes that educate entertain and inform, and importantly encourage listeners to stay tuned to Bro Radio
- Train and develop members of the community in all aspects of the radio industry

## Bro Radio Today

Bro Radio operates from the heart of a very busy building - Barry YMCA Hub. When the station launched in 2009, it broadcasted out of two converted offices in the Hub building, using mainly donated kit from one of Bro Radios directors.

In 2011, The Barry Regeneration Board supported the development of a Digital Media Enterprise, a partnership between Barry YMCA and Bro Radio. This enabled the centre to offer digital media services such as video editing, filming studios, training courses and volunteering opportunities for the local area, amongst many other things.

Alongside this, Bro Radio had a purpose built, state of the art, industry standard studio constructed in the main reception area of the YMCA Hub, which enabled us to be amongst the 2,500 people who use the centre on a weekly basis. In the upstairs area of the Hub, Bro had the two existing studios refurbished, also to industry standard. 'Studio 2' is a mirror image of the main studio in the reception area and is mainly used for recording or acting as a backup studio. Studio 3 is used as a news studio. Here our news readers and journalists produce the station's news bulletins and record them ready for broadcast.

Bro Radio is an incredibly busy community radio station which is operated by around 40 active volunteers and one Station Manager, who is funded by the Welsh Government Community Radio Fund and income from advertisers. The Station Manager is also supported by a dedicated team of directors. We now have a full schedule of programmes right throughout the week, offering anything from dance music, local orientated chat shows, reggae influenced shows, to dedicated Welsh language radio shows. The stations shows and presenters have become very popular within the area they broadcast to and all over the world.

Our chat show for example, broadcasts Monday – Friday between 1pm and 3pm. This show gives the opportunity to Vale Council officers and members, local charities and organisations, police etc.. to come in and discuss relevant local issues as well as National topics. Each Monday, this show features a representative from the Citizens Advice Bureau, who gives advice on issues about benefits, pensions, rouge traders etc. This enables our listeners to get advice about any concerns and any questions answered they may have.

We also have regular representatives from the Safer Vale Partnership offering crime prevention and community safety tips to Vale residents.

Recently, members from the Vale council were on this show talking about fostering opportunities in the county. The members gave their views and expressed the council's points on the subject and our listeners were then invited to take part by asking questions.

We have held many of these types of 'debate' radio shows and they prove very popular with our audience.

We are also keen to develop and grow our Welsh language output. At present we have a dedicated Welsh language show, which broadcasts for 3 hours on Tuesday evenings. This show is bilingual so that anyone who is interested in learning the Welsh language will be able to through this show.

Not only do we broadcast a Welsh dedicated show, we also have a Welsh language local news bulletin that broadcasts daily at 2pm.

We are also in the process of launching a 'Welsh Phrase Of The Week' type feature. This is where we have useful Welsh phrases announced in English and then the Welsh language equivalent pronounced after. This comes after the great success we had with this feature in 2012, working with the National Eisteddfod Of Wales in Llandow as their official community radio station.

## Volunteers

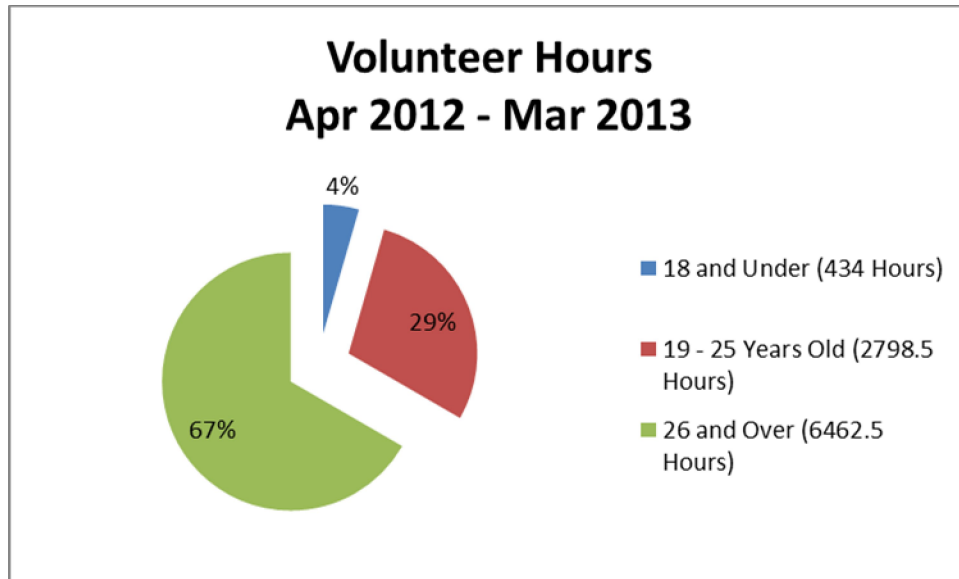
Volunteers receive quality training, from professional, experienced personnel in journalism, presenting, production, or whatever area of radio broadcasting interests them. This training has enabled many of our volunteers to move onto paid employment at other radio stations. For example, one of our past newsreaders, who lives in Llantwit Major, now reads the news on a radio station that covers the whole of South Wales. Before he joined Bro Radio, he had no experience in any area of radio broadcasting. The training and experience he gained from his time at the station enabled him to secure future employment. Another past volunteer has secured a full time apprenticeship at BBC Wales with the support of Bro Radio. Again, this volunteer had no experience in the media industry. She was studying a media course at Cardiff University and used Bro Radio to enhance her education and future employment possibilities.

We welcome applications from potential volunteers from all walks of life and of any ability. The station is proud to be supporting two members who are registered blind. They both present two key, daytime shows on the station.

One presents our daily chat and music show, mentioned above and the other hosts our Drivetime Show. Bro Radio has helped these volunteers to realise their dreams by presenting their own radio shows on their local radio station. These volunteers have often felt socially excluded in the community due to their disability.

Bro Radio recognised this and as a station, we have set up our studios and equipment in such a way, as to enable them to be able to use it confidently and safely. Gareth Knight - our Drivetime presenter, has now successfully secured funding for his post at the station, which means he is now employed, whereas before he was claiming state benefits.

Volunteers are the backbone of the radio station and quite simply, without them, we wouldn't be able to operate. Below is a graph of volunteer hours and their age groups from April 2012 to March 2013.



We currently have 6 volunteers under the age of 18, 9 between the ages of 19 – 25 and 25 over 26 years old.

As you can see from the above graph, young volunteers aged 18 and under contributed 434 hours, 19 – 25 years old – 2798.5 hours and 26 and over dedicated 6462.5 of their time.

Due to the popularity of the radio station, Bro Radio now has a growing waiting list of applicants who are eager to volunteer at the radio station

As well as working with volunteers, we also offer work experience placements at the station. Each year, we accept on average, 20 young people into the radio station from local schools, colleges, universities and work closely with Careers Wales. In late December 2011, Bro Radio won a 'Most Valued Partner Award' for the amount of training placement opportunities that we offered. We offer professional training in all aspects of radio, which could include producing radio programmes, broadcasting, journalism or research. Each person will have a volunteer from the radio station working alongside them each day for the duration of their course, working to a pre-planned training schedule.

Our volunteers go above and beyond their duties to pass on their wealth of knowledge to those that are interested in future employment within the media industry. (See attached letter from Sue Mullett)

Sadly, because of the way commercial and BBC Radio now operates, by means of networking, the vast majority of their radio shows are broadcast from England, which means they are no longer in a position to offer work experience placements. Fortunately, Bro Radio doesn't operate like that. We are based in the Vale and dedicated to the Vale.

## Social media

Social Media is incredibly important part of the day to day operations of Bro Radio. Our Facebook and Twitter pages are where we post local events, news stories, competitions, missing pet appeals, etc.....

We currently have over 4,000 followers on Facebook and over 1,600 on Twitter. We've noticed that during times of bad weather (snow), these pages become the first place our listeners look for up to date information. For example, when we have snowfall across the Vale which impacts schools, roads, and public services, we are in constant contact with the relevant authorities to ensure we bring the very latest information to our listeners and online members. We also have a great working relationship with local police, the Safer Vale Partnership, South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, the Welsh Ambulance Service, RNLI and local search & rescue teams. The station is in constant contact with these organisations and the communications department at the Vale Council, not just when we experience extreme weather, but at all times, to ensure we are very often the first to know anything that may affect our listeners' day – to – day lives. We also encourage our audience regularly to let us know any relevant news stories or traffic and travel issues across the Vale. After all, they are our 'eyes & ears' of the local area.

They and we share up to the minute information to a wider area faster and more reliably than ever before, ensuring everyone is informed immediately, but more importantly, with factual information.

Sharing information with our listeners is one of the key ingredients of our success. We believe that if we bring the latest, correct information to our audience, it will mean more and more people will turn to us first, which is exactly what we're seeing happen. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of June to the 26<sup>th</sup> of June alone, our Facebook page grew by 540 new members.

Our 'Events Guide' and 'Local News' sections on the Bro Radio website are updated regularly. We source all of our information from various outlets. These could range anywhere from listeners contacting us, local news agencies or the Council Communications Team. For example, we recently ran the story sent us from the communications department team about how the council is trialling an innovative approach to ease traffic congestion at the Barons Court junction in Penarth. On another occasion we broadcast during our hourly local news bulletin, the story of The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet holding a 'community' question and answer session in Dinas Powys in May. Attached is a report on the stories and events we have covered specifically from the Vale Communication Department.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, there was a major incident in Rhoose involving a car that had overturned outside a school at 8.50am and unfortunately injured nine people, five of which were children.

This very quickly became a National and some instances, an International leading news story. Obviously we had to cover this and sent two members of news team to the scene - Lucy Short and Dan Broderick. During this time, our office was contacted by Sky News, IRN Radio, Daily Mirror, The Mail, BBC News, Radio Wales and many, many others to get a report from the scene. Within one hour of the incident happening, Lucy and Dan were live on Sky News TV and National BBC TV and radio. The stations name and Dan and Lucys, were then also across the whole commercial, hospital, forces and community radio station network on IRN/Sky News radio. Not only that, the Bro Radio name was also on the front page of nearly every national and local newspaper website and in some cases, actually in the papers themselves the next day.

In total, our name was on around 100 different major news, radio and TV websites from around the UK and the world. It really shows the respect and professional trust that the station has within the media industry. There were major broadcasters and reporters at the scene, but because of the reputation we have for doing things right and properly, everyone chose to use us.

This only goes to prove how needed and respected we are in the community and what a great team with have.





We also send weekly emails to the Communications Team asking is there anything specifically they would like us to cover the week ahead. This could be a news story that the council would like highlighted or a council led event that's happening in the future. We also source information from the council website which we then link to from the Bro Radio website.

On every page on our website we have a picture of the council logo, which visitors can click on, that will take them directly to the Vale Council website. It is also highlighted on our website that we are funded by the council. On all our marketing materials for Outside Broadcasts such as banners and pull ups, they also carry the Vale Council logo.

More and more hosts of events we advertise on air are reporting back to us saying that their functions have had greater attendance numbers due to us promoting their event. (Please see attached letter from Barry Male Voice Choir)

Below is a table of the events we have broadcasted from recently and ones we will be attending soon:

23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2012	High Street Christmas Lights Switch On
1 <sup>st</sup> December 2012	Lighting Up King Square Christmas Lights
January 15 <sup>th</sup> 2013	Work For Life Event – King Square
March 15 <sup>th</sup> 2013	Vale Jobs Fayre – Barry Memo
20 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	Adult Learners Week – King Square
5 <sup>th</sup> May 2013	Victoria Park Dog Show – Barry
18 <sup>th</sup> May 2013	Keep Wales Tidy Beach Clean – Ogmore
19 <sup>th</sup> May 2013	On Your Bike For Barnados
20 <sup>th</sup> May 2013	Adult Learners Week – King Square
15 <sup>th</sup> June 2013	St Nicholas Primary School Fete
28 <sup>th</sup> June 2013	Eagleswell Primary School Fete

29 <sup>th</sup> June 2013	Ysgol Sant Curig Fete
4 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	Holton Road Primary School Summer Fete
6 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	St Josephs Primary School Fete
13 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	'Cadstock' in Victoria Park, Barry
20 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	Penarth Carnival
27 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	Brewers Fayre Fun Day
19 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	Mcdonalds Barry (Bro On The Road)
20 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	King Square (Bro On The Road)
21 <sup>st</sup> August 2013	Vale Show – Fonmon (Bro On The Road)
22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2013	Penarth Pier (Bro On The Road)
23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2013	Barry Island Promenade (Bro On The Road)

We love being out in the community we serve and opportunity we have to do this, we take it.

From Monday August 19<sup>th</sup> to Friday August 23<sup>rd</sup>, we will be taking 'Bro On The Road. This is a massive marketing opportunity for us and also to encourage new listeners and advertisers, as well as meeting existing listeners.

When we broadcast from local school, we take mobile studios with us. These pieces of broadcasting kit teach school children how a radio station operates. Each pupil is offered the chance to have a go at being a radio DJ and to record a clip onto the system as well. In most cases, we actually give a recording that they've made to take away on CD.

Our website has seen a massive increase since our launch in 2009. The figures are listed here:

2009

Month	Unique visitors
Jan 2009	0
Feb 2009	0
Mar 2009	0
Apr 2009	0
May 2009	337
Jun 2009	465
Jul 2009	418
Aug 2009	514
Sep 2009	386
Oct 2009	530
Nov 2009	433
Dec 2009	390
Total	3,473

2010

Month	Unique visitors
Jan 2010	684
Feb 2010	526
Mar 2010	463
Apr 2010	376
May 2010	408
Jun 2010	350
Jul 2010	296
Aug 2010	354
Sep 2010	635
Oct 2010	694
Nov 2010	816
Dec 2010	795
Total	6,397

## 2011

Month	Unique visitors
Jan 2011	1,301
Feb 2011	793
Mar 2011	926
Apr 2011	1,002
May 2011	1,292
Jun 2011	1,120
Jul 2011	1,392
Aug 2011	1,257
Sep 2011	991
Oct 2011	1,095
Nov 2011	1,283
Dec 2011	1,387
Total	13,839

## 2012

Month	Unique visitors
Jan 2012	1,357
Feb 2012	1,841
Mar 2012	1,697
Apr 2012	1,738
May 2012	1,670
Jun 2012	1,718
Jul 2012	1,690
Aug 2012	1,756
Sep 2012	2,299
Oct 2012	1,985
Nov 2012	2,009
Dec 2012	761
Total	20,521

To date this year, we have had 12,631 unique visitors to our website. We predict to reach around 26,000 or more by the end of December 2013.

The statistics show that online listening and viewing on our website has increased at a rapid since our launch in 2009 and continues to do so.

We're finding that not only are people from the Vale of Glamorgan viewing our website, but a number of shows are very popular with people listening in from other countries, taking an interest in what we do. The messages we have received, either through social media, e-mail or through the site itself, tell us that former Vale residents, who now live abroad, are using our site and station to keep informed of what's going on from their hometown in the Vale and using us to contact family members. We have interaction from as far as Perth in Australia, Michigan in the USA and also in France, to name a few.

Not only do we give our audience the opportunity to listen via our website, but we also have the option of our free Smartphone app which we launched in February 2012. This app is available on the iTunes App Store for free, which means our listeners can literally take Bro on the go anywhere in the world. As of the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2013, this app has been downloaded 2,867 times by unique users. On this app, not only can you listen to the station live, but users also have direct access to our website, Facebook and Twitter pages. Plus links to the latest travel and local news stories as and when they happen.



## The Future

One of the biggest hurdles Bro Radio has, is its coverage area on 98.1FM. We acknowledge that our signal isn't being picked up by some areas in the Vale of Glamorgan that we would like to, especially towns and villages in the rural Vale.

We have been in contact with OFCOM on many occasions to discuss increasing our output or the potential for another transmitter, but unfortunately due to their licensing rules, they are currently unable to offer us either at present. There is however another option which we are currently investigating the possibility of.

The option that is available to us is to move our transmitter which is currently placed on the roof of Holm View Leisure Centre. We have found one area in the Vale which we believe may enable us to cover a much wider area. The site is located on Barry Island, above the old Butlins site, on or around street 'Pioden For.' It's hoped that if we were to move our FM antenna there, we should be able to cover a lot more areas that at the moment we cannot. We should be able to cover all of our current 'black spots' in Barry and could include, but not limited to, Rhoose, parts of Llantwit Major, Penmark etc...

Our current transmitter position means we have very good coverage in Barry, Penarth, Dinas Powys and that general direction. It's predicted that if the transmitter move was to go ahead, we will have a greater reception in these areas.

Our engineer is currently working to see if it's feasible for us to move our transmitter there. But as it stands, we see very few engineering issues with this.

The main obstacles we would have to overcome is financing the move. We would be able to use our current transmitter, but amongst other things, we would need to hire in a temporary antenna to run from the new site to allow us to do test broadcasts as well as continuing our current service.

The predicted cost of this project is somewhere between £2,500 and £4,000. This would include the costs of an engineer, parts, temporary equipment and anything else we may need for the move.

If everything works out, we would hope to get the project started by the end of this year. It goes without saying, that funding income from grants, sales through on air advertising and sponsorship is vital in ensuring this project can be completed.

## Vale of Glamorgan Communications Department

As mentioned previously in this report, we work closely with the communications team, broadcasting the news stories and events both on air and via our online pages, sent to us by the communications team and sourced by our own team of volunteers.

The emails that come in to us from the council are general press releases that are sent to all the relevant media organisations, not just to Bro Radio. In the future we would like to be specifically asked to cover more relevant stories/events. There have however, been occasions where we have been specifically asked to cover something on air by the communications team. An example of this would be going back to the fostering campaign run by the council.

We are often the first port of call for residents to report any information they think may impact other residents' lives. For example road closures, road traffic collisions etc....

Going forward, we feel we could broadcast Council service and news releases better if the Communications Department utilise our partnership and resources a lot more.

## Listeners

Listeners are the main reason why we operate. We will continue to try and grow on our listenership now and in the future. The way we plan to do this, is to expand on what we already have.

Our Apple Smartphone app has proven very popular, so in the future we are keen to develop apps for other mobile devices – Android, Blackberry etc... Going by the success of the iPhone app, we predict these devices to be equally as popular.

As you can see from the statistics previously pointed out in this report, our website listenership continues to grow from not only Vale listeners, but also from 'ex pats' worldwide. Bro Radio plans to use our website a lot more in the near future. One of the ways in which we will do this, is build on the already very successful relationship with the Digital Media Enterprise at the YMCA Hub. We want to not only broadcast audio streams through our website, but also live video streams. This will include live streams of our studios, where the presenter is broadcasting his or her radio show. During times of live debates with council representatives, listeners can then not only hear what the members of the discussion are saying but also interact through video feeds as well. Radio is no longer a 'secret' medium, where the listener is often left

wondering what happens behind the scenes. The future for radio is now also very much visual. The YMCA has facilities like no other in the Vale, which we feel both Bro Radio and the Vale Of Glamorgan Council could build on.

## Training

Young people and those often considered too old to gain employment are a key part of Bro Radios success. As you can see from the previous statistics from this report, young volunteers aged 18 and under contributed 434 hours, 19 – 25 years old – 2798.5 hours and 26 and over dedicated 6462.5 of their time. This clearly shows that under 18s and those over 26 make up a big majority of volunteer hours put into the station.

Our youngest volunteer is 14 years old and our oldest is 65. Both of these individuals are often overlooked by other organisations simply because of their age. Bro Radio develops and trains any individual who is interested in the media industry and offers them quality, professional training. This has on many occasions ensured our volunteers go onto future employment, whereas before, they themselves admitted to not having a very bright outlook on life.

Going forward, we will ensure we maintain this quality of service to the community and continue to encourage applications from potential volunteers from any background and of any age.

## Moving Forward

Bro Radios future is very bright, but income from on air advertising revenue and grant income is the only way for Bro Radio to survive.

During times where business owners are often too scared to spend money on marketing, it's becoming increasingly difficult for us to gain interest for on air advertising. Not only that, but gaining funding to be able to pay a full time Sales Manager has also proved difficult. During 2012 – 2013, we have applied for grants and funding to enable us to employ a Sales Manager, but so far been unsuccessful. Our current Salesman is paid on a commission basis only. If he sells an advert to a local business, he will then earn a percentage of that sale. But, there is a high risk that this could be ended at any time if the salesman were to find alternative full time employment.



The Station Manager at Bro Radio is paid by a percentage from the Welsh Assembly Community Radio Fund and the rest made up from on air advertising revenue. This post is funded until March 2014, but indications show that this funding opportunity will cease to exist after this time.

The income we receive from the Vale Of Glamorgan Deed Of Grant, has never been more important. Should this funding stop, there is a strong possibility Bro Radio will no longer be able to operate in the near future. As you can see from the above, all our current income is tied up with other important positions within the station.

If we are to continue the work we do within the Vale County and alongside the Vale Council, the income from the Deed of Grant is essential to Bro Radio's survival. In return, we believe we can offer a unique service that others simply cannot. The partnership between Bro Radio and the Communications Department is a very strong one, but, we know we can build on this in the future to offer the Vale residents a service that no other council in Wales can.

We have a dedicated team, working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, who are willing to entertain, inform, but more importantly engage and educate local residents.

There is an increasing demand on our station to expand and improve on our already very successful service, in particular bringing local news, events, appeals and advice on time, everytime.

In the past, we have proven how needed our community service we offer is. During times of extreme weather and news stories that effect residents' lives, we have always offered an unrivaled service to the Vale, that no other media outlet can.

Bro Radio is fully committed to training, educating and offering life - long skills to our volunteers and to potential volunteers of the station, from the local community. But, without income from funding sources such as the Deed Of Grant, provided by the Vale Of Glamorgan Council, we unfortunately would not be able to continue to do this.

Working alongside the Vale of Glamorgan Council in the future, will be key to Bro Radio continuing it's dedicated service. We firmly believe that we can only build on the success of our existing partnership and develop new ways of communicating Vale Council news and services to its residents.

## Finance

End of financial year 2012-13 accounts are being prepared by HW Accountants LLP and should be presented to Bro Radio Directors within one month of this report. At the end of the year we just about broke even and since February the Directors and Station Manager have been looking at ways to reduce operating costs, which are now at a level there can not be any further cuts. We are also researching grant funding, with assistance from VCVS, and private sponsorship and advertising income. We, as many other organisations are facing the cruel factors of the economic climate and attracting support funding and generating private income is not going to be easy, however we will keep trying.

Attached to this report:

Bro Radio Profit and Loss account summary prepared by station finance clerk

Sales /sponsorship report June 13