

LISTENING LOCALLY ACROSS THE UK



1/8/2024

A study into the nationwide listenership and impact of local community radio

This report looks at findings of a study carried out in 2023 into the listening habits of listeners to local community radio across the UK, and the social impact of local community radio on a national level. The study was conducted in conjunction with the University of Northampton and a number of key community radio stations across the UK (see appendix 1 for details). It was funded by the regulator OfCom. It builds on the insights gained from the 2021 study entitled 'Listening Locally', which looked at the social impact of local radio in Northampton specifically and was conducted in conjunction with NLive radio and the University of Northampton. The 2021 study was funded by an internal scheme at the University of Northampton. Both reports are authored by Dr Alison Hulme, who conducted the research alongside Martin Steers, Station Manager of NLive radio.

Listening locally across the UK

A STUDY INTO THE NATIONWIDE LISTENERSHIP AND IMPACT OF LOCAL COMMUNITY RADIO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local community radio is an important part of the lives of those who listen to it. It improves their sense of connection to others in their community, helps them to engage with activities and meet new people, and enables them to better understand the perspectives and behaviours of different groups.

Local community radio is also a crucial purveyor of information as there are high levels of trust amongst listeners and they are far more likely to act upon information heard on local community radio than that heard elsewhere. Significant numbers of listeners have been directly helped in the crucial areas of employment and health thanks to information heard and trusted on local community radio. This has a direct impact on the local economy and community.

There is a strong sense amongst listeners that local community radio has enabled them to feel calmer and to actually seek help if they need it. It is a grounding influence in their lives, providing them with familiarity and comfort as well as the desire to do new things and take action.

PROJECT CONTEXT AND PARTNERS

NLive Radio is a not-for-profit community radio station that is operated by University of Northampton Enterprises. NLive partnered with the UK Community Radio Network (UKCRN) - the trade body for Ofcom Licenced Community Radio stations, which represents, supports, and develops Ofcom Licenced Community Radio stations. These partners teamed up with Dr Alison Hulme, an academic at the University of Northampton, whose background is in sociology, but who also spent ten years working as a radio professional. Funding was provided by OfCom's Community Radio Fund.

This study followed a pilot study entitled 'Listening Locally' which had been funded the previous year with a Business Ideas and Innovation Grant (BIIG) from the University of Northampton (UoN). BIIG is a UoN initiative which specifically operates to pair up academics with local business partners. This project was essentially a national roll-out of the previous project which was limited to NLive/Northampton. NLive used the UKCRN to recruit other community radio stations onto the project. The full list of those who participated is in appendix 1.

For the purposes of this research community radio and local radio were both referred to as 'local radio' as the stakeholders were aware that very few listeners understand the difference between the two and may not always realise that what they are listening to is community radio as opposed to local radio. In this report however, we refer to the stations in question with their correct title of local community radio.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

The community radio sector is over 15 years old in the UK and has over 300 licensed and broadcasting stations across the country (316 at the point this report was completed). Community Radio stations fall into two broad categories, Community of Location stations (those that broadcast to a specific local geographical area) and Community of Interest or Identity stations (those that cater for different ethnicities, religions, demographics, etc. or to particular interests like Arts, Speech, Specialist music). For this project a conscious decision was made to only include Community of Location stations due to the fact they have a similar way of broadcasting to their audiences and funding their stations. However, if further funding became available, the project team would be keen to run similar studies into Community of Interest or Identity stations.

There is much anecdotal evidence that community radio has a larger listenership than one might expect as well as hugely positive impacts for local communities, such as mitigating against social isolation and division and reducing certain types of crime. However, with the notable exception of the 2016 Hospital Broadcasting Association (HBA) impact study (see [HBA Impact Report | Hospital Broadcasting Association \(hbauk.com\)](#) from where a copy can be downloaded), there has been little research into either its listener numbers or its social impact. Our own previous 'Listening Locally' study sought to begin to address the situation and provided an essential first step towards developing an impact tool for community radio nationally. This most recent study is a national rollout of that impact tool with the addition of a set of questions that measure actual times and periods of listening behaviour. Therefore, this report, 'Listening locally across the UK', provides the reader with a reliable view of national listening habits as well as further insights into the social impact of local community radio.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aims

To explore the listening habits of listeners to local community radio and the impact it has on their everyday lives

To map this impact to a matrix designed to address its social value

Objectives

To gather and analyse data on the frequency with which people listen to local community radio

To gather and analyse data on the days and times people listen to local community radio

To gather and analyse data on the length of periods of time people listen to local community radio

To gather and analyse data on the impact local community radio listening has on social isolation (the degree of connection to others in the local community) and engagement (the degree to which people are actively involved in their community)

To gather and analyse data on the impact local community radio listening has on social division (the extent to which it promotes better understanding of different groups within the local community)

To gather and analyse data on the impact local community radio listening has on employability (the extent to which it provides skilling opportunities)

To gather and analyse data on the impact local community radio listening has on awareness and usage of local services

To gather and analyse data on the impact local community radio listening has on personal resilience (the extent to which it makes people feel better able to cope with periods of stress or anxiety)

METHODOLOGY

Project design

The project was conducted in two phases – an online questionnaire and online focus groups. (See appendices for details of these.) The online questionnaire had four parts – initial demographic info, listening habits and patterns, feelings about what was gained by local listening, and experiences of the extent to which local community radio helped in periods of stress and anxiety. The questionnaire was designed to take no more than 15 minutes to complete. It was both disseminated, and the results analysed, via secure online University of Northampton technology.

Once the questionnaire phase was complete, two focus groups were conducted, using those questionnaire respondents who had indicated they would be happy to be interviewed. Focus groups were therefore sourced from the pool of questionnaire respondents. The focus groups picked up the emergent themes of awareness and trust in information, connectedness, understanding, and resilience. Through them, much deeper contextual information around listeners' responses and experiences of the role listening to local community radio plays in their everyday lives was gained. Focus groups were carried out online, again via a secure University of Northampton platform, and were audio-only (i.e. camera facilities remained switched off for anonymity). Each focus group contained 4-5 participants and lasted around 45 minutes and all were recorded with the participants permission for the purposes of analysis only. Data was analysed using thematic content analysis in order to establish emerging common themes.

The project gained full ethical approval from the University of Northampton ethics committee, meaning it complies to recognized standards when it comes to aspects such as anonymity, data protection, and safeguarding.

Sample

The project found participants via on-air announcements and the social media pages of all the community radio stations involved in the project. A link to the online questionnaire was promoted via these means. As the number of listeners to local community radio is not known and the means of contacting listeners are limited, the project sought to involve *anyone* who listens to local community radio in its initial survey questionnaire phase, in order to gain as many responses as possible.

The questionnaire gained 5710 responses; 50% of those were from men and 47% were from women (the remainder identified as non-binary or preferred not to say).

The sample contained a wide age-range with 15% aged 18-25, 50% aged 26-35, 26% aged 36-45, 6% aged 46-55, 2% aged 56-65, and just under 1% aged 66+.

In terms of ethnic background, 38% of respondents identified as English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British. 5% were; 4% Gypsy or Irish Traveller. Those who identified as White or Black Caribbean made up 11% of the sample; White or Black African 10%. Asian or Asian British participants (Including Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, any other Asian background), were 30% of the sample. The 2% remainder were from 'any other ethnic group'.

Notably, 42% considered themselves to have a disability of some sort. The remaining 58% all said they did not consider themselves to have a disability. This is a high level of listeners with a disability compared to our previous study in which only 18% considered themselves to have a disability; it is an extremely high level of disabled listeners compared to the national disability figures in which only around one fifth of the UK population considers themselves to have a disability.ⁱ In our previous report we stated that a greater number of respondents would be required to test whether those who consider themselves to have a disability are more likely to listen to local community radio as opposed to other types of radio, but that it was 'worth noting that local community radio may have a particular appeal to those with a disability.' The figures from this latest study give much credence to the argument that local community radio is of particular interest and usefulness to disabled listeners.

42% of listeners considered themselves to have a disability of some sort. This gives much credence to the argument that local radio is of particular interest and usefulness to disabled listeners.

Educationally, the largest group of respondents had a Bachelor's degree as their highest qualification (33%). However, this was closely followed by those who stated GCSE's or equivalent were their highest qualification (32%). 29% stated A-Levels or equivalent as their highest qualification. 10% had no qualifications.

When it came to employment, manufacturing was the most common sector for respondents to work in (16%). This was 6 percentage points more than the next most common categories which were split very evenly across a wide range of professions.

Finally, in terms of income, the majority of respondents (55%) earned between 20k and 40k per annum (with 30% earning 30-40K per annum). More earned above 40K per annum (26%), compared to only 18% who earned below 20k.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Listening habits

In terms of listening habits, 42% of respondents said they listened to local community radio 'nearly everyday' in the average week. A sizeable group (25%) listened everyday. So a sizeable majority (67%) are listening to local community radio very frequently indeed and for many this means it is their go-to radio station.

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The typical length of listening time was between 30 minutes and 2 hours, with 39% saying they listened for 30 minutes to an hour, and 37% saying they typically listening from 1-2 hours. Far fewer listened for less than 30 minutes or for more than 2 hours and this reflects wider radio listening trends. (See figure 1 below.)

Across the week afternoons (1-4) and drive (4-7pm) were the most popular times to listen. However, this became more so the further the week progressed. For example, the listeners figures for breakfast (7-10) and mid mornings (10-1) were higher on Mondays than Fridays as they started to drop off by Wednesday, and the figures for drive climbed throughout the week. Afternoon and drive were also most popular at the weekend. This broadly reflects listening trends in local and national radio across the UK, except for the drop-off in breakfast listening (see 2021RAJAR report.ⁱⁱ).

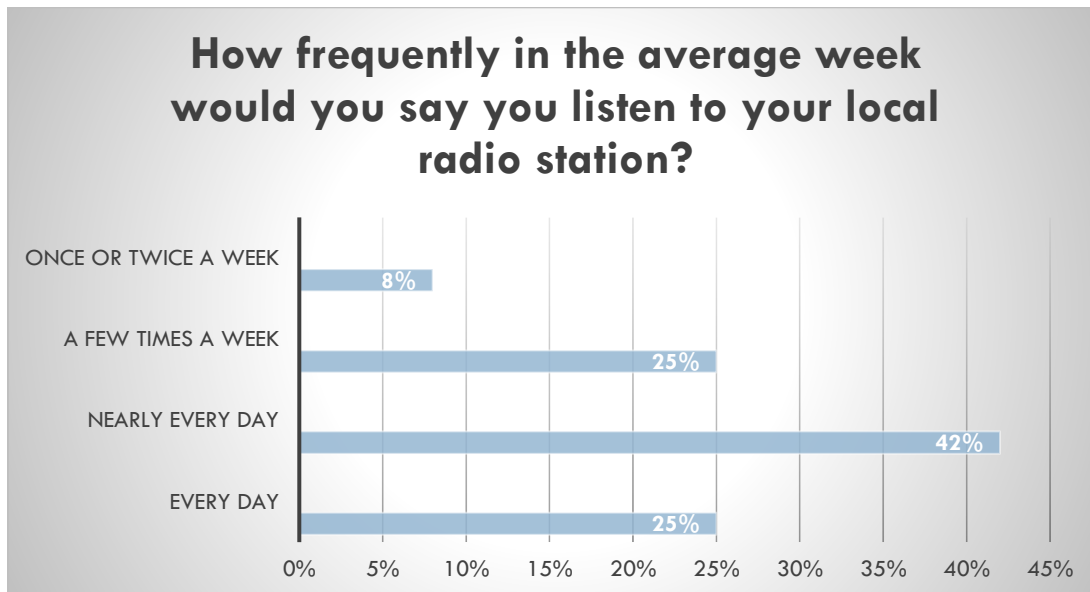


Figure 1: Listening time

Motivations for listening

Crucially, when it came to motivations for listening to local community radio, although music and presenters were important factors, finding out about local events was the main motivation, followed by feeling part of the local community. Considering these two community-led motivations together, a clear picture emerges as to the importance of local radio as part of a sense of knowing about and belonging within the local area. (See figure 2 below.)

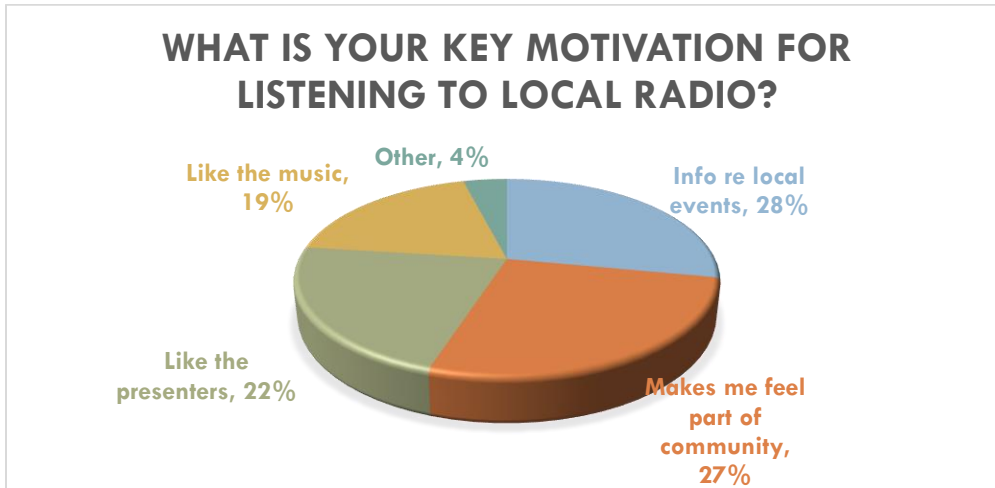


Figure 2: Motivating factors in listening to local radio

These motivations were backed up by comments in the focus groups such as 'I like it because ... it is pretty local, the news is local, the adverts are local, most of the references on it are local' or 'you might learn about something that's happening locally that you've not heard about' frequently being made. When it came to presenters comments tended to emphasize the style of presenting, e.g. 'The presenters are like real people, they talk about their lives and stuff, whereas when *****[commercial station] is on they don't seem real, they just seem like they're there for the money.'

A sense of connection

The importance to respondents of knowing what is going on locally was backed up by the responses to the first of the qualitative statements on the questionnaire - 'listening to local radio has made me feel more connected to my community'. 38% 'agreed' with this statement, and 13% 'strongly agreed'. This means the majority of those who listen to local community radio gain a sense of being connected to their local community through it. 27% felt 'neutral' about this, meaning the percentage who disagreed was very small. Comments in the focus groups added context to this statement:- 'It definitely makes me feel connected. We moved here 3 years ago during lockdown and I discovered the local station then and everything was locked down so we couldn't become part of this community, we didn't have friends here, so *****FM was really important for making us feel part of that community, it made such a difference, and ...it's pretty much the only radio station I listen to now because I want to feel that connectivity.. it really mattered to me.'

There is also evidence to suggest that this sense of connection leads to more actual social connections because 38% of respondents agreed, and 12% of respondents strongly agreed that local radio helped them 'make new friends' and/or 'meet new people'. Again, with 32% neutral on this statement, those disagreeing are a small percentage of the overall listeners. (See figure 3 below.) Again, this was backed up and given greater context by comments in the focus groups. The following shared anecdote was typical:- 'A member of our local cycling club and some of our ride leaders do rides for the local council and the local radio station always reports on those, so it's nice to know that what we're doing for the community is actually being recognised and

put back out there for the community .. the ride went from 2-3 people turning up for it and once it started to be advertised on the radio it started to get 50 or 60 people turning up for it.'

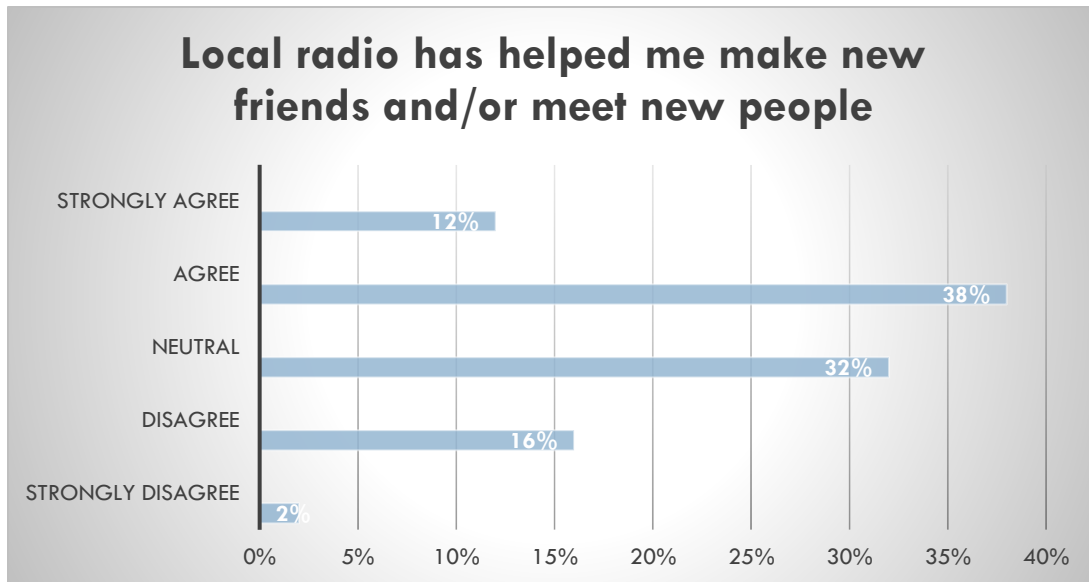


Figure 3: Local radio's role in creating social connections

This is in contrast to the previous study in which only 16% of respondents 'somewhat agreed' or 'totally agreed' with the statement 'listening to local radio has helped me make new friends/met new people' and 48% 'somewhat disagreed' or 'totally disagreed'. The report for the previous study suggested this might be due to the impact of lockdowns and COVID-19 restrictions and that it might reasonably be assumed that once local events were fully up and running, this greater desire to be involved, would result in actual involvement and a greater number of new friendships. It now seems clear that this is indeed what has happened.

The majority of those who listen to local radio gain a sense of being connected to their local community through it ... this sense of connection leads to more actual social connections.

In addition, 44% agreed that listening to local community radio made them more likely to get involved in things that were happening in their local community. 16% strongly agreed with this statement. So, the majority of respondents are socially active in their communities due to listening to local community radio.

Finally, the majority of respondents felt listening to local community radio improved their cultural understanding. 32% were neutral, 43% agreed, and 13% strongly agreed with the statement 'Listening to local radio has made me understand the perspectives of other people better than I did before'. Comments made in the focus groups really helped fill this out:- 'In the space of the last few weeks I have heard LGBTQ community groups, people with cancer, all sorts of people ... and the response that comes through straight

away is that people seem to accept everything and they feel for the particular person who's talking ... there is something about hearing someone's voice tell their story that is much more emotive ... people can be more sympathetic.'

Interestingly, this was an element of local community radio that many in the focus groups really enjoyed and felt could be made more of. For example, one participant commented:- 'There's absolutely an opportunity for local radio to connect people with the diversity of their local community ... I think there's more that could be done and as somebody who used to live in London where I was used to living and working in a much more diverse community than I do now ... I think community radio does really have a role to surface some of that and enable us to integrate and be an inclusive community.' Another participant said, '...the vast majority of people who live where I live ... there's not a lot of diversity... there's a small Asian community, a small Polish community, but ... the town is an old mining town so outsiders are often frowned upon... so I think that's something that our local radio could pick up on.' The following comment also showed how open local community radio listeners were to content from minorities within their community:- 'Maybe it's about providing a voice for the people who are local but who aren't as visible because there are fewer of them ... there's something in there about hearing those seldom-heard voices a bit more. It's not necessarily that community radio has got to suddenly lead in the field, it's just about not always going for the mainstream.'

Awareness, trust and action

41% agreed that listening to local community radio had made them more aware of services provided by, or activities carried out by, the local authority. 20% agreed strongly, meaning overall 61% agreed with this statement. A similar percentage were aware of local business, organisations, and charities due to information played out on local community radio – 84%. Trust of this information was also high, with 74% saying they were more likely to trust information about local business, organisations, and charities played out on local community radio as opposed to elsewhere. In addition, 74% were more likely to act upon such information as a result of hearing it specifically on local community radio, with 70% having engaged with local business, organisations, and charities (for example by buying from them, using their services, or donating to them) as a direct result of hearing about them on local community radio.

67% said they had actually gained employment or skills as a 'direct result of hearing about them on local community radio'.

When it came to employment and skills the picture was extremely positive. A huge 84% were aware of information about employment or skills training being played out on local community radio. 74% said that this had helped them personally gain information they needed about employment or skills opportunities. In addition, trust of this information was high – 74% saying they would trust information they heard about this on local community radio as opposed to elsewhere. Behaviour is also influenced in a very positive way, as 73% said they were actually more likely to act on employment and skills information heard on local community radio as opposed to that heard elsewhere. Finally, 67% said they had actually gained employment or skills as a 'direct result of hearing about them on local radio'.

Information about health and health services was similarly trusted and acted upon with 85% aware of such information being played out; 76% agreeing it had helped them personally; 74% saying they were more likely to trust it from local community radio than elsewhere; and 74% saying they were more likely to act upon it. Most crucially, 71% said their health had improved as a direct result of hearing about health services on their local community radio station. This is very strong evidence for the positive impact of local community radio on the health of listeners.

71% said their health had improved as a direct result of hearing about health services on their local community radio.

Comments in the focus groups very much backed this picture, with participants agreeing they would trust content heard on local community radio, and sometimes trust it more than that heard on national radio. For example, one participant commented, 'Yes 100%. If I hear something on a local radio station it relates to me because I think yes I know them, I know where they are, so the information that I am given I tend to believe ...my ears will prick up straight away if it's local, and it's from a trusted source and I will believe it rather than someone saying well the national statistics are x, y and z.' In addition, comments also backed the view that listeners are more likely to actually act on information given on local community radio too. For example, comments were made such as:- 'Absolutely, not only would I be more likely to believe it on local radio, I would be more likely to act on it... I wouldn't believe that a national radio station would have the level of detail to get that local. I would expect it to be too generic to be useful' and 'If you are sitting there struggling... the last thing you want to do is dial a national number and try to explain to someone where you are, whereas if you've been told look there's someone in Seaford, this is the number, it's familiar to you, the dialing code is familiar to you, and you're more likely to respond to that...'

Personal resilience

The final part of the questionnaire specifically focused on respondent's well-being and the role of local community radio listening in this. The results pointed strongly to a correlation between listening to local community radio and improved mental health and well-being. When asked on how many occasions they had felt highly stressed or anxious over the past year, 33% answered 'at least once a week', and 12% answered or 'most days'. However, 31% said 'less than once a month', with the remainder saying they felt highly stressed or anxious 'at least once a month' but less than one a week. This is a sizeable improvement in stress-levels compared to the previous study, and again, can perhaps be explained by the additional stresses and strains experienced due to the heightened presence of COVID-19.

When asked whether listening to local community radio helped them feel calmer the responses overwhelming suggested it did. (See figure 4 below.)

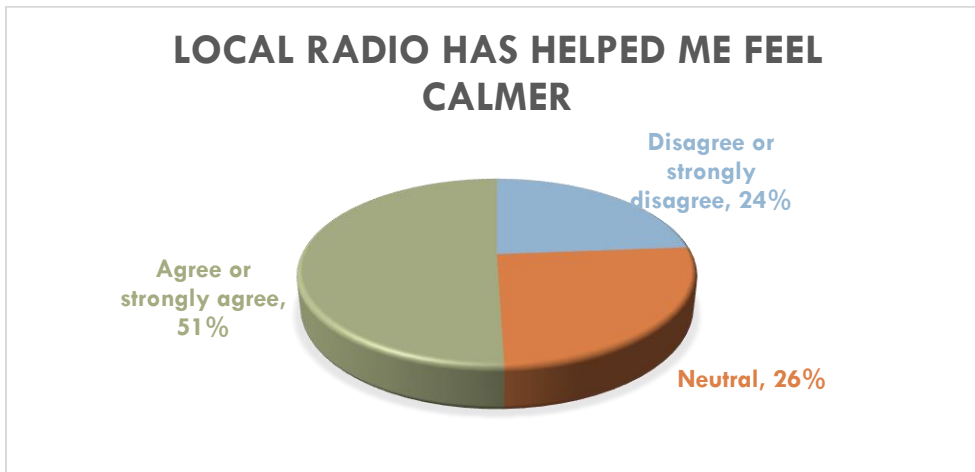


Figure 5: Extent to which respondents agree or disagree that listening to local community radio has helped them feel calmer

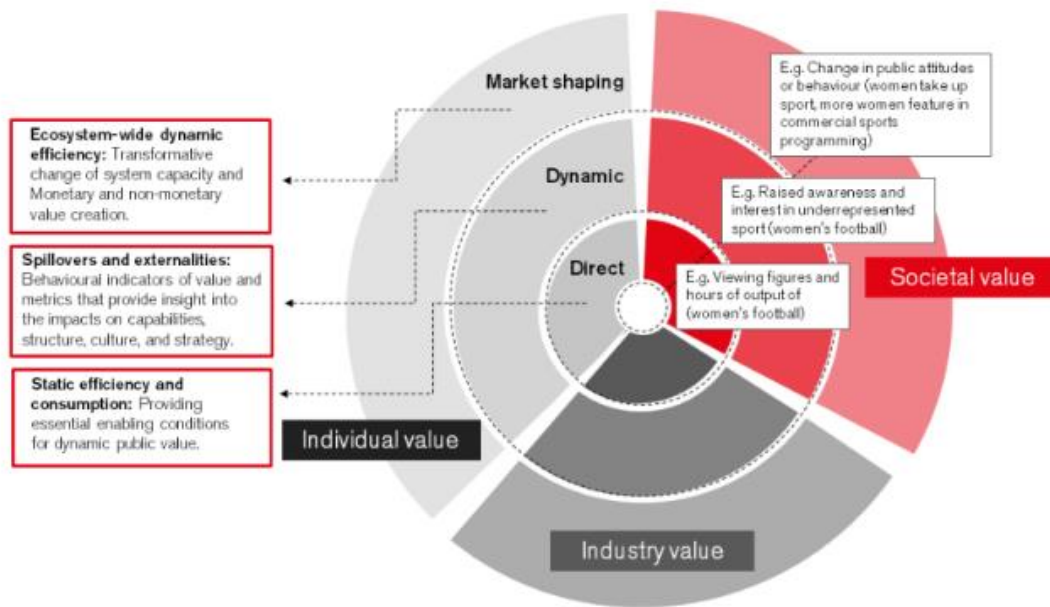
Crucially, listening to local community radio also meant people felt they could actively seek help. 41% agreed that 'listening to my local radio has helped me feel I can seek help'. 15% strongly agreed. Only 10% disagreed; 3% strongly disagreed. This means that overall, 51% of respondents feel local radio helped them feel calmer, and 56% of respondents felt it helped them actually seek help.

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THE SOCIAL VALUE OF IMPACT

In assessing the social value of local community radio this report draws upon a matrix established by UCL and the Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose (IIPP), and which has been used by the BBC since its publication in 2020. The matrix is shown below and can be found in the report entitled ‘Creating and measuring dynamic public value at the BBC’ which is available here: [Creating and measuring dynamic public value at the BBC | UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose - UCL – University College London](#)

Figure 5: the building blocks of dynamic public value creation



As the UCL report explains, the matrix is made up of building blocks – direct, dynamic, and market shaping – which illustrate different effects. The above illustration takes the societal value of women’s football coverage as the example. Starting from the centre, direct value metrics are simply the viewing figures and hours of coverage of women’s football; dynamic value indicators are where ‘spillovers’ influence capabilities and culture (such as increased public interest in minority sports); and market shaping value is where wider economic and social value can be seen (such as widespread change in public attitudes and behaviour) (see p.42 of UCL report).

The matrix is focused on the societal value segment of course as it is assessing social value. It can be used, as above, to look at the social value of a specific type of programming. It is also useful though, in the context of local community radio, to apply it to an entire radio station, or indeed to the local community radio sector as a whole. For example, using the data collected as part of this study and detailed in this report, it would be possible to say that the direct social value of local community radio is the listening figures, the hours of output, the specific segments of society that most listen. The dynamic value of local community radio would include the raised awareness of events and services and minorities groups and cultures in the local area, and the accompanying sense of place and identity. The market-shaping value would be the actual changes in attitudes and behaviours that occur due to the station output, including uptake of skills, employment and wellbeing

opportunities detailed in this report. There is a rich body of future work that can be done for individual local community stations and their communities which uses such a social value matrix to create a localized deep-dive insights report.

CONCLUSION

As the previous study showed, the impact of local community radio on the everyday lives of listeners is overwhelmingly positive. There is clear evidence that local community radio is uniquely able to combat social isolation in ways that other radio is not. There is also clear evidence that it fosters a greater sense of connection to others and to the community than other radio outputs could do. This report adds to that picture clear evidence that **listeners better understand others in their community as a result of local community radio, and actively meet new people and get involved in local activities as a result of it too.**

The previous study showed strong evidence that local community radio aids personal resilience and is absolutely key in enabling people to cope with periods of stress, anxiety, and depression. It grounds people and provides them with a sense of normality that less localized radio offerings cannot. This study backs that, but also shows that **listening to local community radio not only helps listeners feel calmer but helps them feel they can actively seek help. Local community radio is a powerful force in the mental (and often physical) well-being of listeners.**

This study has found that information of various types is more trusted on local community radio than elsewhere. As a result, listeners are more likely to act upon information heard on local community radio than that heard elsewhere and **large percentages of listeners have been directly helped by information heard on local community radio.** This is the case in the areas of employment and skills, and health – both of which are crucial to the positive functioning and resilience of local communities.

When mapping the data collected as part of this study onto an established social impact matrix, it is clear that **local community radio has a strong social impact** and that this could be further positively exploited.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Local community radio is clearly an excellent and trusted platform for listeners to engage with and act upon local employment and skills services. This could be further leveraged to help local employment rates.

Local community radio is also clearly an excellent and trusted platform for listeners to engage with and act upon local health information and services. Further leverage of this could have a significant impact on the health of local populations. This, combined with the strong evidence regarding local community radio's role in mental health and well-being, marks out local community radio as a unique force for good in this area.

Local community radio would benefit hugely from being able to leverage potential public and private sector funding fully by proving the extent and make-up of its listenership. This could be achieved by some kind of measurement service such as that provided to the commercial radio sector by RAJAR.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Participating community(local)radio stations

Vectis Radio
Bro Radio
NLive Radio
Switch Radio
Kennet Radio
Black Country Radio
Witney Radio
Calon FM
SFM
Seahaven FM
Erewash Sound
Cambridge 105 Radio
Mix 926
Marlow FM
Hot Radio
K107FM
Castledown FM

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

Thank you for choosing to complete this short questionnaire which will take about 15 minutes of your time. Your answers are really important to us and we are very grateful for your time.

All your responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Your data will be anonymized in line with GDPR (data protection) law, and stored on the University of Northampton secure, non-public platform.

By completing this questionnaire you are giving the researcher your informed consent and any information you provide will not be able to be withdrawn after completion. However, you have the right to withdraw from completing the questionnaire at any point and your data will be destroyed.

Are you happy to take part in this questionnaire? [opt-in button]

Section 1 - Demographic info

First of all we would like to know a few general details about you...

1. Which age category do you fall into?
2. What gender are you?
3. What income category do you fall into?
4. What is your maximum level of education?

5. Which of the following best represents the sector you work in?
6. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?
7. Which of the following ethnic groups would you say you are from?
8. What are the first 3 characters of your postcode?

Thanks. Now, we would like to know a little bit more about your listening habits...

Section 2 – Listening info

1. How frequently in the average week would you say you listen to your local radio station?
2. Which one?
3. Are there any days or times of the day in particular that you regularly listen to [partner radio station name]?
4. For how long do you tend to listen to [partner radio station name] each time you tune in?
5. What is your key motivation for listening? Multiple choice answers will be provided (including an open response for 'other').

That's really helpful – thank you. Next we want to understand what impact, if any, listening to local radio has on aspects of your life...

Section 3 – Connectedness and understanding

On a scale of 1 'totally disagree' to 5 'strongly agree' to what extent do you feel these statements are true for you... [Likert scale statements]

1. 'Listening to [partner radio station name] has made me feel more connected to my community.'
2. 'Listening to [partner radio station name] has helped me make new friends/meet new people.'
3. 'Listening to [partner radio station name] has made me understand the perspectives of other people better than I did before.'
4. 'Listening to [partner radio station name] has made me more likely to get involved in things happening in my local community.'
5. 'Listening to local radio has made me more aware of services provided by, or activities carried out by, the local council or local authority.'

Section 4 – Employment

1. 'I have been aware of employment or skills information being played out on local radio.'
2. 'I find/would find it useful to hear employment or skills information played out on local radio.'
3. Listening to local radio has helped me personally gain information about employment or skills opportunities.'
4. 'I am more likely to trust employment or skills information that I hear on local radio as opposed to elsewhere.'
5. 'I am more likely to act on employment and skills information that I hear on local radio as opposed to elsewhere.'

6. 'I have gained employment and/or skills opportunities as a direct result of hearing about them on local radio.'

Section 5 – Local businesses and organisations

1. 'I have been aware of local businesses/organisations/charities due to information being played out on local radio.'
2. 'I find/would find it useful to hear information about local businesses/organisations/ charities played out on local radio.'
3. Listening to local radio has helped me personally gain information about local businesses/organisations/charities.'
4. 'I am more likely to trust information about local businesses/organisations/charities that I hear on local radio as opposed to elsewhere.'
5. 'I am more likely to act on information about local businesses/organisations/charities that I hear on local radio as opposed to elsewhere.'
6. 'I have engaged with local businesses/organisations/charities (e.g. by buying from them, using their services, donating to them) as a direct result of hearing about them on local radio.'

Section 6 – Health

1. 'I have been aware of health and health services information being played out on local radio.'
2. 'I find/would find it useful to hear health and health services information played out on local radio.'
3. Listening to local radio has helped me personally gain information about health and health services.'
4. 'I am more likely to trust health and health services information that I hear on local radio as opposed to elsewhere.'
5. 'I am more likely to act on health and health services information that I hear on local radio as opposed to elsewhere.'
6. 'I have improved my health as a direct result of hearing about health services on local radio.'

Thanks very much. We're nearly done! We would just like to understand a bit more about what impact, if any, listening to community radio has on your ability to cope with stress or anxiety...

Section 7 – Coping with personal stress or anxiety

1. How many occasions on average would you say you have felt highly stressed or anxious over the past year? (Range of answers: most days, at least once a week, at least once a month, etc.)

Now, on a scale of 1 'totally disagree' to 5 'strongly agree' to what extent do you feel these statements are true for you... [Likert scale statements]

2. 'Listening to local radio has helped me feel calmer'.
3. 'Listening to local radio has been part of/would be part of making me feel I can seek help.'
4. Are there any other ways in which listening to local radio has helped with any stress you may have felt over the past year? [open-ended answer]

END OF SURVEY

Many thanks indeed for completing this questionnaire. To say thank you we would like to enter you into a prize draw to receive shopping vouchers. If you would like to be entered please be advised that we will need to ask you your full name and email address in order to send out the vouchers to you and that you will therefore be waiving some rights to anonymity. However, only your name and email address will be shared with partner stations; all your other personal data will remain confidential. Please indicate below whether or not you would like to be entered.

I would/would not like to be entered into the prize draw.

We would love to follow up your responses by speaking to you online on our secure platform. This would really help us get a fuller picture of how community radio has impacted you. Would you be happy to take part in a very informal interview/conversation? If so, please provide your email. We do not need to know your name in order to interview you, but please be aware that by providing your email you are waiving some rights to anonymity.

I would/would not be happy to take part in a follow up online interview.

Appendix 3: Interview guide

Hello. Tell me a bit about yourself.

First of all let's talk about the feeling of being 'connected' to other in your local community...

Would you say you feel connected to your community? Why/why not?

What helps/hinders a sense of connectedness to your community for you? Does community radio help (if not already mentioned)?

Would you like to feel more connected?

OK, now, can we talk about the extent to which you feel you understand other groups in your local community...

Would you describe your local community as divided or together or a bit of both? Why/what makes you say that/can you give an example?

What, if anything, has helped you personally understand other people better in your local community?

Do you think community radio can help people understand each other better? What does it already do and what could it do in the future to help with this?

Employment and skills – does your station have any info about job opportunities or training?

If yes, can you tell me your personal thoughts on that... has it been useful, IF you needed it would hearing about it on local radio mean you were more or less likely to trust it or act on it...?

What about health info – heard any? Likely to trust it? Act on it?

In general so you have faith in local radio as a place to find credible information? Out of 10, how high would you say your trust in the info given on local radio is?

Thanks, OK, we'll move on to talk about your sense of your own ability to cope with stress or anxiety – your emotional resilience...

Do you feel you are a resilient person on the whole or not?

What do you do in times of stress to help you cope?

Does radio listening play a part in helping you cope with stress? If so, what is it about listening that helps?

Many thanks indeed. Is there anything you'd like to add that I haven't asked you about?

Thanks. Goodbye.

ⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020>

ⁱⁱ RAJAR report 2021