

# Broadcast Community Media in the UK

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## Local TV and online video in the UK

Currently a small number of local TV services broadcasting on terrestrial television provide a range of programming to geographic areas smaller than that of regional TV. While some stations are run on a for-profit basis, others such as Northern Visions' NVTV service, broadcast in Belfast are run on a not-for-profit basis.

In addition to operating the local TV station, Northern Visions provides facilities for the creation of a community media and provides a range of film and media training workshops which are offered several times a year. Northern Visions has received funding from a range of sources, including the Department of Social Development, Belfast City Council and the European Union.

Other services include Channel M in Manchester, MATV which is mainly at the ethnic Asian community in Leicester and York TV.

In addition, the cable only Channel 7, is carried on the Virgin Media cable platform (Channel 879) in Immingham. The station is a community interest company (a not-for-profit social enterprise) which broadcasts to 140,000 homes - from its own production centre and studios - from 9am to 7pm, seven days a week. What's On, Events and other local info is broadcast in graphic form overnight.

Over the past 12-18 months a number of Online TV like services have launched. These services do not require licences or transmitters, making them more cost effective to run than traditional TV channels.

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In Cumbria, Lakes TV<sup>1</sup> launched on broadband July 29, featuring a broad mix of content about the Lakes and nearby towns such as Barrow and Penrith. Since then it has successfully managed the transition to more traditional TV outlets, broadcasting on SKY (Channel 203), Virgin Media (878) and Freeview (200 via Channel M).

At the other end of the country, a broadband channel highlighting all things Cornish was also launched. myCornwall.tv<sup>2</sup> aims “to capture the very best of all things Cornish on the internet, using video and social media.”<sup>3</sup> Supporters include The Eden Project, Jamie’s Oliver’s Fifteen Restaurant, and South West Tourism.

In recent months [Witney TV](#) has been thrust into the spotlight after [the Guardian picked up](#) on an [interview](#) the site had conducted with Jeremy Clarkson, during which the Top Gear presenter revealed that ‘Stig’ had been sacked. The Independent [reported](#) that Witney TV had 10,000 views in the first week, rising to 80,000, and staggering 3.5 million views in the week when the ‘Stig’ story broke.

[MONTV](#) has perhaps attracted less publicity, but last December it recorded its [millionth visitor](#). Launched in 2008, it features a weekly 15 minute news bulletin as well as a range of other content such as local [Sport](#), [Music](#), [Festivals](#) and [human interest](#) stories. [MonTV](#) is run (voluntarily) by two professional filmmakers, and supported by volunteers and students who undertake a City & Guilds Level 3 Diploma at the station. Their coursework is showcased in the [“Mon TV Academy”](#).

## Community radio and audio in the UK

Community radio stations are a new type of not-for-profit radio service and the only part of community media where its characteristics are enshrined in statute.<sup>4</sup>

2004’s Community Radio Order defined this media as being “for the good of members of the public, or of particular communities”, as well as it being not for profit, responsible for delivering social gain and that members of the community it is intended to serve are given opportunities to participate in the operation and management of the service. The Order also states that the “the person providing the service makes himself accountable to the community that the service is intended to serve.”

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Community radio stations are bound by the Ofcom News and Current Affairs Code and Programme Code, which includes rules on impartiality and accuracy of news, and its Advertising and Sponsorship Code.

The first community radio station launched in November 2005. To date Ofcom has licensed 228 stations over two rounds of licensing. At present 181 are broadcasting, 17 have either not launch or handed their licence back. The remainder are preparing to start broadcasting.

Ofcom estimates that 9.2 million adults (just over 11 million people) are able to receive a community radio station broadly aimed at them. This means that c.15% of the total UK population may be able to receive a community radio service aimed at them on FM or AM.

In addition to licenced community radio stations, other types of community radio/audio are also emerging; from prison radio<sup>5</sup> to local podcasts. The Hackney Podcast<sup>6</sup>, for example, won the Sony Radio Gold 2010 for the best internet radio programme. Launched in 2008, and available to download for free each month from their website, the winning podcast looked at water and how it fits into the lives of people in Hackney.



NOTES

- <http://www.lakestv.net/>
- <http://www.mycornwall.tv/>
- <http://www.mycornwall.tv/about-us>
- <http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/CommunityRadioSlv20.pdf>
- <http://www.prisonradioassociation.org/>
- <http://hackneypodcast.co.uk/>

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Full details can be found on the *Online neighbourhood networks study* can be found on the Networked Neighbourhoods website at [www.networkedneighbourhoods.com](http://www.networkedneighbourhoods.com)  
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