



**Comharchumann Cumarsaide
Pobal Bhaile Atha Cliath Thoir-Thuaidh Teo**

RCN: 20205453

Annual Report 2022

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Chairperson's Report

Dear Co-op members,

I welcome you all to our Annual General meeting on 13 June 2023.

Life has been very busy since our last gathering. Although the shadow of the pandemic still impacts some of our activities, many of the delayed projects are rapidly getting back on track. Thanks to all involved in working hard to complete contracted projects.

The major work undertaken in recent times is the design and installation of the new studio to replace the old Studio 1. A big thank you to the Near project team, who have made this happen! Although work is still underway in this regard, training is being rolled out and it is important that all presenters engage in this process. The changeover from the temporary Studio 1 (in studio 3) to the new facility is rapidly approaching, and we are anxious to return studio 3 to its prior use e.g. for pre-records, etc. The new studio has been a very large financial investment. While much of the funding comes from external sources, I would like to acknowledge the important financial contributions, which co-op members have made to this new facility.

Ensuring the smooth running of the co-op nowadays is a big job and I want to thank, on your behalf, your committee of management, which carries out an enormous amount of work in this regard. However, I wish to raise a word of caution. The administrative load being created by the ever increasing regulatory demands by the State is becoming onerous. While we agree that these regulations are necessary to ensure good practice, there is a need by the State, in my view, that small organisations like ourselves need support for this work to be done, as our resources are finite.

Our community media sector faces huge challenges in the future as new national media legislation is rolled out. Some of our co-op members are actively involved and, indeed are driving forces, in working to maximise benefits for our sector under the aegis of CRAOL (the national body for community radio).

The Near Media Co-op is successful because so many people are actively involved and contribute so much to make that happen. I would like to thank:

- the co-op members who are the backbone of the organisation
- the management and staff, who by their dedication and skill keeps us all on track
- the members who serve on the many Near committees and subcommittees
- the City of Dublin Education and Training Board
- Intreo for their support of the CE, Community Employment Scheme
- the funders, who made possible the installation of the new studio,
- Coimisiun na Meán (formerly the BAI, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland)
- and other organisations who have assisted us in so many ways.

A long serving member of staff, Elaine King, Near TV coordinator, has left the co-op this year and moved to a new position. I would like to acknowledge the contribution that Elaine has made during her time with Near and I wish her every success on her new role.

In conclusion, I believe that our co-op is in a healthy state and is being well managed and making every effort to comply with regulatory requirements. I also believe that we will cope with the changes that undoubtedly will come as a result of new media legislation. However, complacency is a big threat. Everyone in the co-op must continuously make small improvements in everything we do. In that way, we will never get stale and complacent.

Declan Cahill
Chairperson
Committee of Management

Secretary's Report

The Near Media Co-op Committee of Management saw a busy 2022 with monthly online meetings at which staff and volunteers were in attendance.

The Committee of Management has a responsibility as the governing body of Near Media Co-op to report on a regular basis to multiple statutory bodies. The Committee provided oversight and governance in respect of support provided by the Departments of Education, and INTREO at the Department of Social Protection as well as the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and The Charity Regulator.

Since registering with the Charity Regulator, the Committee of Management ensures compliance with the principles of the Charity Regulator's compliance record which is integral to ensuring that our organisation operates high standards of governance and administration.

NearFM and NearTV form the pillars of the Co-op and 2022 saw the membership of the organisation grow even further. The participative aspect of the organisation has been bolstered and the ethos of democratic ownership of the co-operative at the forefront of the work carried out.

The Risk Register of the organisation was adopted and is under ongoing review by the Committee of Management. This aims to identify potential setbacks within a project. This process aims to collectively identify, analyse, and solve risks before they become problems.

While all the above is of vital importance to the foundations of Near Media Co-op, this year was a very exciting year for the organisation with the securing of significant funding from Dublin City Council for studio refurbishment.

The Committee would like to thank the staff and shareholding members for their commitment to the community media over the past year and ensuring the continued growth and success of community broadcasting on the Northside of Dublin.

Sabrina Ryan
Secretary
Committee of Management

Treasurer's Report

Introduction

2022 showed positive improvements on our financial situation as we made a steady exit from COVID-19 restrictions. The ending of the employment wage subsidy scheme did show an increase in our costs. However, with the assistance and the support of our funding partners, we saw year-on-year stability and the provision of a stabilising source of income. At this time, I want to acknowledge the support given by our funding partners.

City of Dublin Education and Training Board

Department of Social Protection / INTREO (formerly FÁS)

Dublin City Council

The BAI Sound & Vision scheme, from the TV licence fee

Members of Near

All played a vital role in supporting Near Media Co-op during 2022 and continue to support our community media organisation.

Our audit shows that with careful management and control of funds the Co-op closed 2022 in a stable sustainable pattern.

Outlook

The forecast on Income shows a predicted return to growth and the organisation has embarked on a capital expenditure programme. The Co-op produces consistent audits which result from continued policies towards maximising access to grant income, whilst closely monitoring expenditure patterns.

Vincent Teeling

Treasurer

Committee of Management

Near FM

Diversity and inclusion training that was initiated with key staff and current affairs producers continued with a workshop being delivered by Elaine King and Ciaran Murray to the Committee of Management. This training was based on materials and experience compiled through the Ethical Media for Active Citizenship (EMAC) project.

A new Social Benefit application was lodged under the BAI's Sound and Vision fund in 2021 which included further initiatives for mainstreaming diversity within the organisation, as well as a review of the learning outcomes for our training, targeted training to specific groups in the community as well as programme development. This new application was successful and its implementation was initiated in September 2022.

Near Media Co-op's Community Employment project was found 100% compliant after Intreo's Development and Training and Financial Monitoring.

European projects:

SMART Trainers project concluded on 31/08/2021. Project report was accepted by the German Erasmus + National Agency. One of those involved in Austria, Walther Moser, is proposing to organise online training with some external trainers in the future.

The Learning Ethnical Media Online (LEMON) project (coordinated by Near Media Co-op) is underway after funding was approved by Léargas. The project will create an e-learning platform. Interim report was submitted on 30 th April, and it was approved by Leargas. Three projects meetings took place in 2022 in Germany (Halle), Austria (Vienna) and Spain (Seville). Last meeting is scheduled to take place in Ireland in February 2023, but due to the cost of hotel rooms a different location for the meeting is being considered, possibly Athlone.

Commissioned Programming and Podcast

Sound and Vision Radio Programming

Through the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland Sound and Vision scheme, Near FM continued to produce high quality radio series on an annual basis, collaborating with new and diverse range of community partners, in order to achieve high quality in tandem with our ethos.

Dublin Punk Untold

Nominated for Best History documentary at the Celtic Media Awards 2023, Dublin Punk Untold is a new three-part radio documentary charting the explosion of the punk music genre in the 1970s. It was one of the most exciting times in music, an era where parents quaked at the sound of rebellion, a movement that was all about rejecting what had gone before to embrace self-expression, revolution, the voice of youth, four chords and the truth. Produced by Neil Farrelly.

New Drama Hour

We continued to produce exciting and thought provoking audio drama written by women writers. The following plays were produced in 2022: Breathing Space by Dorothee Cotter, and Jammie Dodgers by Ciara Gillen. Sound design by Gavin Byrne.

75 Years on the Go

Near FM producer, Enda Roche, produced this documentary about the Donaghmede Estate Residents Association, and is a unique tale of courage, and of unstoppable aspirations of a community newly formed and a determination that still remains strong today.

The Hugh Lane Concert Series

In its fifth season, this captures the best in Irish and international based composers and musicians performing in front of a live audience at the Hugh Lane Gallery in Parnell Square. The series showcased contemporary, traditional, classical and jazz music concerts as part of the Sundays @ Noon concerts. To date we have produced and broadcast 30 concerts from the Hugh Lane. In 2022 we produced concert programmes with acclaimed artists Crash Ensemble, Liz Hilliard and The Few's Ensemble.

Growing up Between the Dustjackets

An eight-part series about coming-of-age novels and films and how they continue to inspire and motivate us today. Produced by Berni Dwan

NearCast

We continue to produce podcasts with The Irish Foster care Association and the Prevention and Early Intervention Network. And podcasts with Social Enterprise Dublin as well as Mid the Gap produced by Mary Oyediran. All NearCast podcasts are available on nearcast.ie, Spotify, Apple or wherever you get podcasts.

Near TV

Training

In 2022 Near TV continued to deliver training to our staff members and to other members of the Co-op. Through grant funding, we've acquired some great new equipment which has helped add to our production values and given us lots of opportunity for upskilling too. This has meant there's been a steep learning curve for everyone on the team, with the skills learned being put into practice filming our BAI, EU and Community projects. Over the year we've had training workshops in Camera Operation, Steadicam Operation, Lighting Techniques, Vision Mixing, Sound Recording and Drone Operation. We have also run post production training in Adobe Premiere and After Effects.

Along with technical training we also conducted workshops in other production skills such as directorial training, interviewing skills, pre production skills and Archiving material.

TV Production

Hugh Lane Concert Series - Post Production and Delivery

As mentioned in the previous report, after filming five concerts in the Hugh Lane and interviewing the musicians, we then edited this material into 5 x 52 minute programmes for transmission on DCTV. All five episodes are also available to watch on the Near TV website. Staff members were able to put into practice skills they learnt through the editing workshops. This project was funded through the BAI sound and vision Scheme.

Europe in My Backyard.

As part of the Europe in my Backyard project we filmed 5 videos highlighting projects in Ireland that were European funded. These included, the Dodder Greenway, Farm4More, The FarmPeat Project, the Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Project and Dwr Uisce. Directed by Adam Heapes and produced by PaulaWiseman, these videos allowed the NearTV Team to gain experience in new skills areas such as directing, filming with a drone and steadicam operation. Because the videos had both radio and video elements it also gave the wonderful opportunity for staff from both Near FM and Near TV to work together.

Our Northside Stories

Another BAI Sound and Vision funded project we are currently working on is Our Northside Stores. Due to Covid this project was put on hold so we were delighted to be able to return to it last year. We have finished filming all 4 episodes and are currently in the post production phase. In each episode we are introduced to 3 different people who bring us into the lives of someone they admire. They introduce the person explaining why they have chosen them and we follow them as they go to meet the person to interview them. This series has given great opportunity for practical production experience using a mix of Outside Broadcast Vision mixing and on location filming. It has also afforded our new staff members, Gavin Christian and Rosemary Quinn the opportunity to work on some very interesting shoots.

Other Community Productions

Along with these funded projects we have also been out in the community filming our usual Vox pops and other projects such as the Colaiste Dhulaigh Open day.

Outreach

Media and broadcast training course in Autumn 2022 with 12 participants of the general public. After completion of the course new members and programme makers joined the Near FM schedule. Paul Duffy Smyth: *Thisnightwillblowyourheadoff*, Damian Leneghan and Stephen White: *Here Hear*

Outside Broadcasts

Outside broadcasts are outreach events that continually allow us to showcase to the community in a vibrant and local way. This helps to attract people to training who normally may not engage with training in a formal manner. It also allows staff, CE participants and volunteers to work together in a different environment and to meet people in the different communities locally.

- Tuesday, 15th March 2022, Creative Brain Week Trinity College
- July 16th 2022, OB from Rose Festival St Anne's Park, live from 12.30-3.30pm
- Monday 3rd October, Darndale Golden Years event marking International Day of older persons from 11.00-1.00pm, part of Social Benefit Plan supported by the BAI

European Project Management: MILES (Media and Information Literacy- Evaluation and Strategies) Erasmus + partnership is an exchange of concepts, ideas and experiences for teaching Media & Information Literacy (MIL). Continuation from 2021 with a collection of good practice and resources bringing together partners with different traditions in media literacy, but also with different backgrounds such as community radio or television, training organization and participatory video producers.

Activities at transnational meetings include structured exchanges, local research and a teaching/learning event to engage partners, trainers, and trainees. The results of this process has been recorded in best practice folders in English, German, Spanish, Swedish, Hungarian and can be found at our lead partner [COMMIT's homepage](#).

Partners: Civilradio (Budapest/HU), Radio ARA / Graffiti (Luxembourg), Bradford Community Broadcasting (Bradford/UK), Radio Kärnan (Helsingborg/SE), Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE) (BE), NearFM (Dublin/IRL), Teleduca (Barcelona/ESP), COMMIT (Vienna/AT).

European Project Management: Europe in my backyard- Radio reporting on the European Cohesion policy is a radio campaign with a focus on organizations, projects and strategies for a more connected, competitive, greener, social and sustainable Ireland. Near FM broadcast 20 x 30min programmes weekly from February 10th 2022.

It also involved the creation of 5 short videos about current projects supported in the Leinster region and a webinar with key players and experts. This project was completed in November 2022 with a conference in Seville. It is a collaboration with [Radio Dreyeckland](#) in Baden Wurttemberg in Germany, [EMA](#) in Andalusia in Spain, [Radio Popolare](#) in Lombardy in Italy, [Radio Student](#) in central Slovenia, [Civil Radio](#) in central Hungary and us, Near FM, in Leinster.

Near FM is part of the Northside Community Forum - Steering Group committee engagement and support to the Northside Community Forum Meeting.

Continuous engagement with community members and organizations and subsequent linking in for radio interviews with existing programmes. We are continuously working on developing our partnerships in strategic and relevant areas and play an active role with important local, national and international networks. Some of our staff and some Near Media Co-op committee members continue to represent us on these bodies; the Northside Community Forum, Northside Partnership, the PPN; Craol, The BAI's Sustainability Network; the Community Radio Forum of Ireland; the Community Television Association; the Community Media Forum of Europe and Amarc, the International Association for Community Radio and Media Literacy Ireland. We are represented on the Aontas supported Community Education Network (CEN).

Online

Listen Again Site

In 2022 1,130 new pieces of audio have been uploaded to the website bringing us to a current total of 11,984 interviews and programmes available on the site.

There were almost 45,000 downloads in 2022.

The most downloaded in 2022:

- Dublin Punk Untold – episode 1 – There was nothing
- Ken Kilbride talks to Orla Doherty
- Asian Talents – Episode 12
- Beyond The Back Page – Author, Alex Duff.
- Angry Bird - Audio Drama

Livestream

Total Listener Minutes in 2022- 3479095 (Approximately 6½ years)

A transfer of 4.5 Terabytes of data. We logged 3809 unique listeners from 99 different countries.

Nearcast

Currently 16 podcasts with a combined total of 172 episodes are hosted on the site.

There have been 10,040 downloads.

Social Media

The co-op now operates three twitter accounts (Near FM, Near TV, Friends of Near), three Facebook accounts (Near FM, Near TV, Friends of Near), Instagram (nearfm90.3), LinkedIn (near media co-op), TikTok (nearfm903) and Mastodon (@nearfm@mastodon.ie)