

Major Update of Infosound's Studio

In October two of our trustees, Ann and David Parry, made the trip to Rottingdean Sussex to visit the studios of Infosound and see how our grant for new studio equipment is making a difference. It was both rewarding and exciting to experience at first-hand how this vital service to the visually impaired operates.



From a small studio, a wonderful menu of audio outputs helps to keep so many people informed and connected. We asked Infosound's managing editor Rowland Myers to tell us more about the charity and how the updated studio is transforming what they do. This is what Rowland had to say.

"Infosound is a small, independent charity that produces information, in audio, for the roughly two million blind and partially-sighted people in Great Britain, where someone starts to lose their sight every 15 minutes. This includes information about products that can help living with sight loss, news of support services, help with mobility, finance (including benefits) and independent living, leisure and social opportunities and the main issues of the day affecting vision-impaired people. With our studio in operation seven days a week and on most days of the year, it is not hard to appreciate just how much we rely on the technical equipment which enables us "to box way above our weight".

So, not before time, with some of our studio equipment being over 40 years old, we have been able to give our technical set-up something of a major make-over, thanks primarily to a very welcome grant from the Parry Family Charitable Foundation.

The equipment arrived in August, but with the studio almost constantly in use, a bit of logistical thinking was needed to make sure we could continue to record interviews, edit audio and maintain the distribution of our information service across all our delivery platforms, while replacing the old equipment with new. So we had to tread very carefully! In the end, there was no "down time", most of the wires went where they were supposed to and normal service was maintained. The new studio sounds better than ever and is so much more reliable.



The equipment really does take a hammering, day-in, day-out, and malfunctions can be very disruptive, to say the least. So it's great not having to hold my breath every time I switch the kit on to see if it's all going to work. Our trustees and I are so pleased with the new kit and

very grateful for the grants that have made this possible.

The new equipment isn't only welcome because it is replacing some very old kit, but because it will also help Infosound to enable the first phase of realising an exciting new way we would like to bring news and information to blind and partially-sighted people in 2018.



Our service can currently be heard on any telephone (03000 111 555), on our web site (www.infosound.org.uk), on a specialist audio player and a modified tablet, supplied by British Wireless for the Blind Fund (www.blind.org.uk), as a podcast and on Social Media (@Infosound).

Infosound also makes much of its original audio material freely available to Britain's talking newspapers and magazines, not-for-profit radio and information services and anyone else producing audio for the benefit of blind and partially-sighted people."

Infosound have lots of exciting plans to broaden access and deliver new services and productions that will keep their offering relevant, fresh and with widespread appeal. We at the Foundation are already in discussion with them about a new grant to purchase the balance of new kit needed to make their studio a truly "state of the art" operation. We will keep you informed of how this all unfolds.

