

The Enthusiasm of a Local Volunteer for Dover Community Radio

—Peter Sherred—

Has anyone heard of Dover Community Radio (DCR)? Does anyone listen to DCR? Two pertinent questions that could be directed to Dover Society members. What exactly is DCR? Well, it is a local community radio station the operation of which is entirely determined by the commitment and dedication of passionate enthusiasts all of whom work voluntarily. It was founded in 2010. An initial meeting was held in the White Horse Public House in St. James Street, Dover and a steering group met several times over the following year or so at The Railway Club in River, now known as the Phoenix Social Club. When it finally emerged DCR mostly served as a "Podcasting" service on the Internet. DCR is a voluntarily run Community Interest Company (CIC). Those greatly involved with it are always having to seek funding simply to cover the expenses of the operation, currently costing in the region of £10,000 per annum to operate. DCR does receive occasional Local Authority and Government Grants, but they are never enough to maintain operation of the radio. As a result, the volunteers must sell advertising on-air simply to keep DCR alive. Perhaps DCR has been a little-known operation to many people in and around Dover, and that may be a reason why it has to struggle to survive.

Martin Turner joined DCR in 2011 and enjoyed pre-recording radio shows which were listened to via the DCR website. When Martin and his wife Linda's daughter, Kelly, was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer (DSRCT) he paused his radio activity in 2015 but rejoined DCR in 2018, a year or so after the tragic loss of Kelly whose death, caused by the cancer, occurred when she was just

seventeen years old. Those who walk the Marina Curve will see a memorial bench for Kelly as they walk from the landward side of the Curve on the pathway running alongside the Marina basin and not far behind the new building which houses the Marina operations centre. The bench is usually easily identified by bunches of flowers tied to its back and on its arms.

Martin has been a radio presenter since 1978 when he joined the Gateway Hospital Broadcasting Service (Dover's Buckland Hospital Radio) and where he served for 20 years. He has presented on Radio Boulogne Littoral (France), Atlanta Radio (SW 49m band), White Cliffs Sound (Dover), Shepway Sound (Folkestone), Coastline FM Dover (where he was also Station Administration Manager), Radio Seagull (Harlingen Netherland), European Klassik Rock, Radio Caroline (on Astra Analogue), Atlantis 87.7FM Tenerife, Hastings Rock Radio and he broadcasts regularly on DCR (104.9Fm). He



Martin Turner

has a good deal of experience of radio presentation under his belt.

DCR's main on-air studio is currently located in Leighton Road Dover. DCR's studio equipment generously came from the BBC World Service. Many of DCR's presenters operate their 'live' shows from home studios - Martin Turner's home studio is in Elms Vale. As mentioned earlier, Martin joined DCR in 2011.

After their daughter Kelly passed away in 2017 due to DSRCT Cancer, which offers no chemo possibilities or cure, Martin and Linda continue to campaign for funds, to help the Institute of Cancer Research work towards an effective chemotherapy or a cure for DSRCT Cancer. Donations to the cause may be made at www.justgiving.com/kellyturnerfoundation2017

When Kelly was diagnosed, Martin paused his radio activity in 2015 and retired from his 46 years of service with H M Customs (Border Force) due to illness. He was able to concentrate on providing rock shows for radio which he continues to do during his stint on Monday nights. Martin became the Advertising Manager for DCR around the time of DCR winning its FM Licence (on 104.9FM) towards the end of 2021. Martin finds the selling of advertising a very challenging proposition! DCR is always seeking voluntary help - can Society members help in this regard? More details at the end of this article. DCR attends many local events where its volunteers try to fund-raise.

Despite all the challenges confronting DCR it has been able to operate 24/7 365 days of the year on 104.9FM since May 2022. It is also on the Internet and has a new website - www.dcrfm.co.uk. DCR covers a significant local area from Sandwich to Dover on the coast and inland towards the Barham/Bridge areas where Radio "X" takes over on 104.9FM.

The scope of DCR is vast as it is also available worldwide on Wi-Fi Radios, Phone Apps and if Society members have Alexa, they simply have to ask Alexa for "Dover Community Radio".

DCR offers live shows from 07:00 each weekday morning and on afternoons and evenings throughout the week. Martin's live show is heard on Mondays 2100-0000. DCR endeavours to "reflect the sounds and voices of the White Cliffs Country." Importantly DCR can promote local events which The Dover Society should do well to remember. All that is required is to email event flyers to website@DCRFm.co.uk This channel of promotion is a useful tool for all local clubs, societies, and organisations. DCR is worthy of support as it promotes the people and town of Dover and its surrounds by offering local news, views and music. It deserves support from Dover and its inhabitants.

Opportunities to be involved with DCR include:

Help with administration, publicity, fundraising and supporting events and local activities including Live Outside Broadcasts, in addition to presenting shows.

If Society members have any knowledge of businesses who may wish to advertise on DCR, or make a voluntary contribution, they are encouraged to contact Martin Turner who has now been with local radio for many years and remains DCR's advertising manager. Advertising@DCRFm.co.uk If any Society member wishes to advertise on DCR (104.9FM) they can contact Martin by email at martin@dcrfm.co.uk As an alternative use Advertising@DCRFm.co.uk Martin can receive texts on 07761 775005.

One can also Join "Friends of DCR". www.DCRFm.co.uk Are any Dover Society members interested in presenting live radio shows? If so, make contact with DCR and also Martin.