

PINF and NewsNow team up to support ‘new era’ in local news

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The Public Interest News Foundation (<https://www.publicinterestnews.org.uk/>) (PINF) has announced a partnership with NewsNow (<https://www.newsnow.co.uk/about/>), the UK's independent news discovery platform, to support a ‘new era’ in local news.

At a time when many local papers have closed, consolidated or cut back their services, leaving a troubling deficit in local democracy, PINF and NewsNow are setting out to support communities in solving the problem for themselves in a pilot project that will be run in six locations around the UK's four nations.

Communities in the six locations will be supported to produce ‘Local News Plans’ for their area. The Local News Plans will set out a shared vision for the future of public interest news in each area, and will include commitments from stakeholders including local politicians, business leaders, civil society organisations, funders and people with lived experience of relevant issues.

Jonathan Heawood, Executive Director of PINF, said: “Local news in the UK is in a state of turmoil. Legacy newspaper publishers are under huge pressure, and emerging providers are struggling to compete for attention with social media. By working in six very different locations across the UK, we aim to support a new era in local news that truly serves communities.”

The project is being led for PINF by media consultant Sameer Padania, with local ‘stewards’ supporting the planning process in each area. The stewards will identify local stakeholders, and invite these stakeholders to a workshop to create a Local News Plan for their area.

PINF is hosting Local News Plan workshops this autumn in Bangor (Wales), Bristol, Folkestone, Glasgow, Manchester and Newry. The six resulting Plans will be hosted on a dedicated website, and lessons from the project will be shared with policymakers and philanthropists.

The first workshop will be held in Folkestone on Thursday 29 September 2022.

Struan Bartlett, CEO of NewsNow, said: “We are delighted to be working with PINF on this important project. We know a healthy society needs a healthy news diet, yet when it comes to local news it sometimes feels like we’re on starvation rations. Sustainably funded public interest journalism is vital for healthy local democracies. Rather than parachuting in money or solutions, we believe that by getting people on the ground to talk to each other, communities can work out for themselves what they want from local news and how best to incentivise and support local providers to deliver it.”

PINF and NewsNow expect an outcome of the project to be a Local News Plan template that can be replicated and adapted to other localities, building support for public interest news from local funders and philanthropists, investors, business communities and policymakers; and increasing the prospects for sustainability for public interest news providers across the UK.

NewsNow has provided the funding for the project.

To find out more, and to register your interest in a Local News Plan for your area, visit <https://www.publicinterestnews.org.uk/post/local-news-plans-a-project-of-pinf-with-newsnow>

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About the Public Interest News Foundation (PINF):

The Public Interest News Foundation (PINF) is a charity supporting public interest news organisations to tell the stories that matter. At PINF, we aim to bring out the value of public interest news of every kind. Through grants, leadership development and research, we unlock the potential of public interest news providers to strengthen our democracy.

The Public Interest News Foundation is a registered charity, no. 1191397, and a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales, no. 12320800.

www.publicinterestnews.org.uk (<https://www.publicinterestnews.org.uk/>)

@PINewsF (<https://twitter.com/PINewsF>)

About NewsNow:

NewsNow is a UK news organisation using technology to support and promote credible, independent and public interest journalism, since 1997. Its website NewsNow.co.uk is the UK's leading independent news discovery platform and a global top 50 news website.

www.newsnow.co.uk/about (<https://www.newsnow.co.uk/about>)