Local Media Survey

Conducted by: Yonder
Fieldwork: 22 February 2023 to 8 March 2023
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### Methodology

#### Background & Objectives
- This survey was designed to investigate how audiences use local media. Including:
  - The types of local news and information used / followed
  - The platforms and sources used for local news overall, and how often
  - The sources used for different types of local news
  - What audiences value about local news sources

#### Sample
- 2,660 online respondents, plus an additional 118 via telephone to cover non-internet/narrow users.

#### Data collection
- Online omnibus & telephone interviews
- Conducted by Yonder
- Fieldwork from 22 February to 8 March 2023

#### Data reporting
- Weighted to be nationally representative of the UK
- Significance testing applied at the 95% confidence level
Executive Summary

This piece of omnibus research was designed to investigate the usage of local news and media across the UK. Questions were designed to understand what types of local news and media people follow, what platforms they use for their local news and media and what specific sources they utilised on these platforms.

The intention with this survey was to understand the different types of sources people use for different types of local news and media and what sources are used for one type of news versus another.

Key findings:

• 92% of UK adults say they use local media. Local weather is the most popular type of information (70%) followed by local news and current affairs (65%).

• Online sources, such as social media, messaging apps and websites, are the most used sources of local news and information (89%).

• Overall, local groups on social media are the most popular (38%), followed by BBC regional news bulletins on TV (35%) and the BBC website or app (35%).

• TV is the most popular platform to receive news and information at the nation and county level, while at the city, town, neighbourhood and street level it is social media.
Use of different types of local news and information
Most UK adults say they use at least one form of local news or information. Local weather is the most popular type followed by local news and current affairs. On average, less sources are used for the more popular types of local news, while more are used for the less used types.

Use of different types of local news/information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Local News/Information</th>
<th>Mean Number of Sources Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NET: Any local news/information</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local weather information</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local news and current affairs</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local traffic and travel</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about local events</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government information</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about local neighbourhood/street</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local life and community stories</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local sport</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local campaigns</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentaries about your local area</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local phone-ins</td>
<td>2.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey (fieldwork conducted February/March 2023)

Question: Q1 Do you use or follow any of these types of local news and information? This could be on TV, radio, on social media or other websites or apps, or in local newspapers or magazines. / Q7 Looking at all the sources of local news and information you have just said that you use, which do you use for ...?

Base: All adults 16+: 2778
Of the nations, only those living in Northern Ireland show any significant difference compared to the UK total, using local weather information, local news and current affairs, local sport, local documentaries and local phone-ins more than other nations. This is consistent with findings from Barb (TV industry audience measurement) and RAJAR (radio industry audience measurement).

Use of/following different types of local news:

- Local weather information: 70% (UK), 76% (Scotland), 69% (Wales), 82% (Northern Ireland), 77% (England)
- Local news and current affairs: 65% (UK), 60% (Scotland), 67% (Wales), 81% (Northern Ireland), 61% (England)
- Local sport: 64% (UK), 50% (Scotland), 62% (Wales), 65% (Northern Ireland), 56% (England)
- Documentaries about your local area: 51% (UK), 45% (Scotland), 55% (Wales), 48% (Northern Ireland), 40% (England)
- Local phone-ins (e.g. about crime, education, health, or other local issues in your area): 33% (UK), 40% (Scotland), 35% (Wales), 47% (Northern Ireland), 32% (England)

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey (fieldwork conducted February/March 2023)

Question: Q1 Do you use or follow any of these types of local news and information? This could be on TV, radio, on social media or other websites or apps, or in local newspapers or magazines.

Base: All adults 16+ (2778), Scotland (309), Wales (307), Northern Ireland (303), England (1859)
Older adults are significantly more likely to use most types of local news and information compared to the UK total population.

Use of/following different types of local news by age group:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q1 Do you use or follow any of these types of local news and information? This could be on TV, radio, on social media or other websites or apps, or in local newspapers or magazines.

Base: All adults 16+ (2778), 16-24 (308), 25-34 (427), 35-44 (404), 45-54 (480), 55-64 (416), 65+ (623)
Social media, TV and word of mouth are the most prominent platforms for local news and information. 16–34-year-olds were significantly more likely to use online sources than 65⁺’s, while 65⁺’s were significantly more likely to use TV, radio and print sources.

Use of platforms for local news and information:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q2 Which of the following platforms do you use for local news and information nowadays? - i.e. in the last month or so?

Base: All respondents using local media (2548)
TV is the most popular platform to receive news and information at the nation and county level, while at the city, town, neighbourhood and street level it is social media.

Use of different platforms for different scales of news, amongst total sample:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q2b. Which of these types of local news and information do you get from the platforms you use?

Base: All adults 16+ (2778)
Social media is the most frequently used source for news at all levels amongst 16–24-year-olds. While among 65+s TV is the most popular at the national and county level, with print and online sources rising in prominence at the local level.

Use of different platforms for different scales of news, among 16-24 year olds:

Use of different platforms for different scales of news, among those aged 65 and over:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q2b. Which of these types of local news and information do you get from the platforms you use?

Base: 16-24 (308), 65+ (743)
Specific sources used for local news and information
On a more granular level looking at the different sources available on local news platforms, local groups on social media are the most popular, followed by BBC regional TV news bulletins and the BBC website or app.

Top 20 local news sources:

- Local groups or accounts on social media: 38%
- Regional news bulletins on BBC One: 35%
- BBC website or app: 35%
- Regional news bulletins on ITV/STV/UTV/ITV Wales: 28%
- Websites/apps of local or regional newspapers: 26%
- Search engines such as Google, Bing, etc: 26%
- NET: Any local commercial radio: 22%
- Hyperlocal messaging/apps (e.g. WhatsApp groups/Nextdoor): 20%
- Websites/apps of local or regional newspapers: 17%
- NET: BBC Local/Nation radio: 16%
- News aggregators: 15%
- A local free newspaper: 12%
- An email newsletter or email alert: 12%
- Other local news websites such as Birmingham Live, Edinburgh Live or Belfast Live: 11%
- Regional current affairs/politics programmes on BBC One: 11%
- A local paid newspaper: 11%
- A local free magazine: 10%
- Video-sharing platforms such as YouTube, Vimeo, etc.: 10%
- Regional politics current affairs/politics programmes on ITV/STV/UTV/ITV Wales: 9%
- Another website of TV and radio companies such as ITV/STV: 9%

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q3-6. Thinking specifically about the sources you use, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: All adults 16+ (2778)
Local groups on social media are the most popular online sources for local news and information, followed by the BBC website or app.

Online sources of local news and information:

- Local groups or accounts on social media: 38%
- BBC website or app: 35%
- Websites/ apps of local or regional newspapers: 26%
- Search engines such as Google, Bing, etc: 26%
- Hyperlocal messaging/apps (e.g. WhatsApp groups /Nextdoor): 20%
- Websites/ apps of local or regional news magazines: 17%
- News aggregators: 15%
- An email newsletter or email alert: 12%
- Other local news websites such as Birmingham Live: 11%
- Video-sharing platforms such as YouTube: 10%
- Another website of TV / radio companies such as ITV/ STV: 9%
- Podcasts: 3%
- Other local blogs: 3%
- Welsh language BBC website: 2%  

6% of those in Wales

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q3. Thinking specifically about online sources, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: All adults 16+ (2778)
News aggregators are more likely to be used by younger people, while email newsletters and hyperlocal messaging apps are more likely to be used by older people.

Use of online sources by age group, amongst users of online sources for local news and information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of News</th>
<th>16+</th>
<th>16-24</th>
<th>25-34</th>
<th>35-44</th>
<th>45-54</th>
<th>55-64</th>
<th>65+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local groups or accounts on social media</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBC website or app</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Websites/ apps of local or regional newspapers</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search engines such as Google, Bing, etc</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyperlocal messaging/apps (e.g. WhatsApp groups/Nextdoor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Websites/ apps of local or regional news magazines</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News aggregators</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An email newsletter or email alert</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other local news websites such as Birmingham Live</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video-sharing platforms such as YouTube</td>
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<tr>
<td>Another website of TV/radio companies such as ITV/STV</td>
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<td>Podcasts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other local blogs</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q3. Thinking specifically about online sources, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: Amongst users of online for local news: 16+ (2271), 16-24 (256), 25-34 (355), 35-44 (346), 45-54 (418), 55-64 (348), 65+ (548)
Both the BBC website/app and other local news websites are popular sources of local news and information in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Use of online sources by nation, amongst users of online sources for local news and information:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q3. Thinking specifically about online sources, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: Amongst users of online for local news: UK (2271), England (1502), Scotland (253), Wales (255), Northern Ireland (261)
Regional news bulletins on both the BBC and other services, such as ITV or STV, are popular television sources for local news and information.

TV sources of local news and information:

- Regional news bulletins on BBC One: 35%
- Regional news bulletins on ITV/STV/UTV/ITV Wales: 28%
- Regional current affairs/politics programmes on BBC One: 11%
- Regional politics current affairs/politics programmes on ITV/STV/UTV/ITV Wales: 9%
- Local TV channels such as London Live: 5%
- BBC Scotland TV channel: 1%

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q4. Thinking specifically about TV, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: All adults 16+ (2778)
Regional news bulletins on BBC One are more likely to be used by older people than younger as a source of local news and information. While other TV sources of local news and information are more even.

Use of TV sources by age group, amongst users of TV sources for local news and information:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q4. Thinking specifically about TV, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: Amongst users of TV for local news: 16+ (1365), 16-24 (80), 25-34 (134), 35-44 (171), 45-54 (248), 55-64 (258), 65+ (474)
Regional bulletins on BBC One are the most used TV source of local news and information in all nations. Regional politics programmes on STV/UTV are particularly popular in Scotland and Northern Ireland, compared to their England and Wales equivalents.

Use of TV sources by nation, amongst users of TV sources for local news and information:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q4. Thinking specifically about TV, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: Amongst users of TV for local news: UK (1365), England (863), Scotland (130), Wales (154), Northern Ireland (198)
Commercial stations are the most frequently used radio sources of local news and information, followed by BBC Local / Nations sources.

Radio sources of local news and information:

- NET: Any local commercial radio: 22%
- NET: BBC Local / Nation radio: 16%
- Any other BBC local radio for your region: 13%
- Heart station for your area: 8%
- Other local radio station that includes ads: 7%
- Capital Radio for your region: 6%
- Greatest Hits Radio for your region: 4%
- Smooth Radio for your region: 3%
- Nation Radio for your region: 3%
- Community radio station for your local area: 2%
- Gold Radio for your region: 2%
- Hits Radio for your region: 2%
- BBC Radio Scotland: 1%
- BBC Radio Ulster: 1%
- BBC Radio Wales: 1%

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q5. Thinking specifically about radio, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: All adults 16+ (2778)
Heart and Capital stations are used primarily by younger audiences as sources of local news and information.

Use of radio stations by age group, amongst those who listen to radio for local news and information:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q5. Thinking specifically about radio, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: Amongst radio listeners of local news: 16+ (887), 16-24 (65), 25-34 (113), 35-44 (117), 45-54 (156), 55-64 (147), 65+ (289)
Local BBC Radio is popular in all nations (BBC Local Radio for your region covers England, while BBC Nations Radio is used for other nations). Commercial stations such as Heart and Capital are also particularly popular in England and Wales.

Use of radio stations by nation, amongst those who listen to radio for local news and information:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q5. Thinking specifically about radio, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: Amongst radio listeners of local news: UK (887), England (550), Scotland (101), Wales (89), Northern Ireland (147)
Local newspapers, both free and paid, are more popular than local magazines for local news and information.

Print sources of local news and information amongst total sample:

- A local free newspaper: 12%
- A local paid newspaper: 11%
- A local free magazine: 10%
- A local paid magazine: 2%

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q6. Thinking specifically about newspapers and magazines, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays – i.e. which have you used in the last month or so for news?

Base: All adults 16+ (2778)
Newspapers and magazines are popular across all age groups among those who use print sources for local news and information.

Use of print sources by age group, amongst users of print sources for local news and information:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q6. Thinking specifically about newspapers and magazines, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays?

Base: Amongst users of print for local news: 16+ (757), 18-24 (49), 25-34 (69), 35-44 (91), 45-54 (122), 55-64 (112), 65+ (314)
Paid newspapers are more popular sources of local news and media in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland than England. Free magazines are significantly more popular in England than other nations.

Use of print sources by nation, amongst users of print sources for local news and information:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q6. Thinking specifically about newspapers and magazines, which of the following do you use for local news and information nowadays?

Base: Amongst users of print for local news: UK (757), England (507), Scotland (83), Wales (75), Northern Ireland (92)
Specific sources used for the five most popular types of local news and information
The BBC website / app and regional news bulletins on the BBC are the most used sources for local weather information. Regional news bulletins on ITV as well as online search engines are also popular sources.

Sources used for local weather information:

- **BBC website or app**: 24%
- **Regional news bulletins on BBC One**: 20%
- **Regional news bulletins on ITV/STV/UTV/ITV Wales**: 15%
- **Search engines such as Google, Bing, etc.**: 15%
- **None of these**: 15%
- **Websites/apps of local or regional newspapers**: 6%
- **Net: Local commercial radio**: 6%
- **Local groups or accounts on social media such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, etc.**: 4%
- **Net: BBC Local Nation Radio**: 4%
- **Websites/apps of local or regional news magazines**: 3%

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey - ‘None of these’ may encompass other sources not present on the list such as pre-loaded weather apps on their smartphones.

Question: Q7 Looking at all the sources of local news and information you have just said that you use, which do you use for ...?

Base: All using local media for local weather information (762)
BBC sources followed by other regional news bulletins and local groups on social media are most popular for local news and current affairs

Sources used for local news and current affairs:

- Regional news bulletins on BBC One: 27%
- BBC website or app: 22%
- Regional news bulletins on ITV/STV/UTV/ITV Wales: 20%
- Local groups or accounts on social media: 20%
- Search engines such as Google, Bing, etc.: 14%
- Websites/apps of local or regional newspapers: 14%
- Hyperlocal messaging/apps (e.g. WhatsApp groups/Nextdoor): 6%
- Websites or apps that bring together news from different news providers: 6%
- Other local news websites such as Birmingham Live, Edinburgh Live or Belfast Live: 6%
- A local free newspaper: 5%

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q7 Looking at all the sources of local news and information you have just said that you use, which do you use for …?

Base: All using local media for local news and current affairs (764)
Online services are prominent individual source of local traffic and travel information. Radio is popular overall but fragmented across services.

Sources used for local traffic & travel information:

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q7 Looking at all the sources of local news and information you have just said that you use, which do you use for ...?

Base: All using local media for local traffic and travel information (633)
Online sources are the most popular sources for information about local events, followed by print sources.

Sources used for information about local events & what’s on in your area:

- Local groups or accounts on social media: 43%
- Search engines such as Google, Bing, etc.: 14%
- Hyperlocal messaging/apps (e.g. WhatsApp groups /Nextdoor): 13%
- Websites/apps of local or regional newspapers: 10%
- A local free newspaper: 9%
- A local free magazine: 9%
- BBC website or app: 8%
- A local paid newspaper: 7%
- Regional news bulletins on BBC One: 7%
- An email newsletter or email alert: 7%

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey
Question: Q7 Looking at all the sources of local news and information you have just said that you use, which do you use for ...?
Base: All using local media for information about local events (638)
Overall, online sources are the most prominent for local government information, with local social media groups being the most popular news source for this.

Sources used for local government information (e.g. about local council updates):

- Local groups or accounts on social media: 28%
- BBC website or app: 16%
- Search engines such as Google, Bing, etc.: 16%
- Websites/apps of local or regional newspapers: 15%
- Regional news bulletins on BBC One: 14%
- Hyperlocal messaging/apps (e.g. WhatsApp groups/Nextdoor): 12%
- An email newsletter or email alert: 11%
- Regional news bulletins on ITV/STV/UTV/ITV Wales: 10%
- None of these: 7%
- A local free newspaper: 7%

Source: Ofcom Local Media Survey

Question: Q7 Looking at all the sources of local news and information you have just said that you use, which do you use for ...?

Base: All using local media for local government information (637)