

March 1 2017

NUJ Local News Matters Week (March 24-April 1) – Derry and North West Branch

Dear members,

NUJ have been running the Local News Matters campaign for the past few years and at delegate conference (DM 2016) the union agreed to hold a week of action that will champion local news as an essential component of society, democracy and citizenship.

Beginning on Friday 24 March and running until Saturday 1 April, the campaign plans include a series of events in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. There will be events, conferences and activities and NUJ members from all parts of the local media – newspapers, online, start-ups, radio, TV, photographers and communications – are getting involved.

NUJ wants to reach out to politicians, community groups, unions and many others who recognise the vital role of the local media.

The campaign is aimed at urging media companies and other decision-makers who can stop the cuts and increase investment in quality local journalism.

Derry and North West Branch NUJ is bringing a notice of motion to the councils in their area, to ask them to pass. In addition to this, the Branch has requested permission to send speakers to local councils to talk to them about the importance of local media.

We would also ask councillors to show their support for local media during Local News Matters Week, including tweeting their backing. Follow us on Twitter: @NUJofficial and #NUJ-LNM

The wider NUJ Local News Matters campaign calls include:

1. A short, sharp, national, parliamentary inquiry into the state of local news.
2. Local papers should be treated as community assets.
3. New rules to prevent local media outlets from closing overnight – they should be offered to potential new owners, including local cooperatives, with the time available to submit a bid for alternative media ownership in advance of any closure.
4. Action by government and employers to stem the relentless job cuts.
5. Increasing investment, from a range of sources, for quality local journalism.

More information is available on the NUJ campaign web page:
www.nuj.org.uk/campaigns/localnews-matters-week/

Kind regards

Bernie

Bernie Mullen

Branch Secretary

Derry and North West NUJ



NUJ Local News Matters Week – motion for Councils

This Council notes the campaign of the National Union of Journalists' Local News Matters Week. The campaign is aimed at highlighting the importance of properly resourced independent media to the functioning of democracy at local and regional levels.

This council recognises the importance of local media in reporting on local government and informing citizens about the work undertaken on their behalf by elected representatives and local authorities and agencies.

Local media also reflect the concerns of citizens and provide a platform for civic participation in dialogue on all aspects of community life.

Journalists engaged by media organisations: print, broadcasting and online, face many challenges, including increased workloads, reduced resources, and lower staffing levels.

This council urges media organisations to provide journalists with the level of resources necessary to ensure accurate and comprehensive coverage of local democracy.

This Council reaffirms its commitment to make information available to the local media and to providing appropriate facilities for journalists attending council meetings.

ENDS