

COULD WE KEEP SAINT FM ALIVE

Your Support Can Make the Difference

The imminent closure of Saint FM has deeply impacted the St Helena community, both locally and internationally. The station has been a crucial platform for connecting the St Helena diaspora, but despite the widespread sadness over its closure, little action has been taken to find a sustainable way to keep it running.

A small group of passionate dedicated individuals and I, have been working hard behind the scenes to find a solution. We believe that together, with a new business model, we can preserve this vital service. This might be our last chance to maintain a valuable source of freedom and connection for the St Helena community.

The Current Situation

There has been some confusion around Saint FM's closure. Although an immediate shutdown was announced, the station is still streaming due to the overwhelming public interest in keeping it alive. Earlier this week, I submitted a thought-out proposal to Vince Thompson, the current custodian of the station. We are negotiating terms to keep Saint FM operational at least through Christmas and New Year, until the end of January. We know this is a significant challenge, but our goal is to explore every possible solution.

We Need Your Help

To move forward, we need the support of the community. We have reached out to confirm the commitment of all voluntary presenters. If you have not yet been contacted and wish to help—whether as a presenter or in another capacity—please get in touch. We are also looking at the possibility of remote volunteers, so you don't have to be on the Island to participate and also you don't have to be a presenter to fulfil this role.

We are starting from scratch with no financial reserves, "We don't have a money pot we have no pot" so the support of the public and Saint FM listeners is crucial.

To give you a warm, fuzzy feeling in how we go forward here are some key points from our proposal that has been agreed to provide reassurance:

- **Operational Control:** The new, volunteer team will provide a reduced level of operational support throughout this period and it is essential that everyone understands that all helpers are purely voluntary. Therefore, the community can expect changes and variations from the previous service while only major decisions will involve the current owner.
- **Financial Management:** We will manage all revenue and cover all expenses for the next two months, focusing solely on keeping the station running with focus on future planning.
- **Dedicated Accounts:** We will set up a new bank account for this project to ensure clear and transparent financial management.
- **Funding Usage:** All new funds raised will go towards maintaining and enhancing the station's services, not settling existing debts.
- **Voluntary Presenters:** All presenters will be contributing on a voluntary basis.

What's Next?

We are waiting for more replies from voluntary presenters and gathering information on the monthly running costs. Once we have this, we will strategize on public funding and seek input on ideas for keeping the station alive. We also want to set realistic expectations—our operating model will initially change due to financial constraints. Only essential paid services will be considered, and even these will depend on available funding. Final technical checks for seamless operation and an element of automation will be implemented allowing enhancement of content to help manage the station output.

Join Us in This Effort

This temporary plan is just the beginning. We aim to secure funding, develop long-term strategies, and engage the community to ensure a seamless transition. By doing so, we hope to maintain Saint FM's vital role in connecting St Helena. During this time, we also aim to build a strong reputation and explore new revenue streams through advertising and listenership. Initially we will be launching a GoFundME appeal to help with funding the operation in the very short term.

With your support, we could be back sooner than expected. This is not just about keeping a radio station alive; it's about sustaining a vital part of our community. Together, we can create "Saint FM Community Radio," powered by the people and for the people. Let's keep Saint FM alive. Your involvement and support can make all the difference!

Contact us to get involved and share your ideas -

Johnny Clingham email johnny@saint.fm - We look forward to hearing from you.

