

# Statement from the chair of the Scott Trust

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Dame Liz Forgan, chair, Scott Trust**

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**Recession alone would have made this a challenging year for all our businesses but, in addition, systemic change sweeps ever faster through every aspect of media.**

Nowhere was that more evident than in the historic decision to sell GMG's regional media division, including the Manchester Evening News (MEN), to Trinity Mirror plc.

For most of the Guardian's existence, the MEN and the other North West papers have been its lifeline and its stalwart financial support. The decision to sever the relationship was a hard one for all concerned. We owe a huge debt to the journalists and other staff of the local and regional papers down the years and we wish them a prosperous future under their new owners. The Trust would particularly like to thank Paul Horrocks, who left the MEN after 12 years as editor and 30 with the paper.

Digital technology is changing not only newspaper production and distribution but also the very nature of journalism and the relationship between us and our readers. The Guardian, under the visionary leadership of Alan Rusbridger, has been in the vanguard of these developments and is pursuing a bold global ambition to take CP Scott's vision to lengths he could never have envisaged.

Where others have sought ways of erecting universal paywalls around their information, GNM has declared support for the concept of an open digital highway, embracing mutuality and collaboration as essential to the journalism of the 21st century. Much work remains to be done to devise new business models and revenue streams. But the spirit of the web is free and open and it chimes well with the traditions of our journalism.

Our newspapers too have seen change. The Observer has responded to new patterns of Sunday readership and refocused on its historic strengths in analysis, comment, culture and passionate and committed journalism. Its elegant redesign has been a significant milestone in John Mulholland's editorship.

Landmark pieces of investigative journalism in both the Observer and the Guardian, a stream of awards for our staff in every department, and the most authoritative writing on the banking crisis by Will Hutton and Larry Elliott have reminded us of the purpose for which the Scott Trust exists, whatever form its journalism takes, analogue or digital, linear or interactive, ink on paper or clicks on screen.

Hard times have forced some hard decisions and there will be more to come, but Trust ownership brings with it both financial support and the ability to take the long view. Both are of great value at a time of bewildering change as we live resolutely by the standards of our print journalism while investing all we can in digital innovation.

In company with other media businesses, GMG needs to ensure that its pay and reward framework enables it to attract and keep high quality talent at every level. The Trust has worked with the Board of GMG to ensure that our pay policies match with Scott Trust values of fairness and openness and as part of the wider remuneration review, further details of which can be found in the directors' remuneration report on page 34, has produced its own statement of the features it will continue to look for in the Board's remuneration decisions. They include fairness both in respect of internal and external criteria, proportionality, transparency and greater focus on the longer term.

The Scott Trust Foundation continues its charitable activities in the UK and abroad. Through the Guardian Foundation it is currently supporting journalism projects in Colombia, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Egypt, China, the Balkans and South Africa. In addition, the Scott Trust Foundation has funded ten UK post-graduate diversity bursary places for the academic year 2009. These have included six print/online journalism, two broadcast journalism and two software development bursaries. As part of the bursary programme each student is provided with several weeks' work experience across GMG and a number of trainees have been retained.

The education centre has continued to evolve at Kings Place and is working to full capacity hosting full-day workshops for schools, as well as Q&A journalist sessions for university students. The GNM archive has been used extensively and considerable work has been undertaken to improve catalogue descriptions in readiness for the launch of a new online catalogue. In addition, the Scott Trust Charitable Fund has supported a number of community projects. More information can be found on the Scott Trust website: [gmgplc.co.uk/scotttrust](http://gmgplc.co.uk/scotttrust).

As the year came to an end Carolyn McCall, chief executive of GMG and a Scott Trustee for four years, announced her resignation to take up a new post. No one better understood the values for which the Trust stands or better exemplified them in the 24 years for which she worked for the Company. We thank her for a tremendous contribution and wish her well for the future.



**Dame Liz Forgan DBE**  
Chair, Scott Trust