**Manx Radio Transcript -**

**Juan:**

Manifestos are always a bit tricky. With having a severe visual impairment, the availability of information is restricted. It doesn't work just handing out paper copies and saying, oh it's alright, you know it'll be grand. With scanning in even paper copies, if you take a photocopy of a leaflet, it doesn't work that way, because to me that's just a photograph. The best way to make manifestos accessible is to create them in something like Microsoft Word and then translate them into a PDF.

But it's so tricky sometimes that a lot of people, they don't have the technological know-how, they don't think it matters, and a lot of the trouble with disabilities is that they're invisible.

Unless you come across them, you don't think about them. I'm doing a lot of work with Manx Blind Welfare at the minute about making things accessible. Making these tactile voting strips available, we're going to be doing some work as well about making manifestos accessible, so that people know that this is something that they can do and Manx Blind Welfare can help them do it as well.

If a candidate were to turn up to Manx Blind Welfare and say I don't know how to make this accessible, Manx Blind Welfare can say that's not a problem. We can help you with that, we can show you how to do it. What would be really helpful to me as a blind person, is to be able to email each candidate and ask them for their manifesto, and just have them at the fingertips.

Because a lot of the world is digital nowadays, and a lot of the world, in paper form, is very inaccessible to people with visual impairments. So, it just means it could span all people. Also, one of the benefits of having it digitally available, is that it doesn’t just benefit people with the visual impairment, but people with dyslexia as well. And maybe people who might just be on the bus and they just want to scan over it quickly and not carry papers around with them.

**Beth:**

And have you got a program which would read it out to you, is that how it works?

**Juan**:

Yeah, so I've got a program called JAWS. It stands for job access with speech. Effectively, all it does is that it identifies text on the screen and converts it into sound. It sounds like Stephen Hawking, which is great. But that’s why it’s really important to make sure that the manifestos are in an accessible format as well, not just a photocopy of a piece of paper. If you can highlight the text on a PDF then it works, but if you can't highlight the text, it's just a picture and it doesn't work. This is the very basic rule of thumb.