

Transcription News for April 2026 from TP Transcription and University Transcriptions.

Specialist academic & business transcription and translation services for all languages, established in 2001, a B Corp company and 1% For the Planet member. Our company donates 10% of annual profits to charity and is a member of the Ten Percent Group of websites and companies. For details of our company please visit www.tptranscription.co.uk. We produce a monthly news round up of our research projects, charity donations and work.

Doodle Doo or Unclear?

One of our transcribers has recently had the experience of transcribing a recording where a number of 'unclears' were noted. She reported that the 'unclears' were due to a cockerel crowing, something we have not experienced before!

Although I guess the transcription could contain the written version of "c... a doodle doo" I am not sure this would have assisted the academic researcher conducting the interview! We come across all sorts of background noise on a daily basis with our work. It is one of the reasons TP Transcription is the premier UK academic & business transcribing company with over 20 years experience and 100 transcribers working on specialist transcription projects. Cockerels crowing is one of the more minor issues that we have to deal with.

Different Types of Background Noise

Over the years we have transcribed recordings made on trains, in cars, in busy warehouses or factories, offices, recordings of telephone calls where a recording has been made with the telephone in the pocket of the person making the recording, recordings where a phone or recording device has been hidden inside a bag in the room quite a distance away from the people speaking, recordings of call centres and call centre environments where there are incredibly loud and large numbers of people working in the background and many more.

Coffee Shops – the Nightmare

However we also spend a lot of time transcribing recordings that have been made by academic researchers in busy cafés or coffee shops where the background noise can be incredibly high. We have blogged about this before because very few people realise the level of background noise in decibels (dB) that exists in a café or coffee shop. I think that academic researchers in particular think that going into one to make a recording will result in a nice quiet and clear recording. Nothing could be further from the truth and the noise in the background in most coffee shops is astonishing.

Ikea Microwave

One of the most difficult recordings we have ever completed was made in the IKEA restaurant next to the baby food microwave. The pinging and whirring throughout the recording were something else! The sound that a cockerel makes is hardly anything to worry about compared with a coffee shop environment. The cockerel may drown out a bit of sound here and there, but it is not likely to be a lot. Most cockerels will crow for about 5 seconds at a time. However the frequency level of the cockerel is much higher than human voices, so it is very easy for us to filter it out when transcribing the recording.

I am not quite sure what AI would make of a cockerel crowing, but it may produce some interesting results.. we might try it out to see what the result is!

Old MacDonald Had a Farm? – No Problem!

If you are planning to record an interview with Mr or Mrs MacDonald on their farm – no problem! If you end up with recordings of cockerels crowing in the background, or cows mooing, birds twittering or dogs barking please send them over. Our transcribers are always happy to assist and it will make a refreshing change to the incredibly loud noise of the background in coffee shops and cafés!

Cure Parkinson's, TP Transcription and the London Marathon



Jonathan Fagan, Founder & Director of TP Transcription Limited, recently ran the London Marathon, raising an additional £740 for Cure Parkinson's, one of our regularly supported charities; in the last 9 years we have donated over £30,000 to them in their quest to cure Parkinson's Disease. We hope one day they find a cure and remove the purpose of their existence.

Jonathan said "it was a real privilege to be able to run the Marathon and support Cure Parkinson's in this way. 10 years ago, in April 2016, my father died with Parkinson's Disease and I wanted to do something this year to remember him by. Although he would probably have thought running a marathon a bit extreme, it was nice to be able to do such an iconic race in his memory." Jonathan can just about walk down steps again and is looking forward to being able to jog again once his legs have stopped being so stiff!

Donation Time for The Ten Percent Foundation

Our nomination deadline has now passed and we are due to be making decisions on this year's donations in mid-May 2026. If you have nominated a charity in 2025 or 2026 and we donate to that charity, we will mention you to the charity and also publish a full list of those charities we are supporting. We tend to distribute donations in the region of £500-£2000 to each charity and we usually have around £20,000 to give away. We get more suggestions from academic staff at universities than we do from any clients in other sectors, which we are incredibly grateful for, and we like supporting ongoing projects, particularly those where our clients are involved. Cure Parkinson's (see our website) is a good example of this (various universities work with the charity on research in the area) and we hope to continue donating for some years to come.

Converting PDF to Word using OCR text recognition – is there any point?

We have recently undertaken a piece of work for a journalist who was converting old newspaper articles into word documents. She had managed to find the articles online but they were, essentially, photographs of newspaper pages rather than in any recognisable text.

Photographs as PDF

Our client had been able to print them out as PDF documents, but was struggling to edit or use any of the material, because it was essentially a photograph rather than specific text. She got in touch with us to ask if there was something we could do to help.

The Power of OCR (Optical Character Recognition)

We are very much aware of the power of OCR text recognition, and the way it can be used effectively to convert difficult images of text into editable documents. The OCR software processes a digital image by locating and recognizing characters, such as letters, numbers, and symbols. Advanced OCR software can export the formatting of the text as well as the layout of the text found on a page.

PDF to Word Conversion Service

We actually converted the PDF document for the journalist in question without charge to start with, so she could see the quality she would get if she did this herself. It took about 30 seconds

to do and we managed to get about 30-40% of the text straight into a word document, with the rest of it either appearing as gibberish or missed off altogether.

OCR = 30-40% Accuracy

OCR will struggle with photographed blocks of text if they are not crystal clear. This is the problem with any AI for either text or speech recognition. Whilst these services are very good at transcribing text and speech that is simple, straightforward and easy to recognise, there are no services available yet that will do anything that is more than just a little bit complicated. In the case of our client, we have ended up transcribing the entire documents using the old traditional method of copy typing, because the quality available using OCR was so poor. It was actually more cost effective for the client to have the whole thing copy typed than it was to sit down and go through it herself and correct.

Alternative for 100% Accuracy – Copy Typing

Copy typing is cheap, effective and gives you instant accurate copies of your work without needing to have to go through and amend large chunks of it. If you would like to use our copy typing service, please get in touch for a quote. Similarly, if you would like us to demonstrate OCR text recognition capabilities on any PDF document you have, please email us over your PDF or text image and we will send you back an OCR version of it. There is no charge for the service.

Recent Articles

- [Beat The Deadlines](#)
 - **This is just a quick reminder that if you have funding that needs spending before the end of the university financial year, we are always happy to invoice in advance for any transcription & translation work.**
- [AI & Multi Speaker Recordings](#)
- [The True Cost of Meetings](#)
- [A Guide to Apple Transcription for Voice Memo Recordings](#)
- [Surviving the ISO 27001 Remote Surveillance audit](#)
- [Anonymising Interviewees in Video Research Interviews: A Practical Guide](#)
- [Scottish accents](#) - our guide
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- [Google Meet transcription](#) - How to Get a Transcription from a Google Meet: A Comprehensive Guide.
- [Zoom Teams How to Improve the Quality of Zoom Transcriptions](#)
- [TP Transcription & University Transcriptions Nominated Charities for the Ten Percent Foundation in 2024](#)
- [Looking after the welfare of transcribers - a study](#)

Peaceful Shropshire Getaways

St Milburga Chapel in the Shropshire Hills is a cosy 4 person, Grade 2 listed holiday home in open countryside overlooking the Cleve Hills. Renovated in 2022, it is approximately 10 minutes' drive from Ludlow with its highly regarded restaurants, cafes and independent shops. The chapel is perfectly located for family holidays (Ironbridge & Church Stretton nearby), weekend breaks and walking holidays. 10% of profits from the chapel lettings are donated to the Ten Percent Foundation. Rated 4 star accommodation by Visit England. Website:

<https://www.stmilburgachapel.co.uk>



We hope you have enjoyed reading our monthly newsletter and look forward to hearing from you if we can assist further.

Kind regards

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Part of the Ten Percent Group of websites, donating 10% of annual profits to charity

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