BBC Northern Ireland is at the heart of cultural and community life. We want to secure its future, and to unlock its full potential – for everyone.

If you wish to find out more about the BBC’s year – including full financial statements and our performance against other public commitments – then please visit www.bbc.co.uk/annual report

Contents
01 Director’s introduction
02 Two minute summary
03 Service performance
11 Looking ahead
12 Northern Ireland management
13 Getting in Touch with the BBC

Front cover
Arts and sciences, working together.
An archive image of the radio transmitter at Lisnagarvey which brought BBC radio to a region-wide audience for the first time in 1936. A BBC Community Archive exhibition about the transmitter and local broadcasting is currently touring libraries across Northern Ireland.
©National Museums Northern Ireland
Collections Ulster Museum
Director’s introduction

“We work hard to make everything that we do the very best that it can be – it’s what BBC audiences deserve, and expect, from us…”

We had a busy, and in some ways remarkable, year in BBC Northern Ireland.

We achieved a long-held ambition in bringing BBC Sports Personality of the Year to Belfast. It was a spectacular event and a source of great pride for local BBC staff and audiences. We also enjoyed success with our network drama productions, including The Fall and Line of Duty. Commissions like this make a big contribution to the creative industries in Northern Ireland – developing skills and capabilities and helping to establish the basis on which long-term sustainability can be built.

Our local television portfolio continued to provide a diverse mix of programmes, many of them created by the local independent sector. And we played our part in BBC-wide initiatives including BBC Music Day and Proms in the Park. 2015 also marked BBC Radio Ulster’s 40th birthday and we celebrated its youthful middle-age in a series of special programmes, events and outside broadcasts. A particular highlight was BBC Radio Ulster’s School Choir of the Year (which we developed with support from the Arts Council). It generated lots of interest and was a great showcase for talents of our youngest music-makers.

We saw real and immediate benefits from our new strategic partnership with Northern Ireland Screen and worked collaboratively with a range of other organisations, developing events and creating multi-media resources. We will want to develop more linkages of this sort, exploring areas of mutual interest and adding public value (and benefit) to our work for BBC audiences at home and around the UK.

We made a big investment in our BBC Newsline studio, making use of the latest broadcast technology, and we provided our most ambitious-ever coverage of the Westminster and Assembly elections. BBC journalists were also to the fore in exploring and explaining the big issues affecting health, education and the economy. And we continued to invest in our investigative journalism with agenda-setting programmes for Spotlight and Panorama.

We also provided BBC audiences with an important forum for debate and reflected their deep interest in community heritage and diversity, including the 2016 centenaries. Our work in this area included some really innovative educational resources and a range of output across radio, television and online.

The next 12 months will be a period of significant change for the BBC. The new Charter settlement will take effect on 01 January, 2017 and will involve new governance and accountability arrangements. Our commitment is to ensuring that audience needs remain at the heart of everything that we do - harnessing the insights that are available from research, feedback and our daily interaction with different organisations and individual licence payers.

Some financial challenges lie ahead. We will want to minimise their effect on local BBC services and to maintain the gains that we have made with network production and portrayal. A re-prioritisation of effort and resource may be required; and we will need to make progress in addressing our property and infrastructural requirements.

Our audiences expect, and deserve, the best from the BBC and that’s what we want to provide for them into the future.

We have been grateful to Dr Aideen McGinley as the BBC’s outgoing National Trustee for Northern Ireland and the members of the local Audience Council for their challenge, advice and support.

Our accountability to, and relationship with, BBC audiences is something that we take extremely seriously. We will do everything that we can to make it even better in the next Charter period.

Peter Johnston
Director, BBC Northern Ireland
Two minute summary

We seek to provide something of value for everyone in the community through a range of programmes and services which inform and stimulate debate, celebrate and support cultural and sporting life, and reflect local interests and experiences for audiences within Northern Ireland and across the UK.

- BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle remains one of the top performing local radio stations in the UK with over half a million listeners each week. It accounts for over one fifth of all listened radio hours in Northern Ireland. And for half of all BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle listeners, it is the only BBC station they tune in to.
- Ofcom’s independent 2015 review of news consumption across the UK confirmed that local audiences have a strong interest in news. BBC NI news services have particularly high levels of consumption and approval. In an average week, more than half of the Northern Ireland population watch our television news (BBC Newsline); and over 400,000 adults listen to our BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle news programmes.
- Locally produced programmes, which are broadcast when we opt from the network schedules, can make a significant difference to channel share, adding around 3% on average to local consumption of BBC One and BBC Two in 2015/16.
- BBC Northern Ireland programmes regularly attract some of the largest television audiences. Live coverage of local sporting fixtures plays a big role in the performance and appeal of BBC Two NI. Our coverage of the Northern Ireland vs Wales match in March 2016 and the Ulster rugby team’s match with Leinster in November 2015 secured two of the channel’s biggest audiences of the year.
- Including indirect costs, we invested £53.3 million in local BBC programmes and services and £20.1 million on network output in 2015/16.
- 34% of locally commissioned BBC television programmes were made by the independent sector – with a value of almost £5.43 million in 2015/16.
Service performance

Television, radio and online – bringing the stories of local people to audiences at home and across the UK.

BBC Northern Ireland Television

We want our local television services to reflect community life in all of its diversity. It’s a big and sometimes challenging task, but also the reason why we exist. Encouragingly, over the last 12 months local BBC programmes have retained their breadth and popular appeal and we have made real progress in developing our presence on the BBC’s UK-wide networks.

Our cameras have taken audiences to places and events across the region (and beyond) and we’ve continued to provide them with unparalleled access to news, information, analysis and debate. Some of this work has been underpinned by partnerships and the local independent production sector. All of it has been driven by a commitment to quality and putting audiences first.

Local programmes are intended to complement and enhance the BBC’s network schedules. Our ambition is to reach as many people as possible, providing them with content that is relevant to their lives. This requires constant change and innovation - trying new formats and ideas and different scheduling options. It also demands close attention to the insights that are available from audience feedback and research.

We brought big spectacle to the small screen with BBC Sports Personality of the Year from Belfast in December 2015. This sell-out event was one of the most ambitious projects that we’ve ever undertaken in Northern Ireland. It celebrated sporting excellence, including some of our home-grown talent, and delivered a large (and appreciative) audience across the UK. We were also at the heart of Tall Ships’ festivities, with outside broadcasts, BBC interactive events and a special edition of The One Show – again on network television. And BBC Proms in the Park continued to work its own special brand of audience magic, generating over 75,000 ticket requests for a free outdoor concert involving the Ulster Orchestra and guests at Titanic Belfast.

BBC news teams brought us coverage of the Westminster and Assembly elections and in-depth analysis of developments at Stormont, including leadership changes and the formation of a new Executive. We made effective use of our specialist and area-based correspondents and worked hard to cover the many different issues affecting people’s everyday lives – health, the economy, rural and social affairs.

We made a significant investment in our BBC Newsline studio (enhancing its look and functionality) and carried live reports from locations across Northern Ireland. We also featured themed series about important policy issues and the centenaries that are being marked in 2016. This reflects our commitment to ensuring that BBC journalism doesn’t just describe events, but that it provides context and explanation as well. We know that this is what audiences want and expect from us, and have been encouraged that they continue to watch our local news programmes in significant numbers.

BBC network drama: Line of Duty 3

An enigmatic genius: Basil Blackshaw
Local people and events should be an integral part of the BBC’s network news coverage. We have been working with colleagues to make this happen in a consistent way and to ensure that BBC news reports give proper acknowledgement to those areas where policies and administrative structures differ across the UK. We understand that news agendas are competitive and that airtime is limited, but have been pleased to play our part in bringing local voices and experiences to a network audience. Devolution has made these sorts of connections even more important in allowing people to engage with, and understand, the realities of a changing UK – administrative, political and economic.

Investigative journalism has been a defining part of the BBC’s work in Northern Ireland over several decades, and it remains as important as ever. Spotlight’s investigations continue to attract large audiences and critical acclaim – underscoring the value that licence payers attach to this type of programming. Spotlight’s remit has always extended beyond politics to include wider aspects of decision-making and public accountability. Some of the team’s investigations over the last year have included reports on NAMA, homelessness, the experiences of Syrian refugees and Arlene Foster’s first few weeks as First Minister. Our skills-base and expertise in current affairs was also evident in several Panorama programmes for BBC network television.

We reflected the significance of different centenary commemorations in 2016 with documentaries, news reports and multi-media initiatives. These included television news coverage of events in Dublin to mark the anniversary of the Easter Rising: The Enemy Files, Michael Portillo’s archive-based look at how what happened in 1916 was seen by government officials and the intelligence services at the time; Eoin MacNéill – Fear Dearmadta 1916, an Irish language documentary about Eoin MacNéill and his attempt to stop the Easter Rising; and Voices 16 – Rising, a landmark programme which provided a northern perspective on the people and politics of this period. The intersection between culture and politics in early twentieth century Ireland was the focus of Bob Geldof on W. B. Yeats (which was also shown on network television) and Faoi Gheall ag Éirinn which looked at the role played by three Ulster women in the republican movement.

We marked the centenary of the Battle of Jutland and followed work to restore its only surviving battleship in Saving HMS Caroline. And we followed preparations for the Somme centenary commemorations in July 2016. Our coverage of this event will include documentaries about the battle, some of the people involved and its impact on local communities. We will also have live news broadcasts of commemorative events at...
the Somme and feature reports about some new and forgotten stories of WW1. Many of these details will feature in next year’s Annual Review.

We showcased local musical talent in a special BBC Music Day programme from the former Crumlin Road Gaol in Belfast with performances by Sir James Galway, Michael McHale and others. Keepin’ er Country gave us a feel-good insight into country music’s appeal for many young people; music, personality and dance were also a feature of Jigs and Wigs: The Extreme World of Irish Dancing; and we celebrated Van Morrison’s 70th birthday and his remarkable musical career in Up On Cyprus Avenue, an exclusive broadcast of his east Belfast concert which enjoyed a repeat transmission on BBC Four.

Basil Blackshaw: An Edge of Society Man (which was broadcast shortly before his death) provided a moving and lyrical tribute to one of Ireland’s greatest painters. We also marked the death of Brian Friel, a playwright who had contributed so much to the BBC and the arts more generally. And we remembered the unique talents of Gerry Anderson in A City Dreaming, a poignant, semi-autobiographical film that was characterised by his trademark humour and word-craft. It was his last television project.

BBC drama commissions from Northern Ireland have enjoyed unprecedented growth and success. Line of Duty returned for a further series on BBC network television, delivering big audiences and reaction, and filming got underway for another series of The Fall. These programmes are amongst the most popular dramas that the BBC produces and they have provided an important stimulus to the creative sector. Their success has developed local skills and capabilities. It has also helped to secure other network commissions including a new peak-time drama set in the west of Northern Ireland, My Mother and Other Strangers (which will be shown in Autumn 2016) and We’re Doomed: The Dad’s Army Story which was filmed in Belfast and featured a cameo appearance by our own Broadcasting House!

A cinematic adaptation of David Park’s The Truth Commissioner provided another dramatic highlight of the year’s viewing on BBC television. Its exploration of Troubles’ legacies struck a deep chord with many viewers and dealt with issues which we continue to reflect in our news, current affairs and other output.

Sporting fixtures, achievements and personalities were featured across our schedules. We provided live coverage of the Irish Open at Royal County Down, GAA matches, Ulster Rugby, Northern Ireland soccer internationals and the Irish League Cup Final. Our cameras were also at the NW200, the Ulster Grand Prix and the Schools’ and MacRory Cup Finals on Saint Patrick’s Day. Horse racing made a return to local BBC screens in Down Royal Racing and we followed the fortunes of the Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland teams as they qualified for the European Championships 2016. Several documentary commissions gave us a revealing insight into the dedication on which all sporting success depends, including the much talked about True North: Crossmaglen – Field of Dreams. Sports news, results and developments were also reported throughout the year on BBC Newsline.

Our partnership with Northern Ireland Screen has brought many benefits. It has assisted the development of BBC network production activity in Northern Ireland, including the new BBC One series, Can’t Touch This and some ground-breaking commissions for CBeebies. This partnership also underpins our television commitments in Irish and Ulster-Scots. Output in this area included a further series of Brave New World, this time...
focussing on Ulster’s historic links with Canada; *Minding Our Language*, Tim McGarry’s playful, but informative, exploration of the influences that have shaped contemporary Ulster-Scots; Mary McAleese’s epic (and bilingual) re-assessment of Columbanus’ career and legacy in *Mary McAleese & an Chéad Eorpaich*; and *A Deadly Mission – Belfast to Congo*, which described the experiences of a missionary family over several generations.

Weather Watchers and *Walking the Line* harnessed local interest in our landscape and heritage and featured some stunning camera work; *True North* continued to provide fresh, and often unexpected, insights into everyday life with programmes about a local cattle mart, the transfer test and female body builders; *Nurses on the Frontline* captured the ‘Troubles’ experiences of some remarkable nursing staff; and we got a glimpse of story-rich museum artefacts in *Ireland’s Treasures Uncovered*.

Countryside communities, locations and concerns were the focus of a new early evening series, *Home Ground*; the experiences of children, social workers and families involved in fostering and adoption were explored in *Find Me A Family*; Stephen Nolan looked at how what we eat can affect how we feel and think in *Food on the Brain*; and he was also our guide in a moving and inspirational programme about Down’s Syndrome, *One Extra Chromosome*.

*Nolan Live* brought topical studio debate to our mid-week television schedule and included an ambitious joint initiative with RTÉ looking at attitudes to different social issues on both sides of the border. *Sunday Politics* and *The View* also allowed viewers to find out more about the big issues and debates in local politics. And all of this (and much more besides) was satirised in a returning series of *The Blame Game*.

### BBC Radio Ulster/ Foyle

BBC Radio Ulster is a broadcasting phenomenon. Its enduring reach and appeal are largely without precedent in BBC radio. It attracts large numbers of listeners from a broad demographic and provides them with a unique mix of music and speech that reflects local community diversity. That it continues to enjoy such success is never something that we take for granted. Just like our other services, BBC Radio Ulster is constantly changing; the familiar is always being enriched by new talent and ideas. And our listeners remain everywhere, and in everything, that we do. Their voices, stories and needs are at the heart of our work – just as they have been for generations.

BBC Radio Ulster celebrated its 40th birthday in 2015 with a range of initiatives and events. These included outside broadcasts from locations across Northern Ireland, including Omagh, Fermanagh and a weekend of programming from Londonderry coinciding with the City’s Hallowe’en festivities. There were also archive-based opportunities to reflect on the ways in which BBC radio has provided the soundtrack to all our lives, and how society and broadcasting have changed over the
decades. These themes were given the full show business treatment in a Gala Concert of music and reminiscence from the Ulster Hall. We also sought to nurture BBC Radio Ulster’s next generation of presenter talent in New Voices, a series of weekday evening programmes featuring different people and styles of music.

BBC Radio Ulster’s School Choir of the Year was inaugurated as one of the station’s birthday projects and became an instant success and a brand new radio tradition! It was developed with support from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Ulster Youth Choir and attracted a huge number of entries. The level of interest from schools and their standard of music-making has led to the competition being re-commissioned for a further year, allowing even more school choirs to showcase their skills on the BBC’s airwaves.

Hugo Duncan is the presenter who visitors can’t stop talking about when they meet him on our public tours of Broadcasting House, Belfast. He’s just as popular with listeners and at his busy, year-round, programme of outside broadcasts. These shows provide an important platform for country music artists and Hugo’s knowledge of their work and the country music scene brought an intimate feel to his series Country Legends, which featured interviews with a number of well-known performers. Absorbing conversation was also on offer in a returning series of With Bennett, which included an archive tribute to the late Sir Terry Wogan.

News and current affairs is a substantial, and important, part of BBC Radio Ulster’s daytime schedule. Good Morning Ulster, TalkBack and Evening Extra provided listeners with a mix of local, national and international news. They followed political developments at Stormont and explored issues affecting health, manufacturing and education. Listener interaction was a feature of all of these programmes and they also made use of new technology to take the BBC microphone to different places and communities.

The depth, breadth and connectivity of our journalism were evident in BBC Radio Ulster’s coverage of the Westminster and Assembly elections and the EU Referendum debate. This was also a period in which we introduced some new presenter voices and consolidated recent changes in our coverage of business and rural affairs. Wendy Austin brought an agenda-setting feel to her weekly programme, Inside Business, whilst Mark Devenport and guests continued to put political developments in context on Inside Politics.

BBC Radio Ulster features every conceivable type of music within its schedules. The station is home to the classical sounds and versatility of the Ulster Orchestra, folk, jazz, choral and sacred music. Its musical diversity is curated by a team of presenter experts and is complemented by special recordings and studio performances with the best local (and visiting) talent. It also provides a platform for amateur music-making in programmes including Strike Up the Band, Pipes and Drums and Sing Out. Their celebration of musical excellence and endeavour is a source of great radio entertainment and an affirmation of the role that music plays in community life.

Ralph Mclean was our impresario and guide for Happy Birthday Van, six days of special programming to mark Van Morrison’s 70th birthday. We also celebrated another local music legend in a concert recorded at a festival in Portglenone to mark Phil
Coulter’s first fifty years as a composer and performer. And the BBC’s Blackstaff Studio was the venue for a performance to mark the 40th anniversary of The Undertones – an event that combined music and conversation and attracted a capacity crowd.

BBC Radio Ulster’s consumer affairs programme, On Your Behalf reached a milestone birthday in 2015. It has been providing consumer advice and explaining welfare, legal and other issues for 20 years. Its award-winning investigations and no-nonsense approach have benefitted from an extended time-slot – one of several scheduling changes that we have introduced over recent years in response to listener demand and research. These sorts of changes demonstrate how radio adapts and responds to its audience – changing with them and their lives in a process that is constant and in many ways, routine.

Stories In Sound allowed us to showcase the documentary-making skills of local BBC staff and included programmes about the career of eminent scientist, Jocelyn Bell Burnell and the history of Irish whiskey. Our teams were also responsible for a range of commissions for BBC network radio, including a series to celebrate the W.B. Yeats’ anniversary, new essays and features by Ian Sansom and several documentaries presented by Marie-Louise Muir. They also produced a veritable sound library of readings and dramas for BBC Radio 3 and 4, including programmes featuring local writers and actors.

Your Place and Mine, which is now produced from our studios in BBC Radio Foyle, provides a captivating window on all that’s happening in communities across Northern Ireland. It remains one of the most distinctive programmes on BBC radio and its appeal owes much to the sense of authentic connection that it provides with community heritage and diversity. Community stories and connections are also a key ingredient of The John Toal Show with its blend of cookery, interviews and outside broadcasts from (sometimes) surprising locations.

Kim Lenaghan’s inquisitiveness and enthusiasm as a presenter acquired a whole new dimension with her series, The Foodie. Its celebration of all things culinary explored the making, marketing and consumption of food and coincided with growing interest in the role that the food industries play in the local economy.

Blas remains an established part of our Irish language output, providing up-to-date conversation and coverage about all that’s happening within Irish language communities. It is complemented by other programmes, including music and documentaries. We also continued to reflect Ulster-Scots events, activities and history in A Kist o Wurds. BBC commitments in this area were the focus of a strategic review which included an assessment of how we might create better linkages between Ulster-Scots on radio and television.

Some of our programme innovations during the year included Dawn Chorus, a collaboration with RTÉ and other European broadcasters to create a live soundscape of birdsong from across the continent; a special series of recordings made on location across Northern Ireland as part of The Listening Project, allowing us to eavesdrop on some intimate, and revealing conversations; Live from The Sunflower, brought new comedy talent to our airwaves, building on the success of established programme strands such as The Blame Game and A Perforated Ulster; and Love Letters from the Front, an epic 137-part series,
made use of letters discovered at the Linen Hall Library in Belfast between an English soldier and his Irish girlfriend.

*Sunday Sequence* provided listeners with lively debate about religion and ethics and we stepped inside church buildings across the region for *Morning Service*, including a special recording at Armagh cathedral coinciding with BBC Northern Ireland’s Christmas-time Appeal about the needs of older people.

BBC Radio Foyle maintained its mix of news, music and audience interaction programmes and we were delighted to secure its availability on DAB. The station’s presenters and production teams also played an increasing role in our region-wide output – reflecting our strategic commitment to, and investment in, BBC activities in North-West.

We know that BBC listeners value our coverage of local sport and we provided them with live commentary from motorcycle road racing fixtures, soccer, GAA and rugby matches. Listener reaction and analysis was a lively feature of *Saturday Sportsound* and *Summer Club* and we kept audiences updated on sports news and results on our radio bulletins.

Stephen Nolan is a presenter about whom almost everyone has an opinion – which is no mean achievement. His weekday morning programme continued to generate lots of audience reaction with its mix of big interviews and topical debate. It provided a platform for listeners’ concerns and included a detailed look at party manifestos ahead of the Assembly election. All of this reached an even wider audience through the Nolan team’s innovative use of social media.

**Digital, Community and Events**

Digital platforms and devices are now an established part of the way in which BBC audiences consume, and interact with, our output. Broadcast technology is fast-changing – creating new editorial opportunities and a few challenges as well. Our concern is to keep pace with these developments and to make their benefits widely accessible. Local teams have undertaken some pioneering work in this area, including *BBC Rewind*, which has helped to unlock our archive resources – with real benefits for programme-makers and BBC audiences.

Our online news services reached a growing audience and we were pleased with feedback about *BBC News NI Live*, which provided audiences with social media updates on stories and events, including links to local newspaper reports. We are continuing to develop our online news coverage at weekends (within the context of competing priorities and funding constraints) and are actively involved in other work to improve the look and functionality of the BBC’s website.

We developed a suite of online curriculum and learning materials including short animations about the Belfast Blitz and resources linked to the Easter Rising and Somme centenaries – which were brought together in *Voices 16*. It included a dedicated website and a Twitter account with daily updates based on newspaper reports, letters and diary entries from 1916. We also created a new *Bitesize* module for the GCSE in Journalism and worked with 65 local schools on *BBC School Report*. Our work in this, and related areas, benefits from the guidance and feedback of the Education Broadcasting Council.
Its submission on Charter Review noted the BBC’s commitment to new/additional investment in resources to support the Northern Ireland curriculum and underscored the need for BBC network services to reflect the needs and diversity of local students.

We refreshed our Broadcast Appeal programme on BBC Northern Ireland television, giving it a new name and presenter (Vinny Hurrell) and doubling the number of programmes each year. We also launched a trawl for upcoming Appeal slots and received a record number of applications from local charities. All of this activity, including our annual Christmas-time Appeal with Age NI is overseen by our Appeals Advisory Committee. Its role also includes advice and support to BBC Children in Need, which issued new grants totaling £3.4 million to over 100 local organisations in 2015.

We provided BBC audiences with the opportunity to attend a diverse range of recordings and events, including at regional locations. These included several preview screenings of local and BBC network programmes; archive-based talks and screenings as part of European Heritage Open Days; the annual BBC Louis MacNeice Memorial Lecture (which was given by Glenn Patterson); and an interactive BBC Experience event as part of the Tall Ships festival which attracted almost 40,000 visitors. We were also able to welcome several hundred visitors to Broadcasting House, Belfast through our year-round programme of public tours.

Our long-established partnership with National Museums assisted our efforts open up the BBC’s archives. A highlight of the last year was the creation of a new touring exhibition about the Lisnagarvey transmitter. It brought BBC radio to a region-wide audience for the first time in 1936 and transformed local broadcasting. This exhibition is currently on display in local libraries and will be accompanied by a programme of events in autumn 2016.

BBC Northern Ireland’s partnership with NI Screen has given strategic direction, impetus and support to our network ambitions and the development of the creative industries more generally. It has made an important difference to the BBC’s minority language provision and the training opportunities that we can provide, including initiatives like Aim High. We will want to build on these (and other) successes in a new partnership arrangement for the upcoming Charter period and have been encouraged that this collaboration has been seen as a model for the BBC in other places.

Creative linkages and alliances also underpinned our Young Musicians’ Award (in association with the Arts Council for Northern Ireland) and our involvement in Northern Ireland Science Week. We were also able to work with Business in the Community in facilitating a BBC Careers Day for local students. And we were pleased to work with local organisations in making the BBC’s micro:bit resources available to schools across the region.

Our broadcast and financial support for the Ulster Orchestra helped to maintain its work and provided BBC audiences with a diverse programme of concerts and broadcast events. Securing the future of orchestral provision in Northern Ireland, building on past achievements and responding to new opportunities, is one of our immediate priorities. We look forward to playing our part in helping the Ulster Orchestra to celebrate its 50th birthday during 2016.
Everyday excellence will remain our objective in everything that we do – building on the past and looking always to the future.

2016/17 will be an important year for BBC Northern Ireland. It will mark the start of a new Charter period with associated changes to our governance and accountability arrangements. We will want to make sure that local audience needs continue to inform BBC decision-making and to find new, and more effective, ways of connecting with people in different places and sectors.

A key objective will be to secure, and further extend, some of the advances that have been made in BBC network production and portrayal - seeking to maximise their cultural and economic benefits and long-term sustainability. We welcome the Assembly and Executive’s interest in these matters and looking forward to keeping MLAs updated on our work through the new reporting arrangements agreed as part of the MOU between DCMS, the BBC and the Northern Ireland Executive.

We have further savings to make over the coming period, but also hope to secure some additional BBC investment to support local commissions and the development of our digital services. We are also continuing to review our technical and property needs and expect to finalise these plans within the next 12 months – allowing us to make other (necessary) decisions about spending and priorities. Value for money, editorial and operational needs will determine what happens next.

We will also want to explore the opportunities that may exist for joint working and collaboration with other organisations (across a range of sectors), focussing on areas of mutual interest and BBC audience benefit.

We will create a new partnership with Libraries NI, recognising the opportunities that exist for us to work together in promoting learning, digital and social inclusion initiatives. We will also work to develop our relationship with local universities, the Arts Council for Northern Ireland and National Museums. And we will renew our successful partnership with NI Screen.

Key priorities for 2016/17
- Create an open BBC, working with partners
- Deliver a more personal, more digital BBC
- Make the BBC simpler and even more creative
- Transform what we do for younger audiences
Northern Ireland management

Peter Johnston
Director BBC NI

Steve Carson
Head of BBC NI Productions

Mark Adair
Head of Corporate & Community Affairs

Jeremy Adams
Head of TV Current Affairs

Kathleen Carragher
Head of News & Current Affairs

Fergus Keeling
Head of Radio

Susan Lovell
Head of Television Commissioning

Mark Taylor
Chief Operating Officer

Kathy Martin
Head of Marketing, Communications & Audiences
Getting in Touch with the BBC

**BBC Annual Report and Accounts**
If you would like to find out more about the BBC’s UK-wide activities in 2015/16, including full financial statements and details of the BBC’s performance against other commitments, then please visit [bbc.co.uk/annual report](http://bbc.co.uk/annual report).

**Comments, Appreciations and Complaints**
If you have a comment, appreciation or complaint about BBC programmes and services, contact [bbc.co.uk/feedback](http://bbc.co.uk/feedback) or write to:

BBC Audience Services,  
PO Box 1922  
Darlington DL3 0UR

Comments and complaints telephone: 03700 100 222*  
General BBC queries telephone: 03700 100 123  
Textphone: 03700 100 212

(BBC Audience Service telephone lines are open 24 hours/day, seven days/week. Calls may be monitored for training purposes).

**General information about the BBC**
Information about frequently asked questions, including how to get advice on reception issues, and other aspects of the BBC’s work is available at [bbc.co.uk/helpandfeedback](http://bbc.co.uk/helpandfeedback).

**Tickets for BBC recordings, events and tours**
Information about how to get tickets for BBC recordings and events (including those taking place in Northern Ireland) is available at [bbc.co.uk/tickets](http://bbc.co.uk/tickets). This website also includes booking information for public tours of Broadcasting House, Belfast and how to take part in our programmes.

**BBC Northern Ireland**
We have two main BBC production bases in Northern Ireland – Broadcasting House, Belfast and BBC Radio Foyle in Londonderry. Our biggest studio facility (which is used for many BBC recordings, and events) is located in Blackstaff House on Great Victoria Street, Belfast.

Information about local BBC programmes, services and activities is available at: [bbc.co.uk/northernireland](http://bbc.co.uk/northernireland)

If you are calling to make a comment or request, or to take part in an on-air discussion on BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle, the contact number is: **03030 80 5555**

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