

B B C



WALES

AUDIENCE COUNCIL REVIEW 2009/10



FOREWORD BY THE NATIONAL TRUSTEE

THE BBC AUDIENCE COUNCILS ADVISE THE BBC TRUST ON HOW WELL THE BBC IS DELIVERING ITS PUBLIC PURPOSES AND SERVING LICENCE FEE PAYERS ACROSS THE UNITED KINGDOM. THE FOUR COUNCILS – SERVING WALES, NORTHERN IRELAND, ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND – ARE SUPPORTED BY THE TRUST TO PROVIDE AN INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF AUDIENCE EXPECTATIONS AND ISSUES.

The Audience Council Wales unstintingly helps to get the best out of the BBC for Wales, drawing on its consultations with audiences to advise the Trust. It remains vigilant about the coverage of Wales in BBC Network news and current affairs. It has now also identified the need for the BBC in its wider programming to portray Wales, as well as other parts of the United Kingdom, more fully and accurately.

Janet Lewis-Jones
National Trustee for Wales

‘THE AUDIENCE COUNCIL WALES UNSTINTINGLY HELPS TO GET THE BEST OUT OF THE BBC FOR WALES, DRAWING ON ITS CONSULTATIONS WITH AUDIENCES TO ADVISE THE TRUST.’

JANET LEWIS-JONES,
NATIONAL TRUSTEE FOR WALES

COVER IMAGE

Picture shows Island of Llanrhidian salt marsh, one of the places covered in the three BBC Two series of *Coast*.

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REPORT ON AUDIENCE COUNCIL ACTIVITY THROUGH THE YEAR

The BBC's Royal Charter gives the Audience Council the remit of advising the BBC Trust on the BBC's performance in promoting its Public Purposes and reporting to the Trust on the BBC's performance in Wales and advising on issues arising.

In order to fulfil this remit, during the year under review the Audience Council Wales met eleven times in various locations around Wales and received presentations from heads of programme genres and services. The Council also discussed strategy with senior BBC staff from Wales and beyond and discussed output on radio, television and online from BBC Cymru Wales and the Network. The Council considered Welsh and English language programmes, distribution issues – and in particular issues relating to TV and DAB reception in Wales, new media and interactive services, the BBC's plans for 2012 – including the London Olympic Games and HM The Queen's Golden Jubilee – the BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales at their new home – Hoddinott Hall in the Wales Millennium Centre – the BBC's News and Current Affairs output, Wales' national radio stations Radio Cymru and Radio Wales, the Digital Switchover Help Scheme, the BBC's plans for its Archive and the BBC's formal and informal education and learning provision in Wales and beyond.

The Council contributed to the BBC's Trust's consultations or service reviews on BBC Radio 2 and BBC 6 Music; Editorial Guidelines; Canvas; On-demand services; the Trust's submission to the consultation on sporting events which should be safeguarded as free to air broadcasts, the Trust's submission to the UK Government consultation on its *Digital Britain* proposals; and the Service Review of BBC One, Two and Four and BBC Red Button Services. The Council also approved the 2010/11 BBC programme plan for S4C and followed developments in the renegotiation of the Strategic Partnership between the BBC and S4C, the previous three-year Strategic Partnership agreement having expired at the end of 2009.

The Council hosted outreach events with the Wales National Pensioners' Forum in April, with Licence Fee payers in Rhosllannerchrugog in May, with the Alzheimer's Society in July, with opinion formers from across Wales in September, in Llandrindod and Llanbedrog in November and with pupils from Builth Wells High school in March. These events, and the comments received at them from members of the BBC's audiences, contributed significantly to the Council's submissions to the above consultations and to the Audience Priorities decided upon by the Council for 2010/11.

Some of the issues raised during these events included the concern felt by audiences that Wales' national radio stations, BBC Radio

“There was frustration that BBC Radio Wales was not available on FM in large parts of Wales and in particular the station's heartland in the south Wales valleys.”

Cymru and BBC Radio Wales, were not available on DAB in many areas of Wales. There was frustration too that BBC Radio Wales was not available on FM in large parts of Wales and in particular the station's heartland in the south Wales valleys. The availability and speed of broadband was also raised at several events, with some participants expressing concern that this seriously limited their access to BBC on-demand services such as the BBC iPlayer, *Democracy Live* and podcasts. The matter of the portrayal of Wales on Network radio and television was also raised on numerous occasions and the Council commissioned a team at the University of Glamorgan to conduct research on this issue of the impact of the portrayal of Wales on Network television. The Council hosted a seminar on this subject in March 2010 at the University of Glamorgan, with members of other Audience Councils and the BBC's Deputy Chairman attending, where the report *Portraying the Nation: Wales and Landmark Television* was published. As well as the portrayal of Wales, portrayal of dementia patients and the paucity of older women as television presenters were also issues considered by the Council. At several events, the challenge of BBC Radio Cymru as Wales' only national Welsh language station to be all things to all people was recognised, with some expressing the view that the time had come for an additional Welsh language BBC radio station to be established or

for a music/speech opt-out to be introduced. The Council was told by audiences that there had been significant improvement in Network News' coverage of the UK's nations since the BBC Trust's 2008 Impartiality Review of the coverage of the UK post-devolution, with stories now more often labelled with the nation of relevance. However, there remained a feeling that Network News still had some way to go in reflecting the richness in the contemporary situation where five governments now existed within the UK.

The Council's increasing development of its website during 2009/10 continued to pay dividends with further increases in visits to the site and the regular appearance of video content on the site proving an attraction. This focus will continue during the year ahead.

Dafydd Whittal was a stalwart of the Council between April 2006, when he took up his role, and his untimely death on New Year's Day 2010. His very significant contribution to the work and development of the Audience Council Wales was recognised in the warm tributes paid to him by members of the Councils and BBC Trust.

AUDIENCE COUNCIL WALES REPORT ON BBC PERFORMANCE IN WALES 2009/10

OVERVIEW

At its November 2009 and April 2010 meetings, the Audience Council Wales received presentations from Acting Director Wales and Director Wales outlining how they considered the output of BBC Cymru Wales – on radio, television and online – had contributed to fulfilling the BBC's Public Purposes. The Council also received presentations during the year from BBC Directors and senior managers from outside Wales on how the BBC as a whole was performing in Wales.

Using the BBC Trust's Reach Quality Impact and Value for Money (RQIV) framework for assessing performance the Council noted that during the past year the weekly reach of all BBC Television in Wales had remained broadly level at 85% with both BBC One and BBC Two performing more strongly in Wales than in the other nations of the UK in terms of reach. The Council was also encouraged that the reach of all television opt-outs in Wales had improved during 2009/10 from 31% during the previous year to 34% in the year under review. The Council was encouraged that half of all adults in Wales – 1.2 million viewers saw at least one edition of *Wales Today* each week with the reach of both BBC Radio Cymru and BBC Radio Wales staying broadly level and BBC Wales' English language websites showed further growth. The Council was encouraged that the BBC scored strongly on Quality, with

approval of the Corporation in Wales remaining above the UK average at 7.19 and Wales having the highest proportion of high approvers in the UK at 44% (source: BBC Trust Purpose Remit Survey June 2010 (PRS)). The Council was content that currently quality remained high for BBC Cymru Wales's output in Wales. However, information shared with it by BBC management at Network and local level regarding the continuing financial savings was causing concern. Audiences informed the Council that they feel that the level of English language TV programming produced by BBC Cymru Wales for audiences in Wales is low and savings could compound the situation or have an impact on quality. The Council was content that the BBC continued to have significant impact in Wales with the inclement weather in early 2010 demonstrating the importance of the BBC as a source of information when *Wales Today* had its highest ever audience of 600,000 and 86% of people in Wales agreed that they would miss the BBC if it wasn't there (source: PRS).

Based on discussion and engagement with audiences, and BBC management and Trust data, the Audience Council Wales concluded that the BBC's output during 2009/10 had fulfilled its public service broadcasting responsibilities in both Welsh and English on all platforms and had contributed significantly to fulfilling the BBC's Purposes.

AUDIENCE COUNCIL WALES REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST 2009/10 AUDIENCE PRIORITIES (THESE WERE SHARED PRIORITIES AGREED JOINTLY WITH THE OTHER AUDIENCE COUNCILS IN THE OTHER NATIONS OF THE UK).

I. Digital and other access issues

- The BBC Trust should ask the Executive to develop plans to work towards greater access for all BBC content on digital platforms. In particular Audience Councils attach importance to DAB radio across the UK; in Scotland for BBC ALBA on DTT; in Northern Ireland, DAB carriage for BBC Radio Foyle; and carriage for BBC Radio Cymru and BBC Radio Wales on DAB and FM across the whole of Wales.

Audience Council Wales remains deeply concerned that progress on this priority remains very slow with DAB Coverage of BBC Radio Wales and BBC Radio Cymru remaining stalled

“Audiences feel that the level of English language TV programming produced by BBC Cymru Wales for audiences in Wales is low and savings could compound the situation or have an impact on quality.”

at 42% despite Network BBC radio stations now being available across more than 80% of Wales, which is itself low.

2. Network commissioning outside London

- That the Trust should monitor the delivery, within the timescale which it set, of the proposals announced by BBC management arising from the TV Network Supply Review, that in monitoring the roll out of the plans it ensures that the BBC maintains and develops sustainable production centres across the UK.
- Within this it was of particular priority for Audience Council England that whilst welcoming the creation of a new hub in Salford, particular attention should be paid to the sustainability of Bristol and Birmingham. Audience Councils welcome the commitment to undertake a Network Supply Review for Audio and Music in 2009 and request that the Trust keep Councils informed of the progress of this review.



Members of the Wales Pensioners' Forum at an Audience Council Wales outreach event.

Audience Council Wales welcomes the developments realised thus far and particularly welcomes the go-ahead given during the year under review for building a new drama production facility in Cardiff Bay, which will provide a state of the art new home both for BBC Network and Wales drama productions such as the perennially popular *Pobol y Cwm*.

3. Portrayal

- That the Trust should investigate ways in which the BBC might better portray the full diversity of the UK's nations and communities in the regions of England, across its Network services, significantly enhancing the cultural representation of the English regions, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Audience Council Wales has contributed significantly to highlighting the importance of this priority both through the evidence it presented to the Trust at the Audience Councils Conference held in Salford in November 2009 – including drawing to the Trust's attention the reputational damage caused to the BBC

when it gets things wrong, such as in the case of TV drama *Framed* broadcast in May 2009, which was set in north Wales, but with actors using south Wales accents. The Council also contributed through research commissioned by it from the University of Glamorgan, entitled *Screening the Nation: Wales and Landmark Television*. The Council is committed to pressing for progress on this priority and looks forward to the outcome of work currently being undertaken jointly by BBC management and the Trust.

4. Impartiality Review of the Coverage of Devolved Matters

- The Trust should carefully monitor the implementation of the BBC management's actions on the Impartiality Review of Network News and Current Affairs coverage of devolved matters.

At its outreach events, the Council was told by the BBC's audiences that there has been progress in terms of the accuracy of Network news in differentiating between the nations

of the UK and the differing governance arrangements in each nation. However, the Council is still told by audiences that Network News has some way to go before it adequately reflects the richness of devolution and the stories behind the differences in approaches of the various nations to particular issues. The Council looks forward to the publication later this year of review work undertaken in 2010 by the Trust, informed by research conducted by Cardiff University on this matter.

5. Audience Councils operation and communications

- The Trust should strengthen its relationship with the Audience Councils through the implementation of the outcomes of the Maximising Audience Council Effectiveness project, and seek to achieve more visible participation of the Audience Councils in its work to ensure the widest audience participation in the processes leading to its decisions. This should include a review of a communication strategy for the Trust and Audience Councils.

The Council considers that progress on this priority has been slow but is regularly made aware by the BBC's audiences of the importance of the Audience Council Wales being seen to be – as well as being – the voice of Wales at the Trust.

“The Council is still told by audiences that Network News has some way to go before it adequately reflects the richness of devolution and the stories behind the differences in approaches of the various nations to particular issues.”

6. Editorial standards and complaints handling

- The Trust should undertake work to gather audience views on acceptable editorial standards and improve audience understanding of the BBC's complaints procedures.

The Audience Council Wales during the past year contributed to the Trust's consultation on the BBC's editorial guidelines and complaints handling and looks forward to the new guidelines being published.

7. National, Regional and Local news services

- The Trust should keep in mind that Audience Councils continue to attach importance to ensuring the BBC delivers high quality services to its audiences at a national, regional and local level, including ensuring sufficient investment in the infrastructure of local and regional radio services and seeking ways to improve the range and depth of regional and local news coverage.

The Council has welcomed the introduction of the *Democracy Live* online politics portal during the year under review, but remains concerned at the gap between the expectation and the perception of audiences that BBC Wales is portraying Wales' culture and communities adequately.



Licence fee payers at an Audience Council Wales outreach event in Rhosllannerchrugog.



REPORT ON BBC PERFORMANCE IN WALES AGAINST THE BBC PUBLIC PURPOSES

SUSTAINING CITIZENSHIP AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The Council considered that News was important across all platforms and that *Wales Today* was a significant contributor to fulfilling this Purpose. Half of all adults in Wales saw at least one edition per week – 1.2 million viewers with the 6.30pm programme having an average audience of 260,000.

Newyddion was also an important contributor to this Purpose, averaging an audience of 26,000. The Council considered that the enhanced news service launched by the BBC during the past year was now a key part of S4C's daily schedule, providing four additional bulletins each weekday between lunch-time and late evening. The Council was glad that during the year under review lunch time phone-in programmes on Radio Wales and Radio Cymru had increased their audiences and received positive audience feedback. Current Affairs programming such as *Week in Week Out*, *Manylu*, *Eye on Wales* and *Pawb a'i Farn* were all contributing to the wider understanding of current affairs by audiences in Wales.

Week in Week Out's programme *Who Cares in Wales* had been important in focusing on the regulation of care homes. Another programme entitled *Why do you hate me?* had involved a wheelchair user going undercover to reveal the abuse faced by some people with disabilities.

The Council was regularly informed by audiences in Wales that the BBC's politics coverage remained important to them with *CF99*, *Dragon's Eye*, *The Politics Show*, *Dau o'r Bae* and *Called to Order* all providing extensive and varied coverage of politics in Wales and beyond. The *Democracy Live* online site was also now providing extensive coverage of the National Assembly's proceedings. Coverage of elections was important on all platforms and the Council considered that the political coverage of the BBC in Wales fulfilled this Purpose.

The Council also commended the BBC's Welsh language TV programming broadcast on S4C, which at 722 hours during 2009 was significantly above the 520 hours which the BBC was obliged to provide by statute. The Council was pleased that of S4C's total audience hours 40% arose from programmes produced by BBC Cymru Wales – a remarkably high proportion given that the BBC's output was only 16% of S4C's total hours (albeit with a much higher proportion in peak).

PROMOTING EDUCATION AND LEARNING

The Council observed that BBC Cymru Wales supported formal learning for young children and teenagers through such programmes as *Telly Tales*, and *Bitesize*, and delivery of formal education for all ages was increasingly moving online and on-demand.

Informal learning through entertainment was delivered to the population at large through programmes such as *Changing Lives* (broadcast as part of BBC Cymru Wales' Green Season), *Wales and the History of the World* and *O Flaen dy lygaid* which had seen a significant increase in its audience during 2009.

The Council was pleased that some of the learning assets in the Welsh language originally produced as part of the (now closed) Jam project had now been finalised and released since it was regularly informed by audiences that the BBC's learning provision was greatly appreciated by audience members, young and old. The Council looked forward to hearing about the BBC Executive's plans for supporting formal learning in Wales in the future and its plans for release of the remaining assets of the Jam project in the Welsh language.

STIMULATING CREATIVITY AND CULTURAL EXCELLENCE

While this purpose encompassed almost all the BBC's activity the Council considered that some

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outstanding examples from Sport, Factual, Drama and Music. *Scrum V live*, *Clwb Rygbi* and *Sport Wales* had all contributed to this Purpose and demonstrated that BBC Cymru Wales' in-house sport production expertise was world class. Extending the *Scrum V* brand to radio had proved to be very successful.

Coming Home had been an interesting TV series with Terry Jones, Gaby Logan and John Prescott all featuring and *Hospital 24/7* had been even more successful during the year under review than past series, broadcast during a single week in January 2010 and attracting a large audience.

The Council also considered the fact that BBC Radio Wales had been nominated for a Sony Radio Academy award during the year under review – the only BBC radio station to have been nominated – illustrated the way it contributed to the fulfilment of this Purpose.

The BBC National Orchestra of Wales contributed significantly to this Purpose, continuing its programme of concerts across Wales and beyond as well as its extensive



Participants at an outreach event hosted by Audience Council Wales and the Alzheimer's Society.

BBC PERFORMANCE IN WALES AGAINST THE BBC PUBLIC PURPOSES CONTINUED

output for BBC Radio 3 from its new home in BBC Hoddinott Hall, at the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff Bay. The 2009 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition had increased its audience on BBC Two and BBC Four and had been a major contributor to this Purpose as well as a critical and popular success.

Pobol y Cwm remained S4C's most popular programme and Council welcomed the introduction during the year under review of its promotion on the BBC Wales English language services. The Council considered that the enhanced interactive and multiplatform National Eisteddfod coverage had also been central to fulfilling this Purpose in making a very important event in the nation's life accessible more broadly.

Torchwood had been a landmark drama during the year having attracted almost seven million viewers every night during its powerful week-long series, *Children of Earth*, shown on BBC One in July 2009.

REFLECTING THE UK ITS NATIONS, REGIONS AND COMMUNITIES

The Council was pleased to hear that during the year under review there had been closer cooperation between Network and Wales News teams, following the BBC Trust Impartiality review by Professor Anthony King of coverage of the nations by Network News and a marked improvement in the representation of Wales on the BBC's News outlets. However, audiences informed the Council at its outreach events that there was still some way to go before this matter was resolved satisfactorily and the Council remained committed to monitoring progress on this.

The Council was glad to be informed that the perception of BBC Cymru Wales as being the national broadcaster for Wales had grown steadily from 24% in 2001 to the current level of 58%, with a correspondingly large increase in perceptions of it being the national broadcaster of news from Wales (from 43% to 70%). The Council strongly believes that it is as important if not more so, for Wales to be reflected to itself

as it is for it be portrayed more widely across the UK. This is reflected in the concern expressed within Welsh public life at the continued reductions in funding available for producing general English language programming for Wales. The Council is informed by audiences that they perceive that the level of English language TV programming produced by BBC Cymru Wales for audiences in Wales is low. The Council's own concern is increasingly articulated in Welsh public life more widely with a recent lecture by Geraint Talfan Davies, Chair of the Institute for Welsh Affairs, to the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion noting that, "the spend on the BBC Wales' English language service is slightly more than £23million, less than 1.3% of the UK spend... whatever the virtues of current programming, the television service for Wales in the English language is painfully inadequate in volume and range. It is inadequate to reflect the complexity and vitality of Welsh society, and it is de-stabilising also of the dispensation in the Welsh language."

BRINGING THE UK TO THE WORLD AND THE WORLD TO THE UK

The Council was regularly informed by participants at its outreach events of the pride felt by people in Wales at the international success of BBC Cymru Wales produced Network programmes such as *Doctor Who* and *Torchwood*. One such participant recounted his pleasure at reading the TV listings in the *New York Times* during a visit to that US city and noticing that the two programmes recommended for viewing that evening had both been produced by BBC Cymru Wales. Programmes like *Last Chance to See*, made by BBC Cymru Wales and presented by Stephen Fry and Mark Carwardine which had shown them setting out on a world-wide journey

"The Council strongly believes that it is as important for Wales to be reflected to itself as it is for it to be portrayed more widely across the UK."

in search of animals teetering on the edge of extinction, had contributed significantly to fulfilling this Purpose.

BBC Cymru Wales' online services provided worldwide access to news from Wales with a significant number of users overseas and the Council welcomed that for the first time coverage of the *National Eisteddfod* in Bala in August 2009 had been accessible online across the world with commentary provided in both Welsh and English.

The Council recognised that *Afghanistan: Five Welsh Families* had contributed to fulfilling this Purpose and movingly illustrated the personal impact of the war in Afghanistan on families across Wales.

DELIVERING TO THE PUBLIC THE BENEFIT OF EMERGING COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND SERVICES

The Council remained deeply concerned that DAB coverage of BBC Radio Wales and BBC Radio Cymru remained inadequate, having seemed to stall at 42% coverage of the population, in contrast with 80% coverage for BBC Network Radio stations in Wales. In addition BBC Radio Wales coverage on FM (at just over 60% of the population) remained a concern particularly in the station's south east Wales heartland.

Following consistent pressure by the Council it welcomed the fact that the Wales category on BBC iPlayer now provided clear navigation to most of BBC Cymru Wales' cleared output on BBC TV, S4C, BBC Radio Wales and BBC Radio Cymru, as well as having a Welsh language interface.



Audience Council Wales outreach event in Llanbedrog.

AUDIENCE PRIORITIES FOR 2010/11

During the year under review, the Audience Council Wales (ACW) hosted seven outreach events at which it had opportunities to meet and hear the concerns and praise of the BBC's audiences in Wales for the BBC's services and programming. While each event considered different topics and concerns, there remained a level of consistency in the messages from participants and these informed the Audience Priorities highlighted jointly by the Audience Councils and adopted by the BBC Trust for the coming year.

As in previous years, transmission and distribution issues loomed large and the Council raised with several of the BBC's senior managers

to someone who cannot receive it and that consequently doing everything to resolve distribution issue for as many members of the audience as possible was pivotally important. portrayal of Wales on Network television remained a key issue for audiences in Wales as well as local provision. Time and again the Council, while welcoming the success of BBC Cymru Wales' News and Current Affairs output on TV radio and on-line, raised its concerns regarding the range and depth of local news provision, but also the provision of English language TV programming for Wales, which the Council perceived as having been squeezed recently as a result of the BBC's efficiency savings.



1. Audience Council Wales outreach event with pupils from Builth Wells High School.
2. Council member Nicola Cockburn at an outreach event.

The Council also remains concerned at its own lack of profile. It is aware of its unique opportunity to contribute to national life as the voice of the BBC's audiences in Wales and regularly communicated to the BBC Trust the importance of the Audience Councils in each of the UK's constituent nations raising their profiles so as to be able to fulfil this important function in a more effective way. The Council restated that it was essential that audiences should be aware of its work in representing their views to the Trust in order for licence fee payers to communicate their views to it and thus enable the Council to fulfil its Charter obligations.

DIGITAL AND OTHER DISTRIBUTION ISSUES

The Council is deeply worried at the references in the *Digital Britain* report to the possible 'switch-off' of FM and AM radio services, and to increasing DAB coverage to match current FM coverage. FM coverage for BBC Radio Wales is inadequate with just over 60% of the population of Wales able to receive the station in this way. Large numbers from amongst Radio Wales' audiences in the south Wales valleys cannot receive the station on FM or DAB, relying instead on poorer quality AM service. Approximately 55-60% of people in Wales are currently unable to receive BBC Radio Wales or BBC Radio Cymru on DAB and about 70% of Welsh speakers are unable to receive BBC Radio Cymru on DAB. The Council believes that the principal public service broadcaster's services, the only national radio services in Welsh or English in Wales, should be universally accessible.

The lack of availability of broadband services in many parts of Wales and the inadequate speed of the service on offer, when it is available, is an issue constantly brought to Council's attention by audiences as something that impoverishes their lives and deprives them of BBC services

"Producing great content is meaningless to someone who cannot receive it."

which they would otherwise access. Many rural communities find themselves marginalised both geographically and technologically and, the Council feels that this may worsen in future as more technological developments are broadband dependent (such as the BBC iPlayer on the Freesat platform). The geography of Wales is a factor which contributes significantly to social exclusion and Council considers that broadband should be genuinely universally available at a high enough speed to enable proper access to those services that demand significant bandwidth. Where people have no adequate internet access they are deprived of a huge and growing amount of PSB on-line content available on this platform.

DIGITAL BRITAIN AND THE FUTURE OF PSB

The Council feels strongly that proposals for the future of PSB in Wales must be guided by the needs and requirements of the audience and be judged according to whether they contribute to ensuring that people in Wales are provided with a meaningful range of quality television, radio and online content in both languages in the future.

The lack of a strong printed press or strong indigenous commercial radio sector means that any threat to ITV Wales news has the potential to seriously compound the current democratic deficit in the context of the role of the National Assembly in deciding policy in health, education, transport and other key areas of public policy.

Council has noted the disparity between the nations relating to the number of hours of English language local television produced (and the disparity in the funding level for those programmes) and is concerned that audiences in Wales are provided with relatively fewer hours of nation specific TV compared to the other UK nations, an even more serious issue

in the context of the withdrawal of ITV Wales from producing programmes addressed to a Wales audience in any genre other than News. The Council remains deeply concerned at the level of real terms financial cuts experienced by BBC Cymru Wales in recent years for producing local programming for Wales, despite the increased level of Network programming being produced in Wales. If legitimate audience expectations are to be met the recent decline in overall investment in English language television programming in Wales must be reversed.

PORTRAYAL

The Council is following closely the Trust's work on the way audiences feel the whole of the UK could be better portrayed in BBC Network programmes and to it investigating ways in which the BBC might better portray the full diversity of Wales and the English regions, Northern Ireland and Scotland across its Network services on all platforms.

The way in which older people, and older women in particular, are represented on television should be investigated.

IMPARTIALITY REVIEW OF THE COVERAGE OF DEVOLVED MATTERS

The Trust should continue to monitor carefully the implementation of the BBC management's actions regarding the 2008 Impartiality Review of Network News and Current Affairs coverage of devolved matters.



1. Audience Council Wales outreach event with pupils from Builth Wells High School.

2. Council member Dafydd Whittall at an Audience Council Wales outreach event in Llandrindod.

RENEWAL OF THE BBC STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH S4C

The new Partnership should be informed by a thorough examination of both the operational and audience value of the current agreement to enable lessons to be learnt for future delivery. The needs of audiences and the delivery of the BBC's Public Purposes must be at the heart of any agreement. Work to ensure that the BBC's significant contribution is acknowledged should proceed in order that audiences recognise that the BBC is undertaking its public service broadcasting responsibilities on television in the Welsh language.

LOCAL

The implementation of the BBC Executive's alternatives to the BBC Local proposal, which was rejected by the Trust, should be monitored to assess their impact in addressing the gap in delivering the BBC Public Purpose of Representing the UK, its Nations, Regions and Communities across its services. They should also be monitored for the way in which they contribute to delivering the BBC's Public Purpose of Sustaining Citizenship and Civil Society in Wales in a way in which Audience Council Wales considers the BBC Local proposals would have done by reflecting local communities better.

SUPPORT FOR FORMAL LEARNING IN WELSH AND ENGLISH

Proposals should be brought forward to enhance support for formal learning in Wales in both Welsh and English which are relevant to the Wales curriculum.

“Proposals should be brought forward to enhance support for formal learning in Wales in both Welsh and English which are relevant to the Wales curriculum.”

AUDIENCE COUNCILS

The Trust should build on its recent project to strengthen its relationship with audiences across the United Kingdom through the Councils. It should also seek to achieve more visible participation of the Audience Councils in its work by raising the profile of the role of the Audience Councils in reflecting the views of the BBC's audiences and the impact they make on the thinking of the Trust.

REVIEWING THE PERFORMANCE OF BBC CYMRU WALES

The Audience Council Wales does not believe that the nations annexes to the BBC One and BBC Two Service Licences offer an adequate framework against which to measure the performance of BBC Cymru Wales television nor do the Statements of Programme Policy being as the references to BBC Cymru Wales output are scattered through the document. The situation regarding online causes greater concern being as the Wales output is not even covered by an annex to the Service Licence. Better yardsticks should be developed against which BBC Cymru Wales' output could be meaningfully measured.

CONTACTS

If you wish to find out more about the BBC's year – including full financial statement and each service's performance against its Statement of Programme Policy – then please visit www.bbc.co.uk/annualreport

If you want to know more about how the BBC is run then please visit www.bbc.co.uk/info BBC information is our audience's virtual front door to the BBC. If you have a question, comment, complaint or suggestion about BBC programmes and services, then please write to us here:

BBC Information

Bangor
LL57 2BY

Telephone: 03703 500 700* (Lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Calls may be monitored or recorded for training purposes).
Textphone: 03700 100 212*
Fax: 0141 307 5770

Website: www.bbc.co.uk/feedback

Last year the BBC had over 3.3 million contacts with the general public.

*0370 numbers are called 'UK wide' and cost no more than calls to 01 or 02 geographic numbers.

If you have a view which you think should inform the Audience Council's understanding of local audience needs, or you would like to find out more about the Council's activities please visit our website or contact BBC Audience Council.

BBC Audience Council Wales

Room E5108
BBC Broadcasting House
Llandaff
Cardiff CF5 2YQ
Trust's main number: 03700 103 100*
Email: acw@bbc.co.uk

Contact Audience Council Wales at:
www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiencouncil

“PROPOSALS FOR SUPPORTING FORMAL LEARNING IN WALES IN BOTH WELSH AND ENGLISH, RELEVANT TO THE WALES CURRICULUM, ARE NEEDED.”
NICOLA BRANSON

“THE COUNCIL REMAINS CONVINCED OF THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING NON-NEWS PROGRAMMES FROM WALES REFLECTING CONTEMPORARY WALES TO ITSELF.”
ROBERT HUMPHREYS

“THE WAY OLDER PEOPLE AND OLDER WOMEN IN PARTICULAR, AND PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA, ARE PORTRAYED ON TV SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED.”
TERESA REES

AUDIENCE COUNCIL WALES



Sangeet Bhullar



Nicola Branson



Andrew Carter



Nicola Cockburn
(member April-Oct 2009)



Carl Cooper



Robert Humphreys



Andrew Jones (member
April-December 2009)



Arun Midha



Teresa Rees



Dafydd Whittall
(member 2006-2010)

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