

# ariel

THE BBC NEWSPAPER

BABY, THAT'S SOME BALANCING ACT:  
SIAN WILLIAMS BACK AT BREAKFAST  
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## What size a future BBC?

'We should  
look at  
whether we  
need to own  
100 percent  
of BBC  
Worldwide'

**MARK  
THOMPSON**

'We may  
need to  
end some  
services...  
there will  
be hard  
choices to  
make'

**MICHAEL  
LYONS**

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PHOTOGRAPH OF MARK THOMPSON: KEN SINIARD. PHOTOGRAPH OF MICHAEL LYONS: ANNA GORDON





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## NEED TO KNOW THE WEEK'S ESSENTIALS

# Size matters, say men at the top

◆ **IN AN ORGANISATION** where it can seem like there's a review launched every week, this felt like an unprecedented move: the BBC flagging the possibility that it might be too big, that some services could close, and announcing that Mark Thompson will lead the investigation into where the axe might fall.

The possibility that parts of BBC Worldwide could be controversially sold off – as Thompson's review of the BBC's scale scans the whole range of activity – has not been ruled out by the director-general, although there was no plan to 'change ownership' of the company, he said.

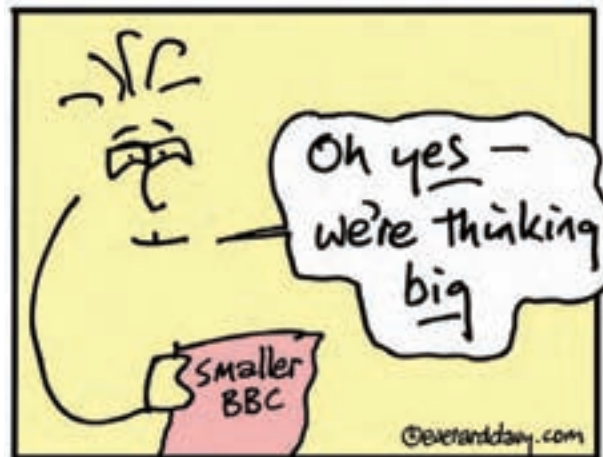
Michael Lyons published an open letter to licence payers last Wednesday, revealing he'd agreed with Thompson as early as June that management would conduct a radical review of what the BBC ought to concentrate on in the future. At the same time, Thompson hit back in an all-staff email at criticism led by James Murdoch of the BBC's scale and ambition. A new ICM poll showed rising levels of trust and pride in the BBC, making recent attacks by the News Corp chairman and others look 'desperately out of touch' with audiences, Thompson said.

The new review – to report in the first half of next year – would 'consider whether the BBC is the right size and is operating within the right boundaries,' Lyons said. 'We want a BBC that is smarter, more efficient and no bigger than it needs to be... The seismic shifts currently taking place in the economy and in technology require us to think bigger even though it may mean the BBC becoming smaller.'

Thompson saw a shift in the old balance

between the BBC and the commercial sector and judged: 'It is the right time to take a searching look at what the BBC should look like in the post-2012, post-switchover world.'

Speaking later on Radio 4's *The Media Show*, Lyons confirmed that the organisation may need to 'change or even end some services', and that



there would be hard choices to make. But not over free online news – the most contentious issue for Murdoch, whose company intends to charge for its news online. 'I would be frankly amazed if the BBC retreated from its trusted position as provider of free, impartial, accurate news,' he said.

Speaking to Ariel this week, Thompson went further, pledging that the service was 'sacrosanct'.

Lyons told the *Ten O'Clock News* that the BBC would still focus on serving all audiences but

needed to be 'better able to emphasise the distinctiveness of its programmes and better able to control the range of activities'. The BBC Trust is already looking at restricting the activities of BBC Worldwide.

Industry figures have been queuing up to comment on the prospect of a smaller BBC and speculate about what might go, from US acquisitions like *The Wire* to BBC Three, the newer digital radio stations and inevitably, the Lonely Planet travel guide business, targeted by Murdoch at the Edinburgh tv festival.

A review that was 'constructively radical' and took into account the wider media environment could 'preserve the essence' of the BBC, said Christopher Bland, former chairman. Broadcaster Steve Hewlett thought it would require a feat of 'intellectual gymnastics' for the BBC to pull out of some services, having resolutely defended its right to provide all of them, up until now.

Tim Hincks, chief executive of Endemol, urged BBC bosses to make a 'sacrificial lamb', most likely in radio or publishing, before the next government does it for them. And Tim Luckhurst, professor of journalism at the University of Kent, claimed the BBC has 'grown to a scale that is threatening, not enabling' and that the new review offered a 'ray of hope' that that was being recognised. It fell to Peter Preston, writing in *The Observer*, to urge 'calm debate... around the scope for compromise and partnership': 'The point is to leave James Murdoch out on a limb, not surrounded by supporters,' he said.

Cathy Loughran

**Thompson: no putting the clocks back – Page 10**

## PROMS IN THE PARK TAPS THE SALFORD CONNECTION



PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON MASON

by Peggy Walker

**THE FLAGS WERE OUT** at Buile Hill Park in Salford where the BBC Philharmonic, conducted by Stephen Bell, led Proms in the Park. Other Proms in the Park events took place in London's Hyde Park, County Down in Northern Ireland, Glasgow and Swansea to complement the Last Night at the Royal Albert Hall.

The BBC Philharmonic has been busy forging connections with local people in Salford and Saturday's concert, featuring singer Chris de Burgh, was another opportunity to build links with the community. In the run-up to the Last Night, BBC Philharmonic players serenaded shoppers in the Lowry Outlet shopping mall opposite the MediaCityUK sites. The orchestra also set up the Salford Family Orchestra in July as part of its partnership with Salford City Council, ahead of

the opening of MediaCityUK in Salford in 2011. More than 70 musical mums, dads and children performed together for a concert which was broadcast live on Radio 3. Plans are now under way for the BBC Philharmonic's next big Salford project which is also a Radio 3 commission. Salford University, eight local schools and Eccles Community Choir will perform a recording of *Wonder – A Scientific Oratorio* in November.





Limbering up: Kate Williams, Donal MacIntyre, Paul Blakeley, Andy Bate and Rachael Hodges

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA GORDON

# Hot Shoes scheme gets northern exposure

by Peggy Walker

Hot Shoes North has opened for people in divisions relocating to Salford, or already working in Manchester or any northern region.

One hundred two-week placements are on offer at various departments including Radio 5live, CBBC, Radio 3, religion and ethics, and at the Manchester-based BBC Philharmonic.

Hot Shoes is the innovative attachment scheme started in 2007 by Peter Salmon when he was creative director of BBC Vision.

'It was a raging success with 250 people taking part,' he remembers.

Next came global hot shoes which offered international placements.

'The scheme aims to encourage people to start thinking about working more closely with other teams,' notes Salmon, now director BBC North. 'It is perfect for BBC North, introducing the best part of 1000 new colleagues to each other, connecting *Match of the Day* to *Blue Peter*, technology to editorial, Liverpool to Newcastle, *Dragons' Den* to Bitesize. It will also get us thinking about new ways of working and collaboration long before 2011 [when people start moving to Salford].'

Liza Booth, partnerships manager, connect and create, wants as many people as possible to apply. 'It's two weeks to do something totally different,' she says, 'and a great chance to learn new skills, get inspiration to take back to your department, or maybe give you the contacts to get yourself a new job.'

The Hot Shoes North attachments will be advertised in waves on the BBC North website: [explore.gateway.bbc.co.uk/bbcmediacityuk](http://explore.gateway.bbc.co.uk/bbcmediacityuk)



# We're fit to run – at a stretch

by Sue Llewellyn

On Sunday Radio 5live will broadcast from the Bupa Great North Run – and field its own team of 14 runners. Ironically, given the event's sponsor, many have had to overcome their own health-related obstacles.

News presenter and team coordinator Kate Williams is running for Kidney Research UK after having two major kidney operations and spending a further week in hospital just before Christmas. Fighting fit again now, she says that preparing for Sunday's run has been tough. 'When I came out of hospital I was so weak it was a struggle to walk up and down stairs.'

It has been a struggle too for morning travel presenter Helen Blaby who says: 'A doctor once told me I'd be dead by 35 if I didn't do something about losing weight and getting fit.'

She is determined to complete the Newcastle course in memory of her dad, who died in 2002 of pancreatic cancer. 'He'd have been incredibly proud of me for doing this.' Her 35th birthday is a week after the Great North Run.

*Dancing on Ice* helped presenter Donal MacIntyre lose weight and get into shape, but his training regime was interrupted for reconstructive surgery on his shin after he impaled himself on his skate.

Rachel Burden, co-presenter of *Weekend Breakfast*, confesses that her main motivation for training is potential loss of face. 'This will be my third half-marathon but my first post two children so I'm not sure whether various different bodily components will hold together.' Her participation is all the more impressive given that she is 23 weeks pregnant.

Sports presenter Vassos Alexander was due to take part but a knee injury forced him to pull out and he has been replaced by racing correspondent Luke Harvey. There will be some good natured jockeying for position as some of the more experienced runners are secretly

hoping for good times. The other 5live competitors are Paul Blakeley, who is running on his birthday, Rachel Hodges, Andy Bate, George Riley, Andy May, Ed King, Katya Willems, Sarah Ransome and Jeanne McCalum.

■ Rachel Burden and George Riley will co-present Radio 5live's special race programme from the startline before running themselves. Lynsey Hipgrave will report mid-course and Christian O'Connell will be at the finish. Athletics summariser Mike Costello will commentate on the race with Alison Curbishley offering analysis of the elite runners.

**Bupa Great North Run, BBC One, Sunday**

# Has Lloyd Webber bitten off more than he can chew?

Andrew Lloyd Webber is leading the way with a tv talent show with a difference.

In his latest quest, to find the stars for a new stage production of *The Wizard of Oz*, he is to cast Dorothy – and her faithful dog Toto.

The series, to be produced by Talkback Thames, will not start on BBC One until the spring of 2010, when it is sure to be a big Saturday night attraction, and the corporation says it is too early to reveal how the casting process for Toto will work, although it has hinted that 'a Barbara Woodhouse type person might have to be brought in'.

Woodhouse became a household name in the early 80s with her dog training tv

programmes; she is best remembered for her catchphrases 'Sit!' and 'Walkies!'.

Whoever is signed up to help Lloyd Webber, the project is already giving the impresario paws for thought: 'As a cat man myself ... I approach casting Toto with considerable trepidation,' he says.

'I might insist on having a cat on the programme, because I think the BBC as a public service broadcaster has got to give equal time in my view to cats.'

He is, though, looking forward to working again with Graham Norton; their partnership on *The Wizard of Oz* follows previous successes such as *How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maria?*, *I'd Do Anything* and *Any Dream Will Do*.

# Vision Forum will be starry do

Bruce Forsyth and comedian Michael MacIntyre will join the tv debate with Mark Thompson, Michael Lyons and Jana Bennett at next week's BBC Vision Forum.

The *Today* programme's Evan Davis will probe the director-general and BBC Trust chairman on the big issues facing the corporation, including how big it should be.

Staff will get their first chance to hear from Aaqil Ahmed, new head of religion and ethics and commissioning editor, in conversation with BBC Two controller Janice Hadlow.

Danny Cohen chairs a session with Diederick Santer, exec producer of *EastEnders*, and Nina Wadia, who plays Zainab Masood, about keeping the soap fresh. And strictly on the record, Brucie will be talking to Jana Bennett about a lifetime in light entertainment.

Despite the starry line-up, the second two-day forum at TV Centre will be business focused says the Vision director, who opens the event on Tuesday (September 22) with her own creative ambitions for the coming year.

'Programme makers from across the business will be taking part as well as some of our key on screen talent. The forum is an important moment for all of us to engage in a conversation with one another,' she said.

Over the two days there will be parallel sessions in Cardiff, Belfast and Glasgow, including a BBC Wales focus on *Last Chance to See*.

Other highlights of the London programme include the stories behind *Psychoville*, *Occupation* and *The Choir*.

Main sessions from TV Centre's Studio 3 will be streamed live on Gateway. Book remaining places at [http://explore.gateway.bbc.co.uk/vision/vision\\_forum\\_2009](http://explore.gateway.bbc.co.uk/vision/vision_forum_2009)



# Mosey's 3D Olympic ambition

by Sally Hillier

The BBC should capture some of the London 2012 Olympic games in 3D, Roger Mosey believes.

In a keynote speech last week at the IBC (International Broadcasting Convention) in Holland, the BBC's director of 2012 said while nobody would expect comprehensive coverage, because the technology would

be nowhere like widespread enough, 'it would be a shame not to have any images of London that were part of an experiment [in 3D]', a technology he described as 'one of the next big waves of change'.

'The Olympic Stadium may only exist in its full 80,000 plus capacity for a relatively short period. Not to have that at all in 3D would be, at the very least, a major gap in the archive.'

Furthermore, while much of the games would be transmitted in HD, Mosey said that the higher definition of Super HD could also be a possibility.

'There won't be a set in your living room by 2012, but there could be a limited number of cameras and big screens that will give us a taste of the future - and could give a major creative boost to technologists and people thinking of the content of

tomorrow. Both 3D and Super HD are currently posing questions and opportunities rather than solutions; but now's the time to start examining seriously whether there are answers that could make 2012 even more of a landmark year,' he said.

Sky plans to launch a 3D-only channel in 2010.

Mail: Page 11

## BBC London leaves high street

David Robey shuts up shop at Marylebone High Street this week as the BBC London 94.9 radio team moves (on September 16) to Broadcasting House.

Coincidentally Robey has also just notched up ten years at the helm.

When he arrived as managing editor of GLR, as it was called in 1999, he inherited a station that had enjoyed its heyday, but was out of kilter with the speech and news-based format of BBC local radio and needed to refocus.

'I inherited a younger, male and ABC1 audience and that continued in the early years as we evolved,' Robey explains.

There has been a determined effort to attract more female listeners, with presenters such as Vanessa Feltz and JoAnne Good helping to redress the balance.

Ten years ago GLR listening figures were around 250,000. The station relaunched as London Live in 2000 then as BBC London in 2001; introducing presenters like Danny Baker helped push figures through the 400,000 mark for the first time in 2002.

'Putting Danny on made a big difference; it made a bang in London and got us noticed,' notes Robey, who now hopes that 600,000 can be achieved (the current Rajar figure stands at 559,000).

The London bombings in July 2005 also put Robey's operation on the map as news station for the capital.

'After 7/7 we finally arrived at the place we needed to be.

'I feel we have achieved a sound which is challenging and newsy but also warm and humorous, so that our listeners get the 'feel good' factor while being informed and making an emotional connection with our presenters.'



## Super troupers turn out for Abba tribute

The BBC followed up Saturday's Proms in the Park with another spectacular on Sunday when it paid tribute to Abba in a Thank You for the Music concert, hosted by Chris Evans.

Kylie Minogue, pictured with Evans and Abba's Benny Andersson and Bjorn Ulvaeus, was among the performers at the concert, created and produced by Radio 2. Other artists included Elaine Paige, Lulu, Jamie Cullum and Jason Donovan. Around 35,000 people packed Hyde Park for what Andersson said was a unique event that won't be repeated. 'It wouldn't be the same to do it again. Anyway, I'm too old now.'

## College job for Morgan

Eddie Morgan, editor of BBC Two's *The Culture Show*, is to become head of the BBC Academy's new college of production.

In his newly created role Morgan will be responsible for setting up the college and developing production training programmes and events for the in-house production community and BBC freelancers.

The operation will sit alongside the existing college of journalism and management in the training academy led by director Anne Morrison.

Morgan, who has worked in various genres and across the industry at the BBC, ITV and the indies, sees his role as timely: 'As the pace of change gets faster and other companies cut back on training, getting every aspect of training right matters more than ever,' he said.

## Manager dies in crash



A production manager in BBC training has been killed in a hit and run incident in the US.

Penny Vernham, 50, was on holiday in Orlando, Florida, riding pillion on a motorcycle that was hit by an SUV. She died at the scene, and the incident is currently under police investigation.

She had worked at the BBC for more than 20 years, most recently in training's Future Now team.

'She was a stalwart of the BBC, totally committed to its principles and always prepared to give 100 percent to

any project she was involved in,' said Andy Wilson, programme manager.

Recently divorced, Penny Vernham leaves a 16 year old daughter Alice, for whom a book of condolence is being produced in Room 2434 in White City. Anyone wishing to contribute, but who can't get there in person, should email Simon Smith-Training.

## NEWS BITES

**A GOVERNMENT** memo, sent to local authorities which licence the production of children's tv programmes, has proposed that under 14s might be able to take part in factual productions only if they are 'singing, acting or dancing'. The BBC says such a proposal would have 'a negative impact' on shows such as *Newsround's Press Pack*ers and CBBC's *Me and My Movie*.

**MARK WADDELL**, senior technologist in R&D, has been awarded the prize for the best technical paper at IBC in Amsterdam. His paper, on low-power low-cost wireless broadband, investigated internet-connected devices and their effects on Freeview receivers and wireless microphones. More info at [bbc.co.uk/rd](http://bbc.co.uk/rd)

**ARLENE PHILLIPS** will be on the panel of a new BBC show aimed at finding 'the nation's hottest dancing talent'. Auditions for *So You Think You Can Dance* will start in October with the series to be broadcast in January. It will be a co-production between the BBC and 19 productions.

**BBC ARCHIVE** has released a collection of *Tomorrow's World* items and programmes. Highlights include a 1979 report on one of the first mobile phones and a 1969 item about schoolboys who have an early computer but have to check its oil levels and thermostat whenever it breaks down.

**OFCOM HAS** censured an item about local rock bands in an edition of *Midlands Today*, broadcast on June 26, which featured flashing lights for around 13 seconds. The BBC has apologised and said the footage should have been accompanied by an appropriate warning.

**RADIO 5** live will decamp to Hull next month as the station broadcasts its own Octoberfest between October 22-24. The event will bring together news, sport, debate and entertainment in front of live audiences.

**RADIO LANCASHIRE'S** *On the Wire*, one of the UK's longest running alternative radio music shows, is 25 years old on September 16 and is celebrating throughout the month with features and contributions from guests and collaborators.

**MATT PRITCHARD** has been appointed head of development at BBC Worldwide, charged with generating original format ideas for international exploitation. He takes on the role with immediate effect, joining from ITV, where he was a senior development producer.

**THE BBC** Performing Arts Fund has launched Choral Ambition, a development scheme for choirs, which will receive funding for commissioning new music, training, masterclasses and other projects.

**SWINE FLU:** *Everything You Need To Know* is the latest *Panorama* special, to be shown on BBC One on September 16.



# BALANCING THE BABY

**Being a working mother and presenting Breakfast isn't easy – but has its rewards, Sian Williams tells Sue Llewellyn**

**SIX MONTHS AFTER** the birth of her fourth child, Sian Williams is back on air and full of smiles. 'It has been like coming home, which I know sounds cheesy,' she says. 'But I've been on *Breakfast* for almost nine years and it feels very homely.'

Being calm and poised, minus baby dribble, and wearing matching shoes (see below) is a challenge for most new mothers. But getting up at 3.30am, going on tv at 6am and presenting a three hour live programme to millions of people might stretch the yummiest of mummies.

And it's not as effortless as she makes it look, as she admits over a post-*Breakfast*

coffee. 'Anyone who finds it easy must have the most amazingly ordered, organised life full of staff – and I don't!'

The childminder leaves at about noon when Sian gets home from work, and for the rest of the day she's mum to Joss (17), Alex (15), Seth (2) and baby Eve (6 months). Having three age groups means that there are many different issues to wrestle with. 'A baby and toddler keep you running around,' she says 'but I sometimes think the big boys are the ones who really need focused attention. When they come home from school I'm there, to monitor and listen and cook them a hot meal...it's

amazing how much you find out just by hanging around.'

Getting up early and being tired 'most of the time' is the price she pays to spend time with her kids. 'I'm lucky to have so much time at home,' she says. 'You often feel like you're putting out fires though. And you never really feel like the best mum because you're always a bit ragged round the edges. But I don't want them to feel as though I'm abdicating responsibility to someone else.'

Her commitment to spending as much time as possible with her family stems from a sense of regret at not being around when her older children were born. As a 'young woman from a polytechnic' in a male, Oxbridge-driven environment she felt she had to work harder to succeed, an ambition which saw her become one of the youngest people to edit *The World At One*.

'I wasn't around as much as I'd like to have been in their early years and I regret it,' she says emphatically. 'When you're in your 20s and excited about working for the BBC, you want to prove yourself. I look back now and I wish I'd had the confidence and the presence of mind to realise I'd make it eventually anyway.'



**All About Eve:**  
Sian with her youngest

**'You often feel like you're putting out fires'**

Working part-time, she says, was not something you discussed at the BBC in the early nineties. 'If you're in a very male

environment you don't say 'oh I need a bit of time off to look after my children please' – you don't even mention that you have children. You go in and you get your head down. It was like an admission of failure to say you'd like to spend some more time with your family.'

The fact there are more women in charge may well lie behind the shift in attitudes over the last two decades, she believes. 'There has been a significant change. I know some dads who feel they can ask for time off and they wouldn't

have been able to in the past.'

With such a busy life, does she ever have any time to herself? [Very long pause] 'No, I had a haircut on Sunday; that was time to myself. You just plug away, do the best you can and if it stops becoming enjoyable or unworkable then you do something else.' If she felt her children were suffering from her doing this job she says she would leave 'in an instant'.

'I really would. It's because the job fits in with my life that I do the job, and not the other way around.'



**Welcome return:** Sian with co-host Bill Turnbull last week

## The first day back...

**I ARRIVED** back at work as editor of television's *One O'clock News* after the birth of my son. I had been off for four and a half months. Within minutes of my return a colleague bounded up and said: 'Did you have a nice holiday?'

**Jay Hunt**, controller, BBC One (pictured)



**WHEN** I returned to work after the birth of my first child, Ella, I got the train in on my first day. Thirty minutes into the journey it hit a cow that had strayed on to the line. As the bloodied carcass came flying past my window, I wondered if this was some kind of omen for my time as a working mum....

**Jillian Moody**, sbj, Radio Wiltshire

**OSCAR** is such a laid back, smiley

baby, but for the first two weeks of leaving him at nursery he cried every morning and I would spend the rest of the day feeling like I was the worst person on earth. Now he loves nursery and being back at work feels like I've never been away.

**Sacha Newman**, PA to Alan Yentob

**I SPENT** the first week thinking I'd lost something and it took me time to realise it was the fact that my daughter Scarlett was not glued to me.

**Mary Langford**, head of production, internal comms

**I JOINED** the BBC straight from maternity leave, so the first issue was finding clothes that fitted. I'd lost most of the baby weight, but the shape hadn't reverted to normal and I could only get one pair of work trousers done up...

**Tricia Duffy**, head of transformation and delivery, Vision Studio HQ

**I CAME** into work wearing odd shoes. I didn't realise until I got to the station platform and looked down.

**Cathy Loughran**, deputy editor, Ariel

**I DON'T** remember anything about my first week back – I was too exhausted.

**Simon Smith**, training & development, BBC People

**THE THOUGHT** of coming back was very scary – like the first day at school. The reality was that nothing much had changed and it felt like I'd never left. I did get on the Central line the wrong way though.

**Nicola Carr**, marketing manager, FM&T

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# The new doctors in Wales



Doctors Who?  
Gareth Milton as  
Simon Strettle and  
Elin Phillips as Rhian  
Matthews, on set

## Local crew, writers and actors get their break on BBC Wales's new hospital drama Crash

by Claire Barrett

**IF THE FOUR YOUNG DOCTORS** – first day on the wards after five years in medical school – were taught a tough lesson last week in the opening episode of BBC Wales's *Crash*, it was the audience who got a masterclass in dramatic screenwriting.

Series creator Tony Jordan (*Hustle*, *Life on Mars*) penned the edition, broadcast last week, which delivered all the ingredients for an entertaining watch – friendship, flirting, cri-

ses of confidence, humour – before killing off the main character in a shocking closing scene.

'Viewers can expect to be constantly surprised by *Crash*,' says Jordan, the former *EastEnders* scriptwriter who mentored the pool of new tv writers for the series. 'It's the story of how our characters grow up in a world where their decisions can quite literally mean life or death.'

The vital signs seem strong for the new series, with the first part attracting an average audience of 167,000 in

Wales – an 18 percent share which was six points above any network programme. It performed particularly well among 25-44 year-olds.

'It's just what I was looking for,' says Clare Hudson, head of English language programmes, of her hunt for peaktime, pre-watershed drama with broad appeal to replace long-running Welsh drama, *Belonging*. 'It's pacy, compelling, appointment-to-view tv that captures what it's like to be starting out in a demanding career at the beginning of the 21st century. The key characters are in their twenties, which will attract both a young audience and their parents.'

While set in the fictional Cardiff City Hospital, the 12-part series – six to be shown this year, six next – is not

**'Viewers can expect to be constantly surprised'**

a medical drama, she insists, with the 'group dynamic' being the main narrative driver. The hospital setting was as much a budgetary consideration as a creative one. 'We don't have huge budgets here so a 'precinct drama', where most of the action takes place in one venue, fitted the bill.'

*Crash* – produced by Jordan's Red

Planet Pictures – was among 38 submissions in the first commissioning round. Others included series set in a police station, a children's home, a campsite and a town hall. Another – *The Fabulous Baker Boys*, set in a bakery – was also given the green light.

Filmed in a disused school in Caerphilly, *Crash* drew on local talent, with many – including crew, writers and actors – being given their first big break. 'We have great young talent here in Wales,' says exec producer Bethan Jones, 'and to see those people given a leg up and a high profile platform for their work has been one of the most inspiring aspects of making the series.'

**Crash, BBC One Wales, Wednesdays**

## Making a drama out of the web

by Laura Scarrott

Teenagers: the audience (you could argue) with the shortest attention span and the most attitude. While there's no magic formula for making drama which appeals to them, teen brand Switch is trying out a new approach.

This week it launches the BBC's first online drama series, *The Cut*, which follow the exploits of six teens living in London. They're hoping to match Bebo's web-based drama *KateModern*, which attracted 2.5m viewers a week before the heroine's untimely demise.

Streamed on the Switch site, *The Cut* will go out every week night at 5.10pm in five minute webisodes, with a 25-minute omnibus show on BBC Two every Saturday. It's designed to

hook the target audience of 12-17 year olds and Switch head Geoff Goodwin says it reflects the way young people consume content: 'It's fast paced and relevant – there are secret crushes, family dramas and intrigue.'

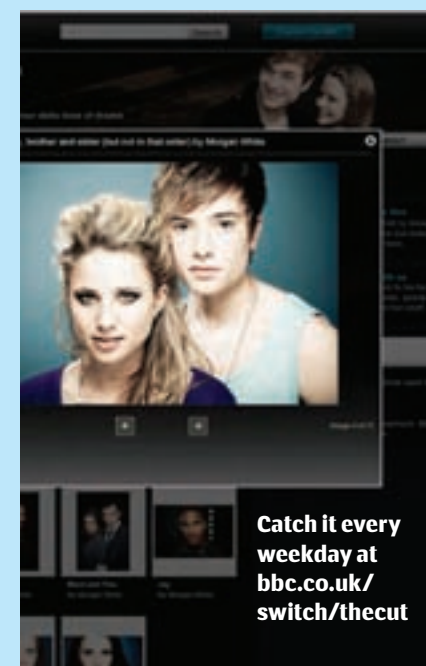
But will it hit the spot? The production team certainly has the right teen credentials: producer Pete Gibbons worked on *KateModern* and director Sarah Walker has called the shots on *Hollyoaks*. In turn, they're supported by a crew Goodwin describes as 'hungry and massively creative' – useful qualities when you're shooting a lot of material to a tight budget.

Almost all the filming is done within a five mile radius of Switch HQ at Grafton House in central London with a cast of young, first time (read cheap) actors. Even the scripts are penned

by in-house staff writers, many of whom have overlapping roles on the show. First assistant director Grant Black is one of the core writers.

Its audience already has a stake in the drama. Early storylines around self-harm, first love and coming out were posted on the Switch website by other teens, who will be able to continue interacting with the show online once it's started. They'll also be able to suggest dialogue and plot points, influence some of the more dramatic storylines and join the cast.

There's even a cutting edge soundtrack, courtesy of BBC Introducing, and a marketing campaign which targets teens on their home turf (Yahoo, MySpace and Bebo) when they get back from school, daily blog posts and backstage footage. Watch the online space...





# week@work

TRADE SECRETS

## FILM IMPOSSIBLE

**Chris Gledhill's company GraphixAsset provided CGI for BBC Two's Last Chance to See. He explains how it can enhance a production**

**1 FILMING THE IMPOSSIBLE** You're telling the story of the Jamaican Slave Revolt of 1831 – the event was massive involving a large proportion of the island's sugar cane fields being set alight. Even if you could get the budget and filming permits to do it for real, chances are health and safety are going to stop you getting that fire going. Solution: a carefully supervised digital composite shot will give you a realistic outcome – it's also better for your carbon footprint.

**2 ADDING SCALE WITHOUT ADDING COST** You're filming a historical piece, but you don't want to be confined to close up shots of the actors and archive footage of the time. Remove



Adding scale: one of the animations used in Last Chance to See

parking meters and other pesky modern paraphernalia that just don't belong in the 17th century with matte painting and digital set extension.

**3 MAPS** Whether you're in a far flung location, and you know at least some of your audience think the Amazon is in Africa, or you're describing a journey, a 2D or 3D moving map can give context to your film.

**4 TECHNICAL ILLUSTRATION** How do bees fly? How could an F1 car drive along a ceiling? And what does a pumping heart look like from the inside? Explaining the answers to an audience using words alone would be an almost impossible task. But if you illustrate your narrative they will be much closer to understanding.

**5 CHARACTER ANIMATION** Animate means 'to bring to life'. In *Last Chance to See*, series producer Tim Green wanted a way of introducing the animals that the presenters Stephen Fry and Mark Cawardine were looking for without giving away the ending of the show when they find them in the wild. A photo or drawing would not have stood up to 30 seconds of narration so animation was the perfect solution.

**6 VISUAL IDENTITY** A strong and unique identity which feeds from the pitch through trailers, content graphics and the titles is more important now than ever before. The freedom that comes from computer graphics is ideal for implementing new ideas.

## CHANGING PLACES



Radio Manchester presenter **ANDY CRANE** (pictured) swaps his Sunday show slot for a new weekday afternoon show... Sbj **LOUISE GOSLING** returns to Radio Cambridgeshire after a year long career break... **JULIA OCKENDEN** becomes senior advisor, public affairs. She moves from the BBC Trust, where she was financial and strategy manager... Radio Berkshire presenters **ANNE DIAMOND** and **HENRY KELLY** swap shows. Diamond will present the weekday mid-morning show and Kelly will present the Saturday show... Shropshire bj **LIZ ROBERTS** starts a six month attachment to *Inside Out* in Birmingham... Radio Bristol

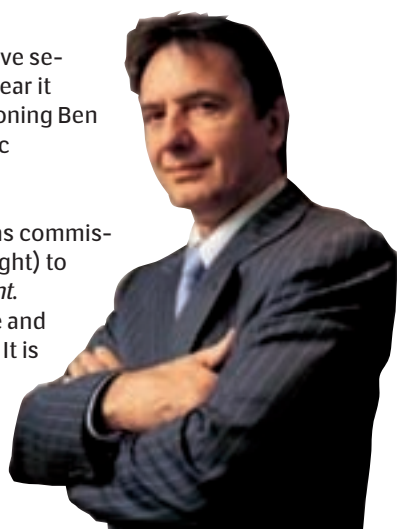
bj **JOHN BENNETT** begins a six month attachment with World Service Sport. He is replaced by **EMMA WEATHERILL**, a producer at A&M factual in Birmingham... Bj **ROBIN MARKWELL** also leaves Radio Bristol to begin a three month placement with GNS (General News Service). **HANNAH JOHNS** from Radio Lincolnshire covers his attachment... Economics correspondent **STEVE SCHIFFERES** leaves the BBC after 20 years. He joins City University as Professor of financial journalism... Hull-based political correspondent **TIM IREDALE** joins *The Politics Show* in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.

## COMING UP

◆ BBC drama production is to make a six-part detective series called **Luther** for BBC One. Due to transmit next year it was commissioned by controller of drama commissioning Ben Stephenson and channel controller Jay Hunt. The exec producers are Philippa Giles and Katie Swinden.

◆ Executive editor for entertainment Mirella Breda has commissioned a cookery series hosted by Raymond Blanc (right) to accompany the new series of BBC Two's *The Restaurant*. **Raymond Blanc: Step by Step** will be made in-house and exec produced by Chloe Solomon and Rachel Arnold. It is expected to be broadcast later this year.

◆ A new series of **Ready Steady Cook** has been commissioned by controller of daytime Liam Keelan for BBC Two. It will be made by the indie Cheetah.



## FACT OF LIFE

◆ **MORE THAN 6500 ARTISTS** have added nearly 15,000 tracks to the BBC Introducing website. The site, which supports unsigned music acts, made its upload tool available to people in the UK in February. Uploads are limited to three tracks per band each month. [bbc.co.uk/music/introducing/](http://bbc.co.uk/music/introducing/)



## Red alert! Radio Kent dials 999

A birthday at Radio Kent kicked off a day of OBs celebrating the work of the county's emergency services last week. Senior broadcast engineer Rom Cordani had the idea for Emergency Day after realising that his birthday would fall on 09/09/09 this year. He took his idea to news editor Ed Cook, who arranged for each of Radio Kent's daytime shows to visit a different service – air ambulance, coastguard and police. 'It was a big task and technically very awkward,' says Cordani. 'Luckily, some of the sites were already set up, as we deal with the emergency services on a regular basis. I didn't mind working late on my birthday as I doubt I'll be around for 09/09/90...'

Emergency measures: aft show presenter Pat Marsh bj Laura Earl meet Kent Ai ambulance doctor Carin D paramedic Gary Baldersto headquarters in Marden



## SHAMELESS PLUG

### ◆ BBC STUDIOS AND POST PRODUCTION

Fresh from their work on BBC One's *Criminal Justice* and BBC Four's *Margot*, BBC Studios and Post Production turned their attention to supporting amateur film project *You Will See Life*.

The script, about a blind teenager's struggles in the 21st century, was written by aspiring film makers Megan Slater and Sara Harrak who decided to launch a project that would give gifted young actors, musicians, directors and crew in Essex the chance to show off their skills.

Having approached BBC drama script editor Esther Springer for advice in the early stages, they contacted BBC Studios and Post Production for help with the edit.

Producer Charlotte Ford, who worked on the film, said: 'We believe in nurturing new talent and sharing our wealth of skills and creative experience with the industry, so working on projects like this is important to us.' Harrak adds: 'We were given lots of advice on how to make improvements for future films. It was a real learning curve.'

You can watch *You Will See Life* at [tinyurl.com/you-willseelife](http://tinyurl.com/you-willseelife)







## LEARNING CURVE

◆ **DO YOU WANT TO LEARN** how to use social media in the newsgathering process or how to operate a DV camera?

Connect and Create is offering staff in Manchester the chance to learn new technical skills and then use them to report on the In the City music festival. It's also an opportunity to develop team-working skills and build on community contacts. Contact Eve Hart.



# Reduce and Recycle

## Could you be 25 percent less wasteful in the office?

● **COMEDY CLASSICS** such as *Only Fools and Horses* and *Fawlty Towers* regularly resurface, but when it comes to what we recycle the environment team thinks we could be doing more.

● Its first quarterly campaign, called Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, wants to get people thinking about generating less waste and recycling where facilities are available. This supports the BBC's target of reducing waste by 25 percent per person and recycling 75 percent of all waste by 2012. It also comes after staff suggested that recycling was the easiest way for them to make a difference.

● The environment website advises on how to avoid contami-

nation when recycling (when a recycling box is contaminated it has to be taken to landfill), how to recycle and reuse difficult items such as printer cartridges



(donate them to Children in Need) and stationery (exchange it at Swap Shop on Gateway) and lets you follow waste from the office to landfill. The team has also made an online video that accompanies the campaign. It has had 3000 hits since becoming available in August.

'People are busy so short messages are more effective,' explains project manager Hattie Park. 'What we wanted to do was put the waste campaign into context and give people an idea of what they can do.' She also explains that through quarterly campaigns they can deliver more 'impactful, clear messages'. The next campaign will focus on energy reduction.

Workplace is working to get recycling facilities in eight key BBC buildings by the end of the financial year. The buildings – Belfast, Cardiff, Pacific Quay, Bristol, Manchester, Birmingham Mailbox, W12 and W1 – are where more than 70 percent of staff are based. Salford and the new W1 development will also be equipped with recycling facilities.

[gateway.bbc.co.uk/environment/environment.aspx](http://gateway.bbc.co.uk/environment/environment.aspx)

## blogbites

### What we found while trawling the blogs this week

#### Monday

**Sunday September 6th 1900 hrs...ish**

So here I am the night before, Knight of the Realm – Sir Terence of Wogan announces to the world that after almost three decades of waking Great Britain up with his unique style of broadcasting badinage and brilliance, he is off...and I'm taking over his breakfast show hot seat. It's very much Terry's story, not mine, as well it should be. To step down from something you have done so well, and for so long and obviously still enjoy doing, must be a tough call even for such a stoic as Sir Tel.

**Chris Evans, Radio 2 dj**

[bbc.co.uk/blogs/chrisevans/](http://bbc.co.uk/blogs/chrisevans/)

#### Tuesday

**Yes, But Do You Have Any Photographs?**

Programme makers at Radio Scotland send me snippets of information in the hope that I might mention it on this blog. Being the grumpy old so-and-so that I am, I always ask if they have any photographs to accompany the story. A few moments ago I received this email from Dawn Munro, a producer in our features department. 'Just to let you know *Medical Matters* next week (Wednesday 16th) is about vasectomies and this morning Edi Stark and I were recording two men having their vasectomy. At one point poor Edi had her microphone inches away from the man's scrotum. Just thought it might be something for your blog.' Naturally, I asked for the pictures.

**Jeff Zycinski, head of Radio Scotland**

[bbc.co.uk/blogs/jeffzycinski/](http://bbc.co.uk/blogs/jeffzycinski/)

#### Wednesday

**West One's Broadcasting House yops out**

After thousands of tonnes of concrete, lots of steel and a lot of hard work the West One Broadcasting House construction project reached a key milestone recently – it was topped out. It's a very big job and I could bore you with lots and lots of statistics but here are a few as a taster: some of the concrete beams used in the structure are so big you could drive a minibus along them; you could fit 70 London buses into the central area of the new building and all of the floorspace equates to ten football pitches

**Chris Kane, head of corporate real estate**

[bbc.co.uk/blogs/spacesandplaces/](http://bbc.co.uk/blogs/spacesandplaces/)

#### Thursday

**The Archers annointed**

The hipsters at The Word Magazine have given two pages of the latest issue to a survey of the best and worst of the world's soap operas. Thrillingly, it's not *EastEnders* or *The Sopranos* (fairly flexible definition of 'soap' in use here) that tops the list but *The Archers*. What can we say? We're speechless.

**Steve Bowbrick, Radio 4 blog editor**

[bbc.co.uk/blogs/radio4/](http://bbc.co.uk/blogs/radio4/)

#### Friday

**Friday's quote of the day...**

'It was my son, at least we think. My wife told me – I believe her.' Tony Blair jokes with David Letterman about Leo's paternity. *The Late Show* host pointed out that Mr Blair was the first serving prime minister for 150 years to have a legitimate child while in office.

**Magazine Monitor**

[bbc.co.uk/blogs/magazinemonitor/](http://bbc.co.uk/blogs/magazinemonitor/)





# I'm up for a fight but not a bar room brawl

## The director-general on Worldwide ownership, the impact of his scale review on jobs, executive pay and the BBC fightback

**CATHY LOUGHRAN** Isn't the announcement of this new review a huge turnaround for the BBC?

**MARK THOMPSON** Creative Future worked well for us: iPlayer worked very well; we now have 27m unique users of the BBC website. [Digital] take up has surprised even us. But already it's clear that post-switchover we'll be in a very different world. The stuffing has been knocked out of much of the rest of the media, so the issue of how the BBC now fits in is very alive. The BBC Trust agreed in June that it is the right moment to look at what's the right size for the BBC to be. That's not about putting the clock back, that's not saying we were wrong to go into digital, where we're connecting so well.

**CL** Is this a fight back? The tone of your email to staff suggests that and if so, why didn't we do it earlier to pre-empt or at least answer the Murdoch attack?

**MT** I am always up for a fight to defend the BBC but I'm not a bar room drunk. Not everyone who's got a criticism of the BBC wants it to be dismantled – and that goes for internal critics too. On the timing, we wanted to tell staff about this review in our own time. Should we be reacting to every single comment? That would seem very defensive and weak. We've got very broad shoulders and the most important thing is that this summer, there was new evidence that the public supports the BBC. The Guardian ICM poll [showing rising levels of public pride and trust in the BBC] was done after the Murdoch lecture.

**CL** Will there be any back-tracking in commitment to serve all audiences, if we end up with a narrower range of channels?

**MT** No back-tracking, we should be offering outstanding content to all audiences. But look, we've introduced new services – on mobile and online. We've not kept the same portfolio but we've been very successful at keeping universality. Ninety eight percent of people now use the BBC every week.

**CL** So what services might disappear in a scaled down BBC?

**MT** It would be potty to announce a review and the likely results at the same time. I have an open mind. We'll look at lots of audience research, that's happening already. Review teams will look across var-

ious content and portfolios, there will be public consultation and opportunities for staff to feed in.

**CL** Is it your instinct that it would be better to close whole services than salami slice several?

**MT** Everyone who works here feels a passion for what we do. But the key thing is, how are people going to want their programmes in the future. We need to ask what is the future for news, comedy, drama, sport, documentary and work out what's the best way of getting that to the public. Services are only a means to an end, it's whether we've got the mix right. I can say that we won't be launching more linear channels – we've reached a slightly different moment – but iPlayer can deliver for audiences and Canvas will be game-changing.

**CL** You're not ruling out a partial sell-off of BBC Worldwide. That would be radical.

**MT** There is no plan to change ownership, but we need to look at whether we need to own 100 percent of Worldwide. Yes, [partial privatisation] would be radical, but you could say there are lots of radical things that we could do, and won't do.

**CL** Free online news from the BBC is shaping up as a big battleground. Is BBC news online sacrosanct?

**MT** Access to free, impartial online news is non-negotiable. Yes, it is absolutely sacrosanct.

**CL** Are there other areas that enjoy that status?

**MT** I was at the Last Night of the Proms on Saturday – a fantastic national and international event. That would be a really good example.

**CL** Is Salford safe from any downsizing?

**MT** There is absolutely strong public support for Salford and it is somewhere we can build a BBC that's fit for the future. It is expensive now, but over time it will deliver big savings for the BBC.

**CL** What about jobs? It's hard to imagine that a smaller BBC would not involve more job cuts.

**MT** We're already getting smaller. We've lost 7000 posts and there are still more to go in the next 18 months. As we go into this review, of course we'll have to look at what the

impact might be on jobs but I don't envisage the kind of scale of reduction that we've seen. And the BBC can't be immune from efficiencies, no matter who's in power. There are areas where there are no efficiency targets, like many local radio stations. We can't carry on trimming everything, so there will be some tougher choices to make if we're to make programmes of the right quality. People come here because it's a creative environment where you can do fantastic work. It might be that we just need to focus on fewer projects.

**CL** Have you misjudged the public mood on executive and talent pay, as Jeremy Hunt and others have warned?

**MT** Not only has the world changed, but we've recognised that. There is a straightforward market but we've been ensuring that pay for top talent is dropping – as recent headlines testify.

On executive pay, we want the best people and they may come from the outside. Everyone who comes here takes a pay cut – I did from Channel 4, the new director of BBC people just has. It's a great privilege to work here, so the salary discount is something that people accept.

**CL** Isn't the gap between staff and executive pay now too wide?

**MT** Not compared to other organisations. Overall, the multiples of senior to average pay has gone up across the UK. The ratio here is lower than in the private sector.

**CL** What about the pay capping that currently exists for people moving to new jobs?

**MT** By giving a cash sum in the last pay award, we deliberately favoured the least well paid. That's a pattern that will continue.

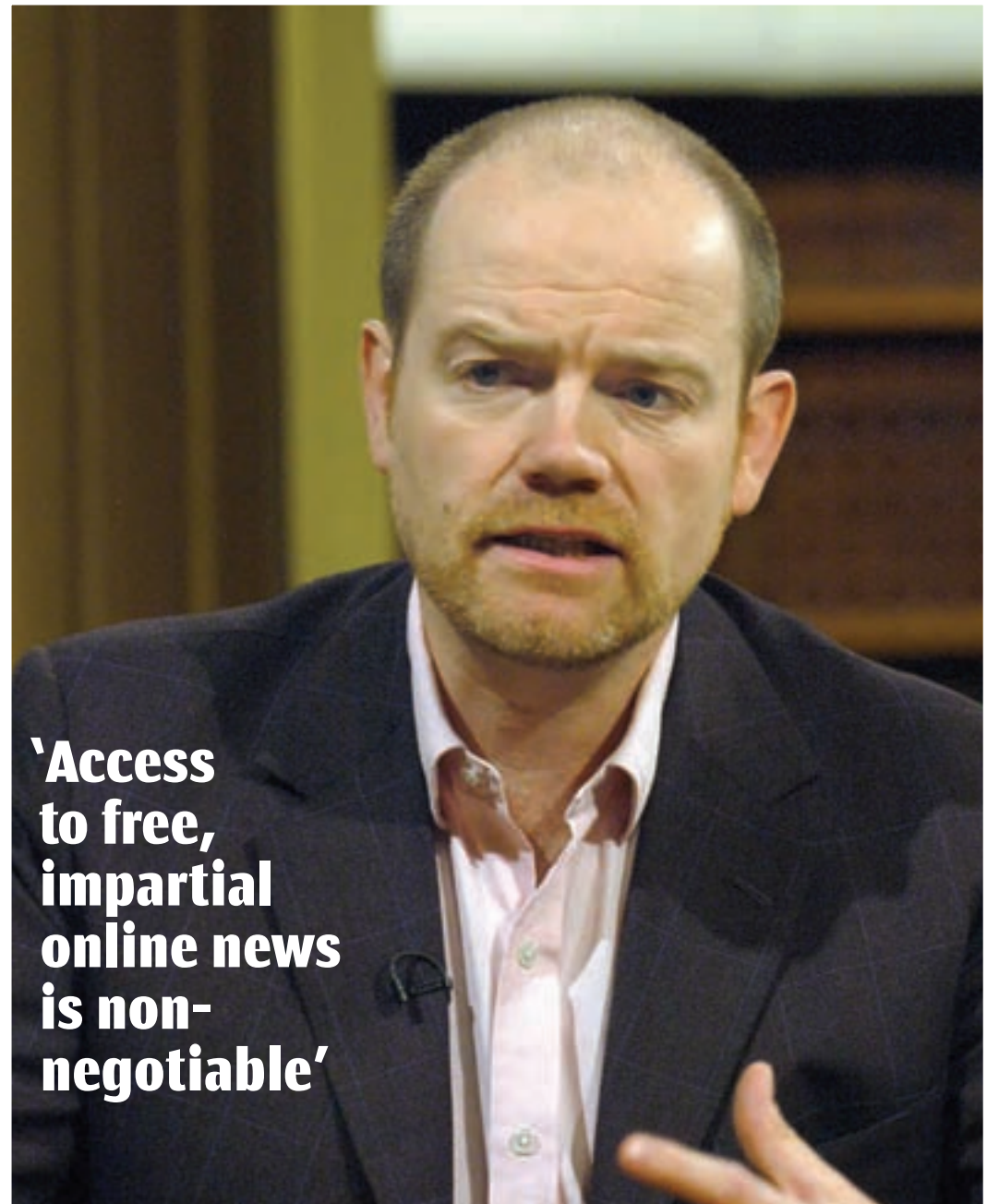
**CL** On partnerships: commercial broadcasters have been critical that

the BBC hasn't gone far enough. Where are we with the regional news tie up with ITV? Is that deal still on the table?

**MT** People may think partnerships have gone away, but there is a hell of a lot going on. Canvas, video syndication and high definition on Freeview are all going well and dozens of other partnership proposals are going through. On regional news, the whole debate around Digital Britain and top-slicing has put the practical discussions on hold but yes, our offer is still on the table.

**CL** Looking ahead to this week's RTS convention, and a session called The BBC Under Fire, will there be less fire-power now the BBC is looking at scaling down its activities?

**MT** At a time when newspapers are fighting for their lives, they do see the BBC as direct competition and we're having a tough time in the press. That's likely to continue.





This is the page that everybody reads. Please email [claire.barrett@bbc.co.uk](mailto:claire.barrett@bbc.co.uk)  
You can also contribute to the mail page directly from the Ariel Online home page

## Keep a close watch on those sickies

The programme producer must not feature on air. Staff can't book their own transport. Nobody can be trusted to produce anything without it being signed off by someone else, and don't even think about buying tea and biscuits for contributors. When management is about respect, enabling and facilitating, ensuring those you manage have what they need to do their job, the result can be

a vibrant organisation full of people who feel valued and passionate about their work.

When management is about control; watching, monitoring, limiting, restricting the result is... well I wonder what sickness levels are like across the BBC these days. It'll be an interesting statistic to watch.

**Matt Seymour**  
*FoC BBC Radio York*

## Democracy doesn't wash



I think Nazma Chowdhury's defence of the BBC's decision to give the BNP's leader Nick Griffin airtime is wrong (September 8). If the BNP are not prepared to abide by democratic norms, why should we invoke notions

of democracy – as Nazma does – to justify putting them on air?

The BNP believes in the state persecution and repression of minorities. It believes black and Asian people should be sent 'back home'. As recently reported, it would limit its membership to 'indigenous' British people. It has no belief in the equality of individuals – all in all, not very democratic.

**Becky Branford**

*bj, world desk, BBC News website*

## Smaller isn't greener

I'm pleased that the BBC has taken steps to address our carbon emissions by effectively banning staff from hiring cars with engines larger than 1600cc.

In the future I'll no longer need to bother with the official Act On CO2 website and its handy guide to the actual carbon emitted by popular cars currently available in Britain.

So if I need to hammer up a motorway, with a cabin full of colleagues and kit, I'll take the snug 1600cc Peugeot 206 Estate, rather than the sinful, but very roomy 2000cc Fiat Sedici.

The fact that the Peugeot spews more carbon into the atmosphere per kilometer than the Fiat? Well, I'll keep that to myself, knowing I've done my bit for the environment.

**Dominic Casciani**

*home affairs, BBC News*

## Gang up against crime

This weekend five young people were shot in Haringey, north London, another was stabbed and, in a separate incident, a woman had her front door shotgunned in Battersea, south London.

So what? There were 40 such incidents last month alone in London, according to off-the-record figures shown to me by a credible source last week, all of them involving teenagers and young people. The sad reality of life in the capital is that there was a fifty percent increase in gang-related violence in the first half of this year.

I am concerned that we in the media are

partly to blame. I have become increasingly convinced over the past few years that the BBC needs to review its policy on reporting such incidents, because I am worried that impressionable young people will hear about their peers being shot and stabbed and think that they need to carry a lethal weapon as a result. Not to mention that the perpetrators undoubtedly revel in seeing themselves and their actions glorified in the media.

We don't report suicides on the whole for much the same reason: that by doing so we risk someone else hearing about it and deciding to kill themselves too.

So isn't it time we opened the debate among ourselves and with other broadcasters about whether we should give airtime to gang-related violence?

**Anna O'Neill**

*radio reporter, BBC London 94.9fm*

## Fun and Games

I agree with 2012 director Roger Mosey that some of the Olympic Games should be captured in 3D. As soon as London won the bid, I was saying the opening ceremony should be in 3D – choreographed and designed for the 3D experience on tv and the camera coverage carefully plotted to give the best 3D images at home, with as many as possible of the expected billion or so viewers worldwide being able to watch the 3D transmission on special channels (via the equivalent of our red button) using glasses provided through their local broadcaster.

One highpoint, for example, could be the Olympic rings appearing as a giant hologram in the stadium and, through suitably placed camera angles, in 3D right in the middle of our living rooms.

**Stephen Bulfield**

*picture editor, tv news*

## Swear it's not so



Your report about the compliance session at Edinburgh (September 1) may have got scrambled on its way back to London.

You mention a contribution from the floor from Ofcom's Trevor Barnes, saying the regulator had never upheld a breach of the broadcasting code after the watershed. However, even solely in the context of looking at strong language, this isn't correct.

Bulletin 133 (May 11) found C4's 9pm broadcast of Ramsay's *Great British Nightmares* in January in breach due to the frequency of strong language and its intense and aggressive delivery. The two-hour special contained 115 use of 'fuck' and its derivatives in the first 40 minutes, 37 of these in the initial 15 minutes (ie between 9 and 9.15pm).

Ofcom obviously intervened as this was an extreme case. But the taste and standards research shows that audiences have a thoughtful and considered approach to the use of strong language on television. And it's important to recognise that – in the same ruling – Ofcom still gave weight to broadcasters' freedom of expression and the audience's right to receive material 'without interference by public authority'.

It's clear from their response to the complaints they received that the same programme transmitted at a later point in the schedule would not have been an issue.

**Mark Harvey**

*compliance manager, BBC Two, BBC Three*

## Sunk without trace

Two thirds of the way through this Darwin year with no sign yet of the BBC showing *The Voyage of Charles Darwin*. This seven-part dramatisation of the great man's life back in 1978 won a host of awards and would surely fit into the Darwin season.

Or is it to go the way of a serialisation from about the same time, *Testament of Youth* starring Cheryl Campbell, which failed to make an appearance on the 90th anniversary of the Armistice last year.

Is there any reason why these jewels from the BBC's archive are not shown?

**Alan Griffiths**

*television sport*

## Writing on the wall?

Has the price of tea and biscuits stabilised across the BBC? Has Radio Gloucester finally got its canteen? Is BBC management at last behaving sensibly? Has the move away from Halfords in the MyChoices cycle to work scheme appeased cyclists?

Or is the shrinking of the Ariel letters page part of some Pravda-esque plot to stifle dissent among staff?

We should be told ...

**Richard Leeming**, *exec producer, Syndication, music interactive*

■ How ironic that in a corporation whose output is free of advertising, half the letters page in Ariel seems to have been replaced with a huge advert. It says at the top of the page 'This is the page that everybody reads' but, with only two letters on the page for the last few issues, this won't be the case for much longer.

Conspiracy theorists will no doubt have concluded that this useful and honest channel for staff feedback is no longer welcomed by the top management. Please can we have our letters page back.

**Mark Patrick**

*technology manager, transmission and distribution, World Service*

No conspiracy... the fact is we received only a handful of letters over the summer, perhaps because there was a scarcity of news on which to comment. Remember that we do need your contributions in order to produce a lively letters page – mail ed.

## arielview



**SALLY HILLIER**

## Lower lower says Brucie

**FIRST IT WAS** *Jonathan Creek* actor Alan Davies who announced he had taken a pay cut and now Bruce Forsyth has done the same, revealing that he is getting less than before.

'I've always been paid far too much money,' he said in a *Newsnight* interview. 'Everyone's taking a pay cut. [They've] done it with goodwill because these are very, very hard times.'

Brucie of all people knows how to play his cards right when it comes to gauging what does and doesn't go down well with the public, but he wasn't the only one talking money last week. Even BBC supporters like former dg Greg Dyke and former deputy dg Will Wyatt waded in to say that, in the current climate, BBC executive salaries were too high.

Shadow culture secretary Jeremy Hunt, who suggested that the leader of the BBC should not earn more than the prime minister, warned: 'In parliament we made the mistake of not understanding that the public mood was changing. We dragged our feet over expenses and people were very angry.'

Hunt hit the nail on the head: the mood has changed and whereas previously people might not have been that exercised about how and where their money was spent, things are different now. The public has had it with greed and extravagance – whether in MP-land or medialand.

## Keeping step

Slow, slow, quick, quick...make your choice.

*Strictly Come Dancing* or *The X Factor*? From Saturday, when the new series of *Strictly* starts, there will be an overlap with ITV's entertainment flagship. Four words spring to mind here: heads, schedulers, bang together.

Viewers are left wondering where is the sense in putting on two programmes, likely to appeal to a similar audience, at the same time.

Watch one and catch up with the other later is one solution, although not everyone has recording/media player facilities and, in any case, this type of show is best enjoyed live, particularly in the knockout stages.

So why not put one talent fest on earlier? Well, both sides want the peak mid-evening slot, which can deliver between one and two million more viewers than early evening.

The BBC has a point in claiming it has less room to manoeuvre with the 90-minute *Strictly*, which has to fit in around *Merlin*, *Casualty*, *The National Lottery* and *Match of the Day*.

In one respect though both the BBC and ITV are laughing. The scheduling issue has generated acres of news coverage. Bad publicity? Strictly speaking, there's no such thing.

*Sally Hillier is deputy editor of Ariel*



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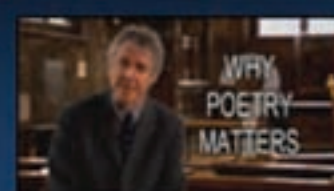
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E 27-Sep-09

**Trainee Script Editor, Drama**  
Glasgow  
5D/Ref: 18250409  
E 25-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Production Management Assistant**  
Bristol  
3D/Ref: 17788709  
E 27-Sep-09 A 06 months

JOURNALISM

**Head of Regional and Local Programmes**  
Southampton  
SM2/Ref: 18500909  
E 20-Sep-09

**Sports Editor, BBC Sport**  
London / Salford Quays  
10D/Ref: 18713509  
E 04-Oct-09

**Senior Producer, General Election**  
London  
TV Centre  
8/9D/Ref: 18778109  
E 03-Oct-09 A 12 months

**Senior Broadcast Journalist (TV Reporter)**  
Southampton  
8D/Ref: 18750309  
E 24-Sep-09

**Senior Broadcast Journalist (Reporter), BBC North West**  
Manchester  
8D/Ref: 18684409  
E 25-Sep-09 A 05 months

**Breakfast Presenter/Producer (Senior Broadcast Journalist)**  
Leeds  
8D/Ref: 18684109  
E 28-Sep-09 A 06 months

**Senior Broadcast Journalist**  
Oxford  
8D/Ref: 18562209  
E 20-Sep-09

**Promotions Producer**  
London  
Bush House  
7D/Ref: 18781109  
E 24-Sep-09 A 06 months

**Broadcast Journalist, Radio 4 Daily News programmes**  
London  
7D/Ref: 18712609  
E 21-Sep-09

**Video Journalist, BBC Yorkshire**  
Leeds  
7D/Ref: 18683609  
E 21-Sep-09

**Video Journalist - BBC Look North**  
Hull  
7D/Ref: 18683209  
E 21-Sep-09

**Video Journalist - Points West**  
Taunton  
7D/Ref: 18309909  
E 22-Sep-09

**BJ/Facilitator, Political Newsgathering**  
London  
Millbank  
7D/Ref: 14649509  
E 23-Sep-09 A 12 months

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5/7D/Ref: 18683909  
E 28-Sep-09 A 05 months

**Broadcast Journalist - Radio Bristol**  
Bristol  
5/7D/Ref: 18644609  
E 24-Sep-09 A 06 months

**Broadcast Journalist - Points West**  
Bristol  
5/7D/Ref: 18309809  
E 22-Sep-09 A 06 months

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Birmingham  
5/7D/Ref: 18152709  
E 21-Sep-09 A 08 months

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London  
TV Centre  
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E 03-Oct-09 A 12 months

**Broadcast Assistant**  
London  
Broadcasting House  
4D/Ref: 18718909  
E 17-Sep-09 A 06 months

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT

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London  
White City  
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E 05-Oct-09

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E 22-Sep-09 A 07 months

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E 21-Sep-09

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E 28-Sep-09

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London  
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E 21-Sep-09

**PMO - Reporting and Governance Lead**  
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E 21-Sep-09

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E 23-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Press Officer**  
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E 21-Sep-09 A 06 months

**Events Organiser**  
Belfast - Broadcasting House  
6D/Ref: 18384209  
E 22-Sep-09 A 06 months

**Co-ordinator, Public Affairs & Stakeholder Liaison**  
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6D/Ref: 17643809  
E 21-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Reception Assistant, BBC Worldwide, Audiobooks**  
Bath  
5W/Ref: 18798009  
E 20-Sep-09

**Audience Insights Executive - Arabic**  
London  
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E 04-Oct-09 A 12 months

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TV Centre  
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E 29-Sep-09 A 12 months

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TV Centre  
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E 28-Sep-09 A 06 months

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E 23-Sep-09 A 12 months

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E 24-Sep-09 A 05 months

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E 21-Sep-09

**Digital Marketing Executive, BBC Worldwide**  
London  
Media Centre  
2W/Ref: 18709509  
E 24-Sep-09

**Sales Administration Executive**  
London  
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2W/Ref: 18689009  
E 21-Sep-09 A 06 months

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E 23-Sep-09 A Continuing

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9D/Ref: 18553009  
E 20-Sep-09 A 09 months

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E 21-Sep-09

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E 21-Sep-09

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E 24-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Technical Project Manager**  
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Broadcast Centre Media Village  
8D/Ref: 18677209  
E 23-Sep-09

**Software Engineer (Enabler)**  
London  
White City  
7D/Ref: 18528409  
E 21-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Software Engineer (Enabler)**  
London  
White City  
7D/Ref: 18528209  
E 21-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Software Engineer (Knowledge)**  
London  
White City  
7D/Ref: 18528109  
E 21-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Software Engineer (Knowledge)**  
London  
White City  
7D/Ref: 18527709  
E 21-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Software Engineer (DEC/Switch)**  
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White City  
7D/Ref: 18527509  
E 21-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Software Engineer, Client Side Developer**  
London  
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7D/Ref: 16846609  
E 21-Sep-09 A 12 months

**Application Support Specialist**  
London  
Broadcast Centre Media Village  
7D/Ref: 16381009  
E 24-Sep-09 Flexi

BBC WORLDWIDE

**Picture Editor, Youth and Childrens Magazine**  
London  
Media Centre  
2W/Ref: 18696309  
E 20-Sep-09 A 06 months

**Production Editor, Youth & Children's Magazines**  
London  
Media Centre  
2W/Ref: 18696409  
E 20-Sep-09 A 06 months

**Senior Designer, Youth and Children's Magazines**  
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3W/Ref: 18731709  
E 21-Sep-09 A 05 months

**Editorial Assistant / PA to MD, Top Gear Magazine**  
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Broadcasting House  
4W/Ref: 18673309  
E 20-Sep-09

**Systems Administrator**  
London  
Broadcasting House  
7D/Ref: 18660209  
E 22-Sep-09

See Attachment

Stop that yawning at the back

South East Today's John Young turns the tables on deadline-driven journalism

**A DESK OF MY OWN.** With a lamp, and a purple plastic tray for bits of paper. For a tv reporter who normally works in a regional newsroom, this was quite a treat.

But it wasn't the only novel experience for me. I was used to life at *South East Today*. Mobile phone ringing ruthlessly. Deadline for lunch, deadline for tea, do it all again tomorrow, deskspace where you can find it. I loved it - I still do - but the prospect of spending a year working on courses that scrutinise what we do on a daily basis proved irresistible. And



It wants clips that get you thinking, speakers who make you sit up

from my own desk, too.

Just as well I enjoy detail. The college of journalism doesn't settle for powerpoint presentations - it wants clips that get you thinking, speakers who make you sit up, exercises that propel you out of the training room and way outside your comfort zone. That, I soon realised, would apply to me too - as my new boss outlined the range of tasks he had in mind for me in my first few weeks.

So I've worked with Radio 4's John Waite and *Newsnight's* Meirion Jones creating sessions on investigative journalism. I've had the luxury of time to put together a workshop about scripting for tv - quite a treat when your normal timeframe is idea-at-dawn, delivery-by-dusk. I've got to grips with multimedia and Twitter. And I've got to know 150 or so great people - colleagues and delegates - and realised what a great place to learn the BBC can be.

But the biggest learner, by far, must have been me. I thought it'd be pretty easy to stand up in front of a small group to kick-start a debate about something I thought fascinating. It's quite a shock when you catch one of them stifling a yawn. Bouncing into a room to say hello to them on the Sunday evening isn't quite so easy when it's the seventh time you've done it, and you're coming down with a cold. But it has been good fun discovering all that.

If attachments are about developing your own skills as well as sharing them, this one has worked for me.

**Been anywhere nice? Send your attachment stories to Clare Bolt**

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# VICKI LINES

STUDIO ASSISTANT PRODUCER  
THE ONE SHOW

A relentless schedule and dealing with the occasional tricky A-list guest is all part of a job that also includes plenty of socialising

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA GORDON

**The One Show is being extended to an hour every Friday. What difference does that make to you?**

We've been really looking forward to the one hour shows. Obviously it'll mean twice the work but we've got more time to prepare, too. With 59 minutes rather than 29 to play with, hopefully we can spend a bit more time talking to guests and not have to try to cover massive and complicated subjects in one minute forty five.

**What does a typical day involve?**

*The One Show* works on a four day cycle. On day one we start researching the guest, putting together a structure for the show and commission fast turnaround, topical film. On days two and three we research and produce the studio content and on day four it's all go from 9am, scouring the newspapers for stories that will work on the day, writing the script and having meetings with the presenters. We then rehearse at 5.30pm and are on air at 7.

**Do you do feedback?**

We have a meeting at 9.45am every day to talk about the previous night's show. We're quite analytical but we've got a pretty good sense of humour about our own stuff. We're trying to learn about what we've done the night before – what worked and what didn't. It's a healthy way to learn.

**Do you get much say in the content of the show?**

It's very much an environment where you're encouraged to chip in. Our editor, Doug Carnegie, likes opinionated people. You have to keep coming up with ideas which can be quite difficult when you've got to do a wildlife film about otters and you think what can we do that we haven't done before. The people who get on are those who are happy to put their head on the line and say what they think.

**What sort of challenges do you face?**

*The One Show* is relentless. You get in on day one of the cycle and are still coming down from the night before. It's important to take regular breaks and holidays just to freshen up. It's like driving a juggernaut – you have to be there behind the wheel otherwise it goes out of control.

**Has anything gone disastrously wrong at work?**

Yes, mainly due to the live element of the programme. We created a habitat for grass

snakes. It took almost four hours to set it up; we got the snakes brought in and I assured my producer that they would be visible. We went live to George McGavin, our wildlife expert, and the snakes had gone. They were nowhere to be found. We found them later though.

**Any nice or nasty celebs on the sofa?**

We have to deal with some pretty A-list stars. You have to measure up and treat them really well and if they call you 'quite stupid', as one of the guests recently did to me, you have to kind of suck that up.

**Who was particularly memorable?**

I remember sitting on the Green Room sofa with Ricky Gervais and his girlfriend for a couple of hours. I made him laugh out loud. I can't remember what I said but it was probably the proudest moment of my life. He does laugh at everything but I'm willing to overlook that. Another highlight was when I ended up running on to the set

to dance with Bryan Adams. He had nobody to dance with and was standing there alone.

**You talk about the team being one big happy family and socialising a lot. Are you a bit of a party animal?**

The team has been independently supporting a local wine bar for the last two years. We also like to empty the green room fridge most nights and have fairly large Christmas and summer parties, plus quite heavy leaving dos, meals out and house parties. In the past two years there haven't been many events I've missed – all in the name of team bonding.

**What do you get up to in your spare time?**

Planning and attending social events, recovering from social events, and going to dreadful West London clubs and swearing I'll never go again.

**Got any hidden talents?**

I sing a bit but not as much as I used to. The singing highlight of my year is currently at *The One Show* Christmas party with a band of merry *One Show* musicians including various members of the production team and Adrian Chiles on double bass. Other talents include forward rolling down stairs, losing coats and cooking Pad Thai for a houseful after a big night out.

Interview by Sue Llewellyn

## foreign bureau



EMMA WALLIS

STRINGER, ROME

**LIFE IN THE ETERNAL CITY** is simultaneously bound by tradition and entirely chaotic. The traffic-choked, spaghetti-mess of modern ring roads weaves past the cobbled streets, noble palazzi, and pine topped hills of ancient Rome.

Rome for its residents is still 'Caput Mundi' where everything that we know today was invented. It might be seen as lazy, southern and good for nothing by the industrialised north, but it's still the home to Italy's twin powers of church and state.

Politics is Rome's life blood. The concepts of citizenship and statehood evolved on the site where today's City Hall sits.

The dance across Rome's stage by its larger than life politicians, cardinals, senators, presidents and visiting foreign dignitaries makes for the world's best reality show.

The BBC office is tucked through an archway at the bottom of a mews building,

**Football and politics are the twin obsessions**

the other side of the city (on the equivalent of the Kentish Town/Hampstead borders). Fifteen minutes' walk uphill and you find Villa Ada, my tropical Hampstead Heath, complete with sandy paths, palm trees and lakes full of terrapins. From my balcony, I wave at my local 'edicolanti' (newspaper sellers). Newsgathering often starts with Alvaro, a font of knowledge on the country's twin obsessions of football and politics. His wife Rita fills me in, and up, on Italian food and family, providing surrogate Mum duties when needed.

September is the time for 'Rientro' (return to normal life after a long summer sojourn). For many, Rientro can be drawn out from Ferragosto (Aug 15, Italy's ascension holiday) to mid September at least.

I too have adapted to a slow Rientro. After five years here, I've realised that when in Rome...it's pointless doing things any other way. As soon as the shops open again, I'll be stopping off on the way back from work for a slice of potato pizza, the Roman equivalent of chip butty – or popping in to the wine bar under my house for a glass of amber coloured Sicilian wine.

Rome might seem relaxed but underneath is a beating heart and constant stream of stories. With a backdrop of cultural Catholicism, Romans like nothing more than to parade through the streets, performing for the 'telecameras' and paparazzi who buzz around like demented flies in search of the next scoop and tasty morsel of gossip for the world's media.

## CV

**Degree:** BA (Hons) Theatre, Dartington College of Arts  
**First Job:** Cashier and assistant business banker for Barclays  
**Career landmarks:** Getting promoted in this job (never thought it would last)



# green room

## THE ARIELATOR

A weekly take on life at the BBC: who's up, who's down, who's off



**UPSIDE** The chances of news correspondent Jonathan Charles beginning the month thinking he would become a YouTube phenomenon are probably pretty small. But thanks

to a craftily cut clip of him presenting *World News Today*, it has become a reality. Billed in typical YouTube style as 'BBC News blooper - the funniest ever', the clip sees Jonathan announcing himself as being kept in a basement and forced to bear children. He has colleague Jeremy Hillman to blame for his new found fame, the business unit editor posting the clip after it had been doing the rounds at news. Hillman is 'gobsmacked' by the snowballing views: 'We went from 100 or so on day one to 600,000 plus today and it's rising by 10,000 an hour,' he told Ariel last week. Jonathan is keen to get the original clip on to YouTube to prove to easily-duped viewers that his apparent blooper was really the result of some deft editing, but something tells us it's not going to get quite as many views.



**DOWNSIDE** The sound of water coolers glugging out their relatively expensive cargo into flimsy paper cups has become a thing of the past in White City.

September 11 saw the last water coolers in the building removed by BBC workplace, with staff instead compelled to enact the less exotic task of turning a tap in their local kitchen sink, as if they were in their own house or something. Will this mean that trend analysts will redub 'water cooler shows' - those programmes whose power produces office banter, as inspired by *Seinfeld* - to 'kitchen hub shows'?

## EARWIGGING

OVERHEARD AT THE BBC

...I've just worked out why his trousers look so long!...

...How can anyone say the Nolans aren't big enough?...

...Grandma thinks I work on Panorama. It's just easier that way...

...Just remind me - is it a lamb that thinks it's a dog, or a dog that thinks it's a lamb?...

...Personally, I'll welcome the aliens when they arrive...Well, you'll have no choice, will you?...

...Do real eggs taste better than the eggs you buy in the shop?...



PHOTOGRAPH: KEN SINYARD

**CHOOSING A SANDWICH** is a very personal matter - there's probably an in-depth psychological profiling system somewhere based solely on people's most common lunchtime choice ('Type C7 - The Ham Sandwich: practical and dependable, averse to risk'). Now BBC workplace is giving staff a chance to see their personality writ large across BBC canteens with its new design a sandwich competition - the winner getting their creation made and sold, with a donation from each sale going to Children in Need. Of course the eternal conundrum of creativity vs commerciality will be the biggest hurdle, with sandwich creators forced to question whether their particular bread-

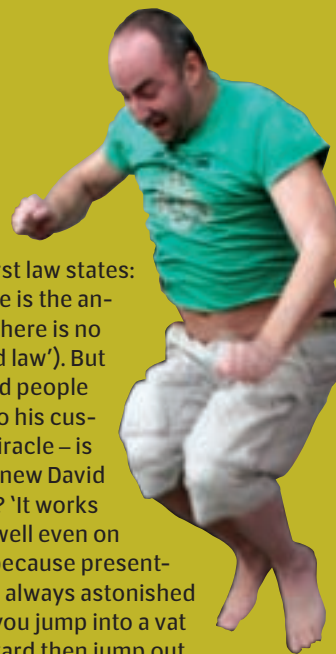
based peccadilloes are going to get the cash in for Pudsey. Some may think the market is crying out for a packaged version of that American classic the peanut butter and jelly (jam) sandwich, while others no doubt would gag in disgust at the prospect of a sweet lunch with their savoury crisps, preferring instead the populist delights of tuna mayonnaise. Chef Ainsley Harriott (pictured) will be part of the judging panel so make sure your effort is worthy of his expert attentions. To enter, go to the workplace website or pick up a form in your local catering outlet. The closing date is October 9.

See the trail at ariel online, or download a form at [tinyurl.com/wplace](http://tinyurl.com/wplace)

## LEAP OF SCIENCE

**JUMPING IN A CRATE OF CUSTARD** - not a usual method of interacting with the yellow liquid more at home on spongy deserts. Such conventions haven't stopped West Midlands science correspondent David Gregory from travelling the region with a jaw-dropping stunt that sees him walking on top of the custard and emerging unscathed, no splashing or sinking involved. Four local radio stations and *Midlands Today* were treated to David's antics last week, in part to promote the *Bang Goes the Theory* roadshow heading to Birmingham. Apparently the way it works is something to do with how 'non-Newtonian' liquids solidify on impact, and a more detailed explanation about the science can be found on David's blog, Gregory's First Law

('My first law states: Science is the answer. There is no second law'). But how did people react to his custard miracle - is he the new David Blaine? 'It works really well even on radio because presenters are always astonished when you jump into a vat of custard then jump out without getting wet,' says David. 'Phil Upton at WM even ran on the spot on it.'



## WE HEAR THAT...

**TWO BBC** old boys get to let their hair down at the end of the month when Andrew Harvey, formerly of this parish, talks to Peter Sissons, recently retired from the news studio, at the Media Society. The event is to mark the long tv career of Sissons, but given some of his views on the craft of news presenting (not to mention ageism, sexism and favouritism) the evening looks like being more than a respectful run through the Sissons cv. For details contact [Johnmair100@hotmail.com](mailto:Johnmair100@hotmail.com)

**A LUCRATIVE** sideline in celebrity impersonation awaits Al Seenan, hr adviser with the BBC People team in Scotland. Al was sitting in the communal area of Pacific Quay when he was approached by one David Tennant, on his way to a radio drama recording of *Of Mice and Men* for Radio 4. 'Do you know who you look like?' asked Tennant, who then suggested they have their photo taken together (pictured, right). Need a doctor for your sci-fi party? You know who to call...



**PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE** emerged last week suggesting Sarah Montague had succumbed to the early morning demands placed on her by *Today* and fallen asleep on the job, and in a particularly indiscreet place to boot. Turns out she's just the latest player in internet challenge The Lying Down Game... [tinyurl.com/smontague](http://tinyurl.com/smontague)

**ANOTHER REASON**, if any were needed, to make the move to MediaCity has come with the news that a unit underneath the multi-story car park is set to become a... supermarket. And not just any supermarket, but a Booths. Non-northern readers may be wondering if we just misspelt the name of a common high street chemist, but no. 'They have fairly posh, nice local produce popular with well-to-do farmers' wives,' our northern correspondent informs us. Fans of 'artisan breads' should sign up now.

## Win 'Where's Stig?'



**SOME SAY** he lives in a tree, and that his sweat can be used to clean precious metals... But the question being asked in a new offering from BBC Books is Where's Stig? The mysterious racing driver from *Top Gear* has gone on the run from those seeking

his true identity and can only be found in a series of busy scenes reminiscent of that classic of children's time wasting, Where's Wally. To enter to win one of five copies of Where's Stig?, answer this question: Who was the Stig sensationally 'revealed' to be in the first episode of the most recent series of *Top Gear*? Email ariel competitions by September 22.