

ariel

THE BBC NEWSPAPER

THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL USER
GENERATED CONTENT
Page 7



Illy Woolfson,
Sarah Lake,
Steve Goggin,
Tae Mawson
and Patricia
Almond of the
Headroom
team

PHOTOGRAPH: MARK BASSETT

Reasons to be cheerful

◆ **WHAT MAKES YOU SMILE?**
Meera Syal, Joe McGann
and Esther Rantzen are among
celebrities who reveal what brings a
grin to their famous faces in a BBC
Headroom campaign with a positive
approach to mental wellbeing.
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Or maybe you're just
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front lines** [Page 10](#)



Room 2316, White City
201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TS
020 8008 4228

Managing Editor

Stephen James-Yeoman 02-84222

Deputy editors

Sally Hillier 02-26877

Cathy Loughran 02-27360

Features editor

Clare Bolt 02-27445

Senior Broadcast Journalist 02-27630

Stephen Hawkes

Reporters

Laura Scarrott 02-84224

Peggy Walker 01-43940

Production editor

Claire Barrett 02-27368

Art editor

Ken Sinyard 02-84229

Business co-ordinator

Silvana Romana 02-84228

Ariel mail

claire.barrett@bbc.co.uk

Guest contributors this week

ANDY PARFITT controller of BBC Radio 1 explains the thinking behind the latest station branding. Page 4

RAY PAUL exec producer gives his tips for success when listeners take over for the day. Pages 8-9

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Jobs telephone 028 9032 8478

BBC Jobs John Clarke 02-27143

Room 2120, White City, London W12 7TS

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NEED TO KNOW THE WEEK'S ESSENTIALS

Worldwide to the rescue

◆ A MONSTER

SUCCESS could get even bigger, thanks to BBC Worldwide which has come to the aid of *Primeval*, ITV's dinosaur-slaying drama. It has become the largest investor in the programme, ensuring that it can return to the screen in 2011. UKTV has also invested in the series for its new entertainment pay tv channel, Watch.

It's all good news for the show's millions of fans, in the UK and overseas, who thought that *Primeval*, whose special effects make it hugely expensive to make, was in danger of extinction after ITV announced during the summer that after three successful series it would not recommission it.

Worldwide has put money into *Primeval* before and with the show facing an uncertain future, decided to give it a bigger cash boost. In fact its investment is not with cash-strapped ITV but with the independent company, Impossible Pictures, producers of the programme.

And while it might struck some people as odd for Worldwide to be investing in an ITV show, it is not unusual: it has also put money into *The Fixer*, another big ITV drama, and the upcoming *Single, Married, Other*.

The rationale is that the BBC believes it's healthy to have a well-supported tv drama industry, and investing in a programme gives Worldwide distribution rights, with which come plenty of money making opportunities.

Primeval is already one of BBC Worldwide's most successful drama exports and has been sold to around 45 countries, including Australia, America, Singapore and South Korea. In the UK it attracts audiences of 5.5m and is also a big hit on BBC America, which under the new deal takes a co-production credit for the first time.

'[Our] increased investment in the title is a



reflection of our belief in the quality of the whole production and its international appeal,' says Helen Jackson, BBC Worldwide's director of independents.

◆ **ANOTHER CHAPTER** in the history of BBC buildings closed at the weekend when the BBC Trust left 35 Marylebone High Street, moving just down the road in central London to 180 Great Portland Street. The relocation of the trust means that 35 MHS has now waved goodbye to its final BBC occupants.

Training and development transferred to White City in August, which is also when BBC London online and regional tv current affairs programme *Inside Out* moved to the Egton Wing of the new Broadcasting House development.

Radio London transferred to Egton, where it joins the Arabic and Farsi services, in mid-September, followed two weeks later by BBC London tv (see story, opposite).

The BBC now hopes to dispose of its leasehold interest in 35 MHS as part of the effort to provide better value for licence fee payers by rationalising its properties, particularly in costly central London.

The corporation first occupied 35 MHS in 1936 when it was the home of BBC Publications and Radio Times.

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IN THE FRAME AT BH NORTHERN IRELAND



MARK CARRUTHERS of Radio Ulster's *Good Morning Ulster* takes an innovative approach as he launches a public art competition to mark the 70th birthday of Broadcasting House in Ormeau Avenue, Belfast.

Adults and children are being invited to create a picture of the landmark building or a picture of what the BBC means to them. The best entries will be chosen for an exhibition. In addition, a winner from each age category will be selected to receive a VIP tour of BBCNI and a trip to radio and television studios in London. The results will be announced in December.

'Broadcasting House has been part of [Northern Ireland's] history for the past 70 years and when you work in it every day you become used to it and tend to forget this fact,' says Carruthers, who will chair the panel of judges.

He will be joined by local artist Joe McWilliams, Suzanne Lyle from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Mark Adair, head of corporate and community affairs at BBCNI.

'It will be fascinating to see other people's perspectives on the building,' Carruthers adds.

NEWS BITES

THE BBC has declined to discuss individual tax arrangements following press reports that it pays some star names through service companies. Paying presenters as freelancers or through service companies is not a 'tax dodge', says the BBC, adding that if it had doubts about a person's employment status, it would consult the Inland Revenue.

STRICTLY COME Dancing star Anton Du Beke has apologised 'unreservedly' for any offence caused after an exchange 'in jest' with his partner Laila Rouass during which he called her a 'Paki'. The exchange took place during rehearsals. Rouass has accepted his apology and the BBC says the couple has 'moved on'.

THE 75TH anniversary of the Maida Vale Studios will be celebrated on October 30 when all the radio networks will broadcast from the venue. Highlights include Kiri Te Kanawa on Radio 2; Snow Patrol on Radio 1; a special edition of Radio 4's *Front Row*; a performance from the BBC Symphony Orchestra on Radio 3; sets from BBC 6 Music's Craig Charles and BBC 1Xtra's Max.

THE BBC News website has won the Online News Association's internet award for breaking news for its coverage of the Mumbai attacks in November 2008. Other nominations were the Houston Chronicle for Hurricane Ike and the New York Times for the Hudson plane crash.

DONALD RUNNICKES will lead his inaugural concert as chief conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra on October 8. The occasion will be marked with a documentary on BBC Two Scotland, *Return Of The Maestro: Donald Runnicks*, followed by a broadcast of Mahler's First Symphony, in a deferred live relay from Glasgow City Halls.

OFCOM'S DIGITAL TV Progress Report for the second quarter of 2009 shows that 80 percent of tv sets in the UK are now digitally-enabled (up by seven percentage points in three months).

BRIAN MAY of Queen fame, who is bringing out a book called *A Village Lost and Found*, will be the guest on the first episode of Radio 4's *Open Country* when it returns for a new series on October 31.

MARY PHILLIPS, a contributor to BBC Jersey for more than 25 years, has died after a long illness, aged 81. An historian and teacher, her weekly broadcasts attracted a loyal following. She also contributed to more than a dozen documentaries on Jersey's history.

THE BBC is to pay substantial undisclosed libel damages to Labour MP Andrew MacKinlay who was wrongly accused of proposing an amendment to a government motion on MPs' expenses so he would benefit financially. He brought proceedings in response to a *Newsnight* broadcast in April.

Almost half say yes in last Salford vote

by Sue Llewellyn

Family considerations and fear of redundancy are among the key factors influencing people's decisions about Salford.

Of the 519 staff in pay grades 2-7, who had to decide by September 30 whether or not to relocate with their jobs to the north west, 234, or 45 per cent, said yes. Grades 2-7 were the final group to vote, and the result is in line with the 45 per cent of senior staff who have committed to go.

Even so, the latest round of voting in divisions scheduled to move – 5 live, children's, sport, FM&T, and learning – still leaves a majority who have decided against. Among them is sport publicist **Natasha Ayivor** who says: 'I grew up in London and it's where most of my family and friends live. My daughter is happy at school, so it just doesn't make sense for me to relocate to Manchester without any support network in place.'

Carmel Keaney, a talent manager in children's, feels the same. 'I come from a very close family. I think it's going to be a kicking place and I'm gutted I won't be able to go, but for me Salford came second to my family.'

Family considerations were a big part of **Adam Cumiskey's** decision too but in the end the 5 live breakfast

senior broadcast journalist voted to go. 'I weighed up the worst case scenario and thought I can't afford to be made redundant and I do like my job. If something else comes up in the meantime then great but if not then I know I'll have a job I like in Manchester.'

Richard Tribe, a software developer in tv platforms, says the timing is right as far as he is concerned. 'Our children's schooling would probably require a house move at some point and it fits better to do it sooner rather than later. There's also the chance to access some open spaces and to continue working at something I enjoy.'

This view is echoed by **Chris Tangye**, who also works in tv platforms, as an assistant development producer. 'I'm excited by the opportunities offered in Manchester – both in tv platforms and in

the change in lifestyle. As my girlfriend and I are from Sydney originally, I have no ties to keep me in London other than friends. I felt like I was someone who could participate in the move fairly easily.'

For 5 live publicist **Leanne Williams** the decision was not difficult. 'For me there's no reason not to go. You keep your job you like, it's part of an exciting move north and it fits with this particular time in my life.'



Adam Cumiskey with his daughter Kitty

TV debate to reflect UK

The SNP and Plaid Cymru will be 'part of the equation' if the BBC screens live debates between party leaders during the general election campaign, says the corporation's chief political adviser.

'We are completely conscious of the fact a UK-wide debate has implications for Scotland and Wales and we will find a way of taking account of that,' Ric Bailey said.

On Friday the BBC, ITV and Sky wrote to the Labour, Conservative and Lib Dem leaders with a joint proposal for three live televised

debates in the run up to the election, expected in the spring.

Each broadcaster would be responsible for producing one debate between all three leaders and for 'making suitable arrangements for ensuring due impartiality across the UK', they said in a joint statement.

Gordon Brown's announcement the following day that he was willing 'in principle' to take part in a tv debate was welcomed by David Cameron and Nick Clegg. But the SNP threatened legal action to block the screening

in Scotland of any debate that did not include its leader Alex Salmond.

On Sunday Salmond said his next step would be to 'seek guarantees of inclusion from the broadcasters'. On Monday Bailey told Ariel the BBC was 'nowhere near' preparing to fight a legal challenge.

Detailed discussions about possible formats for the planned debates would involve 'lots of different people with lots of different views', he said. 'But we will make sure viewers across the UK are appropriately catered for.'



Taking off the heat: presenter Riz Lateef in the refitted studio

This cool blue light is actually green

BBC LONDON HAS adopted low energy lighting in its new studio at Egton Wing in Broadcasting House.

Charles Simmonds from the BBC's environmentally sustainable productions department worked with BBC London's production teams and lighting directors to make it happen. 'As well as looking fantastic on-air, the lights use one third of the energy of the previous studio at Marylebone High Street, significantly cutting energy bills along the way,' he says.

Traditionally, studios use tungsten bulbs, but only five

percent of the energy consumed produces light: the rest is emitted as heat, making them seven times more expensive to maintain than low energy lighting or so-called 'cold lighting' because of the amount of air conditioning required to cool down tungsten-lit studios.

The ESP team hopes that as the technology evolves more studios will make the change. Watchdog and BBC Persian already use low-energy lighting in their studios.

explore.gateway.bbc.co.uk/environment/

To help reduce travel costs and energy consumption, from Monday October 12, minicab bookings for up to three people starting from the same point and travelling along a viable route may be combined into a single booking. This will occur as long as the route is 'practical and convenient and where significant cost savings and reductions in CO2 emissions can be made compared to those of individual minicab journeys'. View the minicabs page on Gateway for more information.

New CRB checking introduced

by Sue Llewellyn

The BBC has this week introduced more rigorous checks to clear people to work with children.

The revised Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checking applies to anyone in the BBC working potentially unsupervised with children, who would otherwise be put on restricted duties until checks had been completed.

If the checking process delays production, a more senior sign-off than was needed previously will now be required to grant clearance. A special compliance unit has been established to ensure the process runs smoothly.

The BBC's child protection policy was put into place following the Soham murders after consultation with the NSPCC.

Alison Cresswell has been the BBC's child protection expert for nearly three years and, in addition to advising on who needs to be CRB-checked, she also runs a range of special training and awareness schemes.

'The whole point of the policy is not only to protect the children we come into contact with but also the staff who deal with them. It's about the policy being made practical for the needs of production and content makers.'

CRB checking is mandatory in CBBC and over the past year a total of 1500 CRB checks have been done across the BBC – 120 since the new scheme began piloting in June. The strengthening of internal safeguarding procedures reinforced the BBC's ongoing commitment to working safely with children, said Lucy Adams, director of BBC people. For full details visit <http://explore.gateway.bbc.co.uk/peoplepolicies/default.aspx?page=2308>

Ninety jobs to go in rights revolution

by Cathy Loughran

Talks between the BBC and Bectu are due to open this week over the radical overhaul of rights clearance, resulting in around 90 job cuts over the next two to three years.

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By 2012, the plan is also to automate as many transactions as possible, increase collective licensing agreements and strike new deals

with some of the talent unions to simplify future rights acquisition.

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depends – will shift to programme teams and training for 1200 production co-ordinators is now under way.

A total of 90 out of 240 posts could close. Around 70 jobs in the group's public service teams and commercial rights clearance operation are scheduled to go by March 2012. A further two in music copyright and two more in the photo unit are expected to close by March next year.

These are in addition to the 21 closures already announced in the group's management information team, where the proposal is to out-source some jobs to Steria.

Hayward-Tapp says he hopes the cuts can be achieved without compulsory redundancies.

Welcome to BBC Radio 1

Controller Andy Parfitt on why the time is right for the station to fly the BBC flag

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Here's why. In the late 1960s the BBC was preparing to launch a new pop music radio station, to fill the void left by the soon-to-be outlawed pirate stations. One of the favoured names for this new service was Radio Flower, an allusion to the blooming flower-power generation. That was dropped in favour of the more sensibly titled Radio 1 and the station launched along with Radios 2, 3 and 4 – a portfolio that powers along to this day.

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But the perceived 'brand' distance between Radio 1 and the corporation has endured, not least because Radio 1 has its own 'teenage bedroom' (separate HQ) away from BH. Critics argue that in an attempt to connect directly with the young, we've ignored our tie to the masterbrand.

A myth worth busting

It's a bit of a myth. Radio 1 has never 'hidden' its connection with the BBC. Just listen to Zane Lowe dropping BBC ident into his mixes. The principle of delivering public value to our audiences is as real and focused at BBC Radio 1 today as they are at Radio 4.

For 42 percent of 15-24 year olds, the station is the most meaningful connection they have with the BBC. What we've done is to enlarge the BBC logo on our T-shirt.

Another myth worth busting is the view that young audiences think that 'BBC' equals old and grey. This is not borne out by our research and experience. The fact that the station belongs to the BBC means that the expectations of quality among our young audience is extremely high. The BBC master brand is an advantage.

So with our new schedule and new station sound, we're set for another strong period. At a time when the BBC is under such scrutiny, I want Ariel readers to know that everyone at Radio 1 is fighting hard to give every ounce of credit back to the BBC.

Hats off to Harry

by Laura Scarrott
Harry Whinney's attempt to raise £10,000 for charity has earned him publicity as far as Malta, India and Vietnam.

'My efforts have done the rounds as a bit of a wacky story,' he says.

And no wonder, because last week the East Midlands graphic designer travelled the 16 miles to work in five different ways to raise money for the region's air ambulance service.

On Monday he canoed from his home in Leicestershire to his BBC base in Nottingham, arriving two hours late for his 11am shift. 'The canoeing did take a little longer than expected – seven hours

– but I had some support from the producers.'

His colleagues also threw him a welcome party on Friday when he 'swam' part of the way to work in an exercise pool on the back of a lorry. 'I couldn't swim all the way because the inclines would have made the water slosh over the sides,' he says.

The lorry, which was donated along with the pool and a generator for the pool's currents, travelled at 15mph in a convoy that included two paramedics.

He emerged unscathed from his week, but has no plans to repeat it. 'Rather amusingly my wife has banned me from taking part in any more fundraisers for the next year.'

So far he has raised around £1500. You can sponsor him at Harrys-10grandchallenge.co.uk



PHOTOGRAPH MAIN IMAGE: SPIKE REDDINGTON

Way to go: Harry Whinney cycled, canoed, went by horse and cart and swam

Victory for BBC on disclosure of Balen report

by Sally Hillier

The BBC has won a significant legal battle with the ruling that it has 'no obligation' to disclose details from the 'Balen report' on its news coverage of the Middle East.

The corporation had always argued that the internal report, which was commissioned by Richard Sambrook when he was in charge of news and written in 2004 by senior editorial advisor Malcolm Balen, fell under an exclusion clause in the Freedom of Information Act.

Last week the High Court agreed, dealing a blow to solicitor Steven Sugar, from London, who has waged a long campaign to get the report made public.

He initially took his complaint to the information commissioner, who decided that the BBC was correct to say that it should not have to disclose material relating purely to its journalism.

Sugar appealed and won the backing of the information tribunal.

The BBC then took the case to the High Court, where a judge found that the tribunal had no

jurisdiction because the case fell outside the scope of the FOI Act. The Court of Appeal upheld that conclusion.

But in a further twist, the Law Lords held that the tribunal did have jurisdiction and that the case should be returned to the High Court.

At last week's hearing the judge, Mr Justice Irwin, concluded that: 'The BBC has no obligation to disclose information which they hold to any significant extent for the purposes of journalism, art or literature, whether or not the information is also held for other purposes.'

YOUR CHANCE TO WRITE A TRUE LIFE STORY

AT THE RISK OF SLIPPING into Take a Break territory, Ariel is looking for BBC staff with a 'real life' story to tell. In short, if you've triumphed over adversity, rescued an eagle or saved a colleague from jumping off the sixth floor window ledge, we'd like to hear from you.

Our competition is running in parallel with BBC learning's My Story, inviting the public to submit true, untold 'real life' stories in 300 to 1500 words, in the hope of inspiring non-writers to put pen to paper. Fifteen shortlisted writers will take part in a BBC One *My Story* series next year and five finalists will see their story published by Harper Collins.

Holly Greenland, project manager for the learning campaign, is taking My Story on the road to encourage the public to take part.



'We're trying to reach people who may not usually engage with the BBC, or people without strong reading or writing skills,' she says.

The learning team will be joined by alumni from Oxford University, who will be on hand to help people develop their ideas and, where necessary, write them up. The competition, Greenland stresses, is not about spelling or grammar. So far they've had a run of stories featuring triumph over adversity, health and illness, but more mundane tales, often based on favourite memories, are still popular.

Back us and while we can't promise the Ariel competition winner a five book deal, they will get a selection of books from Harper Collins and a face to face meeting with a senior editorial team member at the publisher's offices.

Stories should be between 300 and 1500 words and must be accompanied by a summary of between 50 and 300 words and a short description (email bbc.co.uk/mystory for writing tips)

The deadline is November 2; send your story to Ariel Competitions.

A female lead gives the new series of Criminal Justice fresh impact, **Claire Barrett** reports

WOMAN'S HOUR

YOU KNEW WHERE YOU WERE with Myra Hindley, but the latest portrayal of a killer by Maxine Peake – who played the Moors murderer in ITV1's *See No Evil* – is far more likely to play games with your sympathies.

As Juliet Miller, Peake is a middle-class mother on the brink in the second serial of *Criminal Justice*, stripped across five nights on BBC One this week. Part one saw her absent-minded and agitated as she sought to cover up an apparent affair while clinging by the nails to normality for the sake of 13 year-old daughter Ella and understanding barrister husband Joe.

But this is another Peter Moffat script, and notions of right and wrong, innocence and guilt, victim and offender are indistinct. The glossy, white interiors of the family home reflect back some neglectful, obsessive and abusive behaviour, before Juliet plunges the kitchen knife into her husband's chest.

'It is ambiguous,' agrees exec producer Hilary Salmon. 'Juliet's story is presented in a very complex way. We hope conversations will take place in living rooms around the country about whose side people are on.'

What is clear, though, is that *Criminal Justice* mark two has much to live up to. The 2008 drama won a Bafta, RTS award and, just last week, a Prix Italia; it earned high ratings, commendations from critics and namechecks in speeches. But simply sticking to a formula wasn't an option. 'The gender difference of the main character makes a massive difference,' attests Salmon, 'especially in terms of women's prisons and the impact of family law.'

With a wife who is a former family law barrister, Moffat says he is struck by the fact that 'the world of family law is hidden, secret and consequently misunderstood'.

'It occurred to me that writing a second *Criminal Justice* with a woman as the main character and the family courts alongside the criminal courts would make for impactful drama and a fresh way of looking at the system,' he explains.

With a headstart on research, the in-house production was turned round in just over a year – 'largely because Peter's on a roll,' says Salmon, 'a writer at the top of his game'.

But a writer who, nevertheless, had offended the Bar Council with his earlier work for what some people in the profession saw as a negative representation. The exec producer has been careful to support everything in the new script, but backs the writer's defence that 'at the bar, just as in life, ethical standards are all too often... grey'.

'It's made responsibly,' Salmon insists, 'but we don't just want to give the party line, reporting back what the professional bodies say. Our research bears out our depiction of prisons and

On the brink:
Maxine Peake



'It is told in a complex way'
HILARY SALMON



the way some barristers behave.'

The huge central performance and pivotal perspective – a journey through crime scene, police station, prison and court – is bolstered by an impressive cast, including Matthew MacFadyen and Sophie Okonedo, lured, reckons Salmon, by Moffat's multi-faceted characters. 'There's definitely a bit of Dickens in him. His work supports the little man and the fight for justice, while his characters all have their idiosyncrasies and their big moments.'

But whereas Dickens wrote in instalments for a weekly or even monthly readership, Moffat's story is told in daily parts. Stripping the drama like this liberates the storytelling, believes the exec. 'It doesn't have to be so pacy, with the need for a strong hook at the end of each programme. You can spend time in each part of the justice system, eking out the reasons why Juliet did what she did.'

Moffat willing, *Criminal Justice* itself could be eked out over any number of years. 'Just as long as Peter has something to say,' notes Salmon. 'I feel as if we've discovered a format without trying to.'

Criminal Justice, BBC One and BBC HD channel

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'My efforts have done the rounds as a bit of a wacky story,' he says.

And no wonder, because last week the East Midlands graphic designer travelled the 16 miles to work in five different ways to raise money for the region's air ambulance service.

On Monday he canoed from his home in Leicestershire to his BBC base in Nottingham, arriving two hours late for his 11am shift. 'The canoeing did take a little longer than expected – seven hours

– but I had some support from the producers.'

His colleagues also threw him a welcome party on Friday when he 'swam' part of the way to work in an exercise pool on the back of a lorry. 'I couldn't swim all the way because the inclines would have made the water slosh over the sides,' he says.

The lorry, which was donated along with the pool and a generator for the pool's currents, travelled at 15mph in a convoy that included two paramedics.

He emerged unscathed from his week, but has no plans to repeat it. 'Rather amusingly my wife has banned me from taking part in any more fundraisers for the next year.'

So far he has raised around £1500. You can sponsor him at Harrys-10grandchallenge.co.uk



PHOTOGRAPH MAIN IMAGE: SPIKE REDDINGTON

Way to go: Harry Whinney cycled, canoed, went by horse and cart and swam

Victory for BBC on disclosure of Balen report

by Sally Hillier

The BBC has won a significant legal battle with the ruling that it has 'no obligation' to disclose details from the 'Balen report' on its news coverage of the Middle East.

The corporation had always argued that the internal report, which was commissioned by Richard Sambrook when he was in charge of news and written in 2004 by senior editorial advisor Malcolm Balen, fell under an exclusion clause in the Freedom of Information Act.

Last week the High Court agreed, dealing a blow to solicitor Steven Sugar, from London, who has waged a long campaign to get the report made public.

He initially took his complaint to the information commissioner, who decided that the BBC was correct to say that it should not have to disclose material relating purely to its journalism.

Sugar appealed and won the backing of the information tribunal.

The BBC then took the case to the High Court, where a judge found that the tribunal had no

jurisdiction because the case fell outside the scope of the FOI Act. The Court of Appeal upheld that conclusion.

But in a further twist, the Law Lords held that the tribunal did have jurisdiction and that the case should be returned to the High Court.

At last week's hearing the judge, Mr Justice Irwin, concluded that: 'The BBC has no obligation to disclose information which they hold to any significant extent for the purposes of journalism, art or literature, whether or not the information is also held for other purposes.'

BBC North's head of development and events has been asked to turn Salford into a 'creative powerhouse'

A lot on her hands



Fertile ground: Pat Connor, against a colourful backdrop at the Media Centre

by Clare Bolt

PAT CONNOR has a 'minor obsession' with books about creativity. 'My shelves at home are stacked with them. Thomas Edison's innovation labs, Lego, Toyota....'

It's fitting, as BBC North's first head of development and events has been tasked with turning Salford into a 'creative powerhouse', a smoke-belching ideas factory spewing inspiration over the north. It's no small ambition, but the woman who spent the past two years leading Vision Productions' development team feels prepared for the task ahead.

When a speaker at the Vision Forum likened the impact of the BBC in Salford to Hollywood on film and Google on Silicon Valley, she was positively delighted.

'I love that level of ambition,' she says. 'Let's look at what people think might be possible and then put a rocket right under it.'

But if BBC North is to take off in a rocket-fuelled explosion of 'excitement and clamour' in 2011, the clock is ticking. Peter Salmon has tasked her with delivering the 'big collaborative and cross-cutting ideas that will define BBC North': in other words, she's there to build partnerships and devise brilliant, original ideas for content and events.

What then, are BBC North's development priorities? Content-wise, she's looking for ideas that 'punch above their weight' and events that speak 'loud and proud' for the region. 'The bottom line is we have to improve perceptions of the

BBC for the 15 million people who live in the north of England,' she says firmly. 'Our content will feel rooted in the north, but it has to be loved by people across the UK. How we do that is part of the challenge.'

One solution is to find willing partners in the region. She is already targeting organisers of Manchester International festival and last week she invited the BBC Philharmonic, Radio Manchester, *North West Tonight* and BBC arts and comedy north to brainstorm some 'spectacular ideas' for an event.

'Salford has got the potential to be a brilliant playground,' she says. 'We've got access to a public space twice the size of Trafalgar Square; we've got rooftops, spaces, studios and waterfronts. Could we put on an

event for children and families? Can we involve FM&T or sport? What's the scope for public performances?'

Connor compares the three creative groups in Salford (children's and families, sport and entertainment and performance) to a 'diverse, modern family', and she's looking for projects which involve two or three relatives.

'Let's look at what people think might be possible and then put a rocket right under it'

'That's when the alchemy takes place,' she says confidently. 'When you have different content, different platforms, experience and expertise...'

For the staff, she envisages an idyllic working environment: 'I want it to be very open, very collaborative. People will be able to experiment and take responsibility for ideas and projects. They'll be able to create their own fertile networks within and beyond the BBC and feel empowered to make big decisions.'

But most of all? 'I'm determined we all have as much fun as possible,' she says. 'And I'd really like the work we're doing at BBC North to be written and talked about as an inspirational creative model one day.'

When it happens, you can guarantee there'll be space on her bookshelf.

SCAR: THE MASTER CONTROL ROOM FOR NEWS IS 40 YEARS OLD

by Claire Barrett

IT'S ALWAYS NIGHT in the basement of Stage 6, the absence of windows making a stranger of the daylight. Bulbs are simply dimmed to signify the onset of the late shift for the engineers working in Scar – the master control room for BBC News, which has just turned 40.

The inhabitants, many having worked together for years – provide audio and video feeds to news production folk.

'We're somewhere between a glorified telephone exchange and the air traffic control of video,' says Rob Jones, Scar co-ordinator.

'Those upstairs' request the feeds via a computerised booking system. Scar allocates the receivers to get the pictures to air, liaises with crews and correspondents, lines up the visuals and switches circuits at the right time.

The pictures return to TV Centre by satellite or terrestrial link.



The heart of it: Rob Jones in Scar, in the basement of Stage 6 at TVC

One vestige of the Queen's coronation in 1953 is the LoCo network. This was installed, at great cost, to get pictures of the momentous oc-

casion into living rooms around the nation. These days, at various points around London – Buckingham Palace and the Old Bailey among them

– crews simply have to plug in to network boxes to access the lines.

Away from city skyscrapers, satellite links are preferred. 'The weird thing is that the satellite stuff, which goes on a 50,000 mile round trip to get here, is much easier to get on air than that travelling terrestrially,' says Jones. 'It's not uncommon for a gas main to be dug up in central London, taking half a mile of circuit with it.'

Long haul travel – as well as the 24/7 demand for material – means that pictures can go astray.

Most times, the Scar team can 'engineer' its way around problems. During the funeral of Princess Diana, for instance, a dodgy bit of video cable threatened transmission. 'One of our engineers attempted to replace it, but the pictures were needed live on air right away. He had to stand there holding the two cables together.'

It helps that the team are trained engineers, who understand the in-

frastructure – the main distribution frame and corridor upon corridor of audio and video routers that fill the back rooms. Systems specialist Robert Brown can pinpoint the source of a problem in seconds.

But as well as problems, there's also fun – booking a feed from a space shuttle, and even, computer-game like, guiding a lost news helicopter towards Number Ten. 'I had to do my left a bit, right a bit routine...' says Jones.

The 40th anniversary is bittersweet as the team will be merging with the revamped London Control Room at Broadcasting House, with the feeds into TVC to be remotely controlled. The Scar name will not survive and the team has already moved from the news division to FM&T.

'Everyone was quite proud of being in news,' confides Jones. 'It gave me a rush, getting home and seeing a package on the Six that I'd spent the day setting up. You felt it was all your own work.'

week@work



1Xtra producer Raeph Powell gives the U Takeover trainees some last minute hints and tips

LISTENERS TAKE OVER

1Xtra put its money where its mouth is when it let 22 young people take over the airwaves for a day as part of BBC Blast's radio and online training scheme, U Takeover. Exec producer **Ray Paul** explains how to make such projects a success

1 Treat the young people with respect. Listen to their views on what the network is currently doing – they ARE the audience.

2 Have adult to adult conversations; they have left school and don't want to be lectured by a teacher figure. Make them understand WHY things are done and what happens to the programmes if we don't match expectations.

3 Be honest. Don't promise things you can't deliver; trust is a quality that you only have one shot at with youngsters.

4 Work as a tight knit team. Meet regularly, always review your objectives and ensure everyone is on the same page.

5 Ensure your line managers have totally bought in to the project. If you face battles from above and battles from below, you are going to be under pressure.

6 Have production ambassadors. We were fortunate to have top quality producers and broadcast assistants who believed in the project, and spread the word to their peers.

7 Treat the trainees as part of the team. We all remember what it is like when you join a new team – use your experience to make them feel at home and watch them blossom.

8 Set the rules out from the start, and stick to them. Although this isn't school, anarchy can't reign. Let them know the boundaries of acceptance.

9 Don't celebrate too early. With the BBC's infrastructure, just being on air isn't enough. Treat each show on its individual merit as a radio show as that is how the audience will judge it.

10 Never give up. Nobody does this solely for money or glory, and the feeling that you can make a difference to a young person's life cannot be underestimated or matched.

COMING UP



Friends actor Matt LeBlanc (left) will star in a new comedy series for BBC Two. **EPISODES**, a six part series written by *Friends* writer David Crane, sees a British couple

try to recreate their successful comedy series for American tv. It will be made by Hat Trick Productions for the BBC and Showtime and will be exec produced by Simon Wilson. Channel controller Janice Hadlow commissioned the series.

Polly Hill will executive produce **A PASSIONATE WOMAN**, a two parter about a mother who has an affair with her Polish neighbour.

Billie Piper (right) will play the lead in the drama destined for BBC One next year. Commissioned by channel controller Jay Hunt and controller of drama commissioning Ben Stephenson, it will be made by Rollem Productions.



Jermaine Jackson is on the look out for talented dancers in a new entertainment show for BBC Three. The six part series **MOVE LIKE MICHAEL JACKSON** will be stripped across one week and made by Gogglebox Entertainment and Fever Media. It will tx later this year and be executive produced by Karl Warner, who commissioned it. **Ariel View Page 10.**

A two part drama about the World War Two vessel the RMS Laconia has been commissioned for BBC Two. Made by Talkback-



Thames, Teamworx and ARD, **THE SINKING OF THE LACONIA** will tell the story of the people

on board when it was sunk by German forces. Commissioned by former controller of BBC Two Roly Keating and former controller of fiction Jane Tranter it will be exec produced by Matthew Read. It will tx next year.

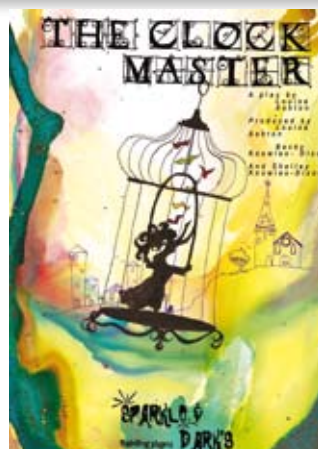
SHAMELESS PLUG

◆ LOUISA ASHTON, RUNNER POST PRODUCTION

In typical fashion, my job outside the BBC is performing, having trained for six years in theatre.

The world of 'runners' is a drip-tray of similar young people and it was while working here that I met two other like-minded

creatives, Shelly and Rebecca Knowles-Dixon (yes, they are related). Together we formed the theatre company, Sparkle and Dark's Travelling Players Show. This month we're performing **The Clock Master**, an original play about the dark secrets of a pocket watch, at The Rosemary Branch Theatre in London.



Incorporating magic, music boxes and a monkey, the play promises puppetry, animation and a little audience interaction.

Tickets cost £4 for BBC staff and concessions and £5 for everyone else. Call the box office on 0207 7046665 or visit tinyurl.com/theclockmaster

CHANGING PLACES



JAMIE HINDHAUGH (pictured) becomes head of production 2012. **TRACEY MORRIS** replaces him as head of sourcing, production resources... BBC

Cambridgeshire bj **MOUSUMI BAKSHI** starts a six month attachment as sbj news editor at the station... **PAUL GRYCKIEWICZ** starts as senior category manager for production resources.... Assistant producer **TONY SHEARMAN** leaves the BBC after 15 years in radio sport.



1973 Sinclair Cambridge calculator



1980 Sony Walkman



1981 BBC Micro



1983 Motorola mobile



1990 Mac Classic



2001 iPod

9

Are you keeping UP?

WHAT MAKES YOU UPGRADE? WE ASKED GADGET GEEKS AND LATE ADOPTERS

Hello, my name is Andrew Wong and I used to be an excessive gadgetry upgrader. I gradually stopped once I realised that, sure, the gadgets got sleeker, more useful and could hold more things – but having a new iPod Nano didn't mean I'd have more time to listen to podcasts. Now, I only get a new gadget if it actually does something new that it didn't do before. And in this age of convergence, most new gadgets simply add an old trick to their palette...
Andrew Wong, senior content producer

I'm a second hand upgrader – my tv is the only thing I bought from new. My hi-fi cost me 40 quid but was £500 new, my Blu-ray player was second hand – it's amazing the deals you can get. People must get bored of the stuff REALLY quickly...

Tom Percival, late producer Breakfast, Radio Northampton

My phone is an ancient Nokia, my camera a beaten up old Casio, but in my dreams I have a palm pre and GPS enabled Eye-Fi equipped Leica digital. Why do I have such rubbish kit when I covet such exclusive stuff? Firstly, I'm lazy and the disruption of upgrading is a wrench. Secondly, I also hardly use the features I have, so these objects of desire would be wasted on me. And finally, I could no more afford these toys than a speedboat moored in Portofino.
Ant Miller, technologist

I normally upgrade my phone when eldest child either breaks, loses or has his stolen. He ends up with my old one and I get a new one, although I have taken to getting pink items in the hope it will put him off my cast-offs and look after his things better...
Louise Prince, rights executive

It's impossible to keep up; product cycles are so short that there's always something better just about to come out. That said, you have to take the plunge at some point and I'd like to see far more senior people in news with iPhone or Android devices, so they can fully understand how news

consumption is changing. My favourite gadget is the Pico 101 Pocket Projector: hooked to the iPhone you can go from small screen to big screen in a trice – via BBC Redux I've been able to watch Andrew Marr's History of Modern Britain beamed onto the bedroom wall, or the ceiling when a position change is needed!
Paul Brannan, editor emerging platforms

I replace them if they break (my vhs hasn't broken yet) or when the product gets down to about £50 or less – it's a

A psychologist explains...

According to psychologist Dr Rob Yeung, people with the biggest thirst for new technology tend to have a certain personality type. He calls them 'high inquisitors' – people who are by nature hugely curious, imaginative and open to new experiences. 'They tend to be early adopters,' he explains. 'They will pounce on new technology and love it. They'll be on Instant Messenger, Facebook, Twitter... they'll engage in all these things but they don't tend to evaluate how useful those forms of technology might be.'

rule of thumb. I bought a Sony Cyber-shot k750i in November 2005 and tried to upgrade it last year, but the mobile was so poor I sent it back and carried on with my k750i. The quality of the photos and the navigation were better and it's smaller too.
Annabel Blair, head of internal communications, World Service

I currently have a Nokia N97, an HTC Hero (android), a BBC Blackberry; an iPhone 3gs, a Chinese phone with digital tv. I have a Mifi device; a 3 Mobile router and a Novatel wireless router all with data sims. I am desperately waiting for the iTablet

and the Nokia N900. As an obsessive upgrader it is the functionality that attracts me; I want to know how the new stuff works. I purchase new phones as often as possible. iPhones tie you in with their application capabilities, their entertainment value and their podcast platform. I have never made a phone call from one: Nokia offer a reliable phone platform for that.
Tom Cranstoun, technical specialist

I have had three phones in ten years. My first lasted for five. One of my laptops is nine years old. I got a new mp3 player when I accidentally dropped the old one in the fountain outside the Broadcast Centre. Who needs to upgrade if it still works? (Goes off to chunter about the throwaway society...)

Andrew Bowden, senior development producer

As I get older I become more resistant to change. My mobile is now five years old and the number 4 button was stuck on with Sellotape until I found an abandoned facia. That said, I did just splash out on a new Apple Mac and added a Time Machine – I understand it and it's easy to use. I'm happy to upgrade and spend the cash a) if the gadget does something I actually want/need b) I don't have to invest much of my time learning how it works. If it doesn't then I'm happy to soldier on with obsolete stuff.
James Price, senior content producer

I fall into the 'when it stops working I'll change it' category – something to do with being from Yorkshire. Also it's about what you use stuff for. I want my iPod to play music. How you can 'watch' a film on an mp3 player screen is beyond me!
Iain Day, project manager

I only upgrade when it's free – not that bothered about technology to be honest. If I have a phone that I can use to make a call and send a text then that's enough for me.
Marianne Bradley, bj, BBC Essex

In the 70s the humble pocket calculator was a status symbol. Today we pack more memory in our mobiles than was used to land a man on the moon. Adam Bambury looks at BBC Four's Electric Revolution season – the years when our interest in electronic gadgetry began to the decades where it exploded into full-blown obsession



Short memories: Martin Freeman (centre) plays Chris Curry, head of Acorn, in *Micro Men*

RIDING INTO HISTORY

VHS versus Betamax, Mac versus PC, Blu-Ray versus HD-DVD – all battles in the never-ending technology format wars. To the victor goes the holy grail of market dominance, to the losers a purgatorial existence gathering dust in the car-boot sales and eBay auctions of the country.

Sinclair versus Acorn may not be the first such clash to come to mind, but the very British tale of computer visionary Clive Sinclair and his colleague then rival Chris Curry is getting a re-telling in new BBC Four comedy drama *Micro Men*, which charts the two men's rise and fall as they fight for dominance over the UK home computer market of the 1980s.



Batteries included: Alexander Armstrong on the Sinclair C5

Martin Freeman is Curry, with Alexander Armstrong of *Armstrong and Miller* gaining the distinctive bald head and orange beard of Sinclair. Period accuracy is vital and copies of the script were sent to both men for their perusal. The production team has painstakingly recreated the era with original computers and props. But that's not all: 'It was always Saul [Metzstein, director] and Tony's [Saint, writer] intention to splice real archive footage with our own created footage to take an audience back to that time,' explains exec producer Jamie Laurenson. 'We're showing the actual computer programmes like *Jet Set Willy* and *Elite* – which speak to a lot of people – as well as archive and news footage.'

Micro Men is billed as a comedy-drama, but don't expect a sneering parody of the eccentricities of Sin-

clair and his notorious C5 electric car. 'It's a comically affectionate account of the times,' Laurenson offers. 'They're talking about the tiny amount of memory they have at the time in hushed tones, and that raises a chuckle. From our lofty vantage point what was pioneering then looks like small beer now.'

The exec producer is instead keen to emphasise how the piece respects the pair and re-acknowledges their place in the history of technology: 'Many of the things Clive talked about in the 80s are taken for granted now. Electric cars are exempt from the congestion charge. The mini tvs the film opens with are now on your iPhone. These things have happened and his dream of the miniaturisation of technology is all around us.'

Micro Men, Oct 8, BBC Four See the trail at [Ariel Online](#)

BOARD GAMES AND BIKES WERE FUN FOR A WHILE

From a historic perspective the last three decades of the 20th Century went in the blink of an eye, but in technological terms they saw a sudden acceleration in the prevalence and sophistication of consumer technology which is increasing to this day. Three-part BBC Four series *Electric Dreams* attempts to capture this (re)evolution all over again, and in that quintessentially 90s format, the reality show. The Sullivan-Barneses are our time travellers, a tech-happy family who experience what life was like before everyone had their own personal screen. It's back to the future for the parents, and a voyage of discovery for the four children.

Every day for the family represents a year in history, starting in 1970 and going through to 2000. While their house, clothes and hair get transformed in the style of each era, the real star of the show is the technology, or lack of. Sourcing and distributing the appropriate kit is the show's 'tech team', three specialists who choose what new item to deposit on the family's doorstep each day, from a colour television to a Sony Walkman (in today's money, £300)

'I was most interested in the reaction of the kids and how they would deal with everything,' says Gia Milinovich, technology writer, presenter and 'professional dork'. 'When they started they had nothing except board games and bicycles. Initially they were really excited, but that was probably because the whole experience was new. By the 90s they just wanted their old stuff back, and everything was really rubbish and basic as far as they were concerned.'



For the parents it was a similar story. Accountant Adam had a hard time doing a day's work on a Commodore PET, an ancient computer that suffers the affliction of not actually being connected to anything else, unthinkable in today's communications age. He and son Hamish did get excited about the archaic BBC Micro, brought into the house as the family's first personal computer, but such gadget geekery didn't interest mum Georgie who spent the 70s grappling with feeding the family without a freezer, a surprisingly recent appliance credited in one of the social-history excerpts in the show with getting women out of the kitchen and into the workforce.

It seems most of the fun was had behind the scenes. 'Everyone on the crew would turn up at computer museum and be like 'Oh my God I had that!' or 'Oh my God my neighbour had that!' or 'I remember this kid who no-one liked at school had that rubbish computer!' laughs Gia. 'It was so exciting for everyone. Even the silliest little things, the non-technology bits and bobs around the house, people still remember.'

While at times it may have been a trial living through the 70s, witnessing the influence of technology on their home as the decades progressed did have its benefits: 'The one thing the whole family learned is that they like spending time together, which [usually] they don't do a whole lot of. In the modern world we all have our own screens, and we separate out,' says Gia. 'They really enjoyed the 70s for reminding them of that.'

Electric Dreams continues on Tuesdays on BBC Four

AFGHANISTAN: balancing risk and reward

Last month's bloody rescue of kidnapped journalist Stephen Farrell put into sharp focus the risks of independent reporting in Afghanistan. Head of newsgathering Fran Unsworth has strongly denied claims that, for safety reasons, the BBC insists on embedding its journalists with the military. But what is it really like for those working on the ground in the country, as security deteriorates? Ariel asked three people who know

THE REPORTER

MARTIN PATIENCE

STEPHEN FARRELL'S KIDNAP

in Kunduz has certainly raised awareness of the risks of being out in the field in certain parts of the country – particularly of kidnapping and the potential for a rescue operation to go wrong.

There's no question that security here is getting worse, the insurgency is strengthening across the country, from south to north, east to west. We've had a permanent BBC safety adviser in Kabul since the end of 2008 and I think that forces us to think closely about everything we do, possibly puts a brake on our natural instincts.

The south and east of the country are tricky and in some areas, like Helmand, you have to go with the military.

Correspondent Ian Pannell recently spent two weeks embedded with the British forces and since with the Americans in the south, and he said it was the most dangerous situation he'd ever been in. Caroline Wyatt was in Helmand with the troops during the election, when her convoy was caught up in a rocket attack.

Being embedded is possibly the most dangerous place to be. As far as the insurgents are concerned, you are a soldier. In one recent attack an AP photographer lost a foot and a CBS corre-

spondent was badly injured.

You can still travel independently, with the right precautions. I went an hour's drive south of Kabul, with an Afghan tribal elder in a low profile jeep, to do a piece for the *Ten* on the mechanics of Afghans going to the polls. We assessed the risk, spent no more than an hour and a half at our destination and headed back.

I was also in Mazar-e-Sharif in the north for a week during the election, with a local producer to vouch for me. We didn't book a hotel in the main square but chose a small guest house, out of the way, and spent only a couple of days in the villages. Every day, we made sure we got back into the city before dark. You have to be disciplined.

But the real danger is often not the Taliban and the insurgents, but criminal kidnapping for money, particularly in Kabul, or getting caught in a bomb blast.

It is frustrating that we can't go to Helmand and spend time with people in the towns and villages, but you have to be realistic. Although security is going downhill, there is still massive scope for reporting.

We have excellent local producers, language service colleagues and local reporters



strung out across the country. No one else comes close.

Journalists still see more of this country than diplomats and NGOs do. The key is to stay low key – distinguish ourselves from the diplomats in their large convoys.

Kabul reporter Martin Patience has been based in Afghanistan for almost 18 months. He has also reported from Gaza and Lebanon

'The real danger is not the Taliban, but risk of kidnap'

MARTIN PATIENCE

THE SAFETY ADVISER

RUPERT DAVIS

ACROSS GLOBAL NEWS and newsgathering, the BBC team in Afghanistan now stands at 230. Restrictions are regional and constantly updated with daily intelligence from ISAF (International Security Assistance Force), the Afghan police, British forces, the Foreign Office, external security companies and our own Afghan staff.

On the day that Stephen Farrell went missing, newsgathering and World Service had also wanted to investigate the Nato bombing of two petrol tankers in Kunduz, but it was judged to be too dangerous.

We can't give blanket advice. There are ethnic considerations, cultural and gender issues – perhaps as simple as making sure a woman rides in the back of a car.

It's true that embedded journalists can't report impartially but it is a means to gather one part of the story. And such is the likelihood of a journalist being a casualty, given the rise in military deaths, there needs to be a powerful newsgathering imperative to go off base.

An embedded AFP crew that were severely injured in the east of the country were travelling in a mine resist-

ant vehicle. One soldier was killed. When a mine hits, a shock wave, akin to a sledgehammer, hits your body. At times, no amount of armour can help. Sometimes you'll just be on the wrong road at the wrong time.

Recently the media colours have changed, from blue to tan body armour, to prevent journalists standing out. If I was an insurgent and had the choice of shooting a soldier, a policeman or a journalist, I'd shoot the journalist because it would be a headline for weeks.

Of course, independent reporting still goes on. BBC journalists have recently reported, unembedded, from areas in Herat, Gardez, Badakshan, Paktiya, Wardak and Bamiyan, to name but a few. Whether interviewing local tribal elders, looking at the rise of Talibanization or illegal arms trading, BBC staff continue to push the boundaries of journalism, on the limits of safety.

In most cases, local journalists are safer. Tragically, local BBC freelance producer Abdul Samad Rohani was murdered in Southern Afghanistan last year after some of his reporting for another Afghan outlet angered



a local warlord. Within eight hours I had deployed from the UK to investigate his death and co-ordinate the extraction of his colleague from Kajaki to Kabul.

The relentlessness of the security concern is a bigger issue for local staff. Ex-pats get breaks back home. For western media, kidnapping is undoubtedly the biggest risk. Since Alan Johnston's captivity, BBC protection measures have been further refined, region by region, so we offer bespoke advice.

Kabul itself is relatively benign, with occasional 'spectacular' incidents. The kidnapping risk is well documented but manageable. The BBC bureau and accommodation in the city are not Fort Knox, but a balance of protection versus profile. The lower our profile the better.

Deputy head of high risk Rupert Davis is a former army officer who completed three tours in Afghanistan as recently as 20 months ago

THE SOLDIER/JOURNALIST CLIVE LEWIS

I'M A TERRITORIAL Army lieutenant and I've just spent the summer in charge of the army's combat camera team (CCT) in Helmand province.

It's certainly been emotional. The sheer contrast of one month presenting on *BBC Look East* and the next finding yourself in the middle of some of the fiercest fighting you can imagine, is hard to describe. There were times when I wondered if we'd ever make it home.

The CCT is a small team of soldiers, trained to use video and stills cameras, who are then attached to frontline fighting troops. It's their job to capture British soldiers in action, often in the most dangerous situations – in this case, covering Operation Panther's Claw. As their commanding officer, it was my job primarily to protect them as they concentrated on getting the pictures. Much of the fighting you will have seen on the news in the last few months was filmed by my team.

Although the pre-deployment training you get is excellent, I don't think anything can quite prepare you for the reality. On one operation,

the patrol we were with was ambushed after an improvised explosive device (IED) blew up the lead truck. Fortunately no one was killed, but immediately after the explosion local insurgents unleashed machine gun fire and rocket propelled grenades, trapping us for around 15 hours. It's not something I'd like to repeat.

All the risks aside, the whole issue of em-



bedding journalists with the military is a complex one for both sides. The embedded reporter has to accept the price for security is also a loss of editorial sovereignty and the ability to show up where and when you want.

Media Ops, the umbrella organisation responsible for the UK military's media output and media handling, is the one most journalists in theatre will have daily contact with. Part of its controlling instinct stems from a natural distrust of journalists, and in the military, messing up with the media ie fluffing an interview or being caught out on camera etc

has taken on an almost mythical 'taboo' quality. For an organisation used to doing things behind closed doors, the media therefore represents the bright light of external intrusion.

Personally I feel all embedded reporting from Afghanistan is a compromise. A compromise between the truth as the journalist sees it and their perceived assessment as to how relations with their military hosts will be affected by the story they write/broadcast.

It depends on just how juicy, how world-shatteringly big the story is as to how far journalists will go to antagonise their military minders. Hardly ideal, but if the alternative is no coverage, or at best coverage from the margins, it seems a compromise most news organisations, including the BBC, are prepared to make.

Clive Lewis is a political reporter/presenter for BBC Look East and The Politics Show, and a 7 Rifles infantry officer

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

Why did we take a jab in the dark?

When do we stop reinforcing the bogus link between Natalie Morton's death and her cervical cancer vaccination? The News 24 on-screen graphic I'm looking at now even says 'Cervical Cancer Inquest' while acknowledging that Natalie died as the result of a malignant tumour. Talk about doublethink. We know there is no link, and yet we make the link by reinforcing the link and then denying it. Jesus wept. We may as well find out what Natalie had for breakfast and call it the Shredded Wheat inquest for all the sense making the connection with the cervical cancer vaccine makes. And that's

just one of the many dozens of things that will have happened to Natalie in the hours before she died which are also irrelevant.

When are we going to apologise to the thousands of teenage girls and their parents that we have unnecessarily terrified? How are we going to put right the inevitable dip in vaccinations as scared parents and schools withdraw from the programme? Did we learn nothing from the MMR/autism scare that we helped hype that has since resulted in an increase in measles cases and at least one death? **Mark O'Donnell**, *BBC Wiltshire*

No grey area

One of our six public purposes is to represent the UK, its nations, regions and communities – and that means we need to reflect and connect with all our audiences. Why hide the fact that we are seeking ways to do just that?

It's true we have been both honest and open in acknowledging the areas where we don't do this as well as we'd like. The visibility of older women in serious news and current affairs programmes is one of those areas (September 29).

Talking publicly about our aspiration to better reflect all sections of the community is exactly what we should be doing. It opens up debate on what should be a concern for the whole industry and yes – we hope it will encourage older women to think about applying for more visible and more senior roles.

This and other more targeted forms of encouragement is called Positive Action. Unlike positive discrimination, which is illegal in the UK, Positive Action is perfectly legal and standard practice. Positive Action refers to a variety of measures designed to enable employers to encourage people from certain groups who are under-represented in the workplace to apply for jobs and promotions. Let's be clear though, Positive Action absolutely requires that selection is made solely on merit.

Amanda Rice
acting head of diversity

Mayor and Square



I know that the BBC has (unfairly in my opinion) been accused of having a left leaning bias in recent years, but surely allowing a Conservative mayor of London a high profile cameo in the corporation's most watched soap, the week of the Labour conference, is going too far in redressing the balance?

Matt Arnold, *producer/director, Watchdog*

Found a gem

I just wanted to let you know about a really nice gesture from Robin Doran, who works at FM&T. I found his wallet on Wood Lane when I was cycling to White City last Monday. I handed it in to reception and it made its way back to him later that day.

But rather than just send an email thanking me (or not, as many people probably would have done) he offered to give the value of the wallet to a charity of my choice.

How lovely!
Madeleine Morris
sbj, World Service

Form of torture

I've been fuming over the reply from procurement's John O'Donnell to Dominic Casciani's letter regarding the silliness of limiting hire cars by engine size only (September 22).

Not only does procurement stand by a policy that they admit is fundamentally broken, but their 'solution' is to fill in more forms – giving reasons why you need a larger car – and to make the process more complex if you want to be greener.

I'd like to make something clear to all in procurement, HR, expenses and every other support function of the BBC – we value you as colleagues dearly, but every time you give us another form to fill in it diminishes you in our eyes and eats into all our days.

If you want people to use greener cars, reward the use of greener cars. If you can't find a mechanism to do so, keep looking, and in the meantime do not force us to fill in pointless paperwork.

Grrrrr!
Ant Miller
technologist, FM&T

Marylebone magic

After 73 years as a BBC building, 35, Marylebone High Street ceased to be so on October 2.

BBC Publications moved in back in 1936, when growing sales for Radio Times meant that its publishing staff needed larger premises. Apart from the war years, publications operated out of this building until 1992, when it moved to Woodlands.

Over the last 17 years it has been home to BBC London and, more recently, to the BBC Trustees.

Personally I spent 23 years of my BBC career there. It really was the most wonderful building with a great atmosphere, situated just ten minutes from Regent's Park in one direction and Oxford Street in the other. It had a real 'village' atmosphere, very different from the cavernous, factory like buildings that many of us work in today.

As treasurer of the MHS Club – a luncheon club for ex-MHS staff – I have been trying to find out more about the building. Can anyone help?

Steve Wehrle
treasurer, MHS Club, BBC Worldwide

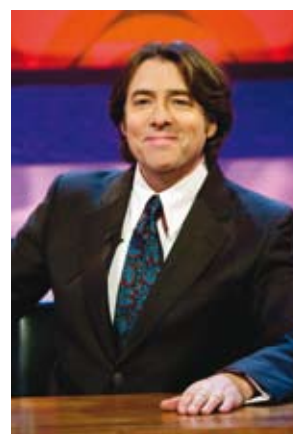
High priority?

I've just upgraded the telly to HD, and have to admit I'm one of the few in our place who does notice an appreciable improvement in picture quality. However I was a bit miffed on finally accessing the BBC HD channel that it wasn't simulcasting anything that was potentially HD on BBC One or BBC Two.

Reading through online blogs I've come across similar gnashing of teeth and annoyance that flagship programmes will become available on BBC HD much later than original transmission date.

Being rather pedantic, I'm going to watch the programmes as they go out and probably won't watch them again just to have the HD experience. Why can't or won't BBC HD simulcast?

Robert Gardiner
broadcast assistant, Belfast



Danielle Nagler, *head of BBC HD*, **replies:** BBC HD simulcasts a very wide range of programmes with other BBC channels, including BBC One and BBC Two – *Strictly Come Dancing*, *Friday Night with Jonathan Ross* (pictured), *Countryfile*, *Antiques Roadshow*

and *Harper's Island* are all showing as simulcasts at the moment.

But as we currently make and broadcast only a selection of programmes drawn from all the BBC channels on BBC HD, there are times when none of the content being broadcast is made in HD, and other occasions when two HD programmes are being shown at the same time.

When an HD programme can't be simulcast, we do try to make that clear to audiences and to find an appropriate slot for the programme as soon as possible.

For example, over the summer, *Dragons' Den* was simulcast, and *Who Do You Think You Are?* was shown immediately afterwards at 10pm (BBC One and BBC Two were showing both at 9pm).

Blame that tune

Is anyone else having problems after the Freeview retune? I read somewhere that I'd lose access to ITV3 and ITV4, and yet despite retuning my set-top box three or four times, I still seem to be stuck with them both.

Ben Debus
studio director, BBC East

arielview



SALLY HILLIER

Have you got any new moves?

AS WE REPORT on page 7, the latest entertainment thriller – forgive the expression – is a new BBC Three series called *Move Like Michael Jackson*. The six-parter, to be broadcast later this year, will involve a nationwide search 'to find Britain's most talented and original dancers who can demonstrate they have the spirit, showmanship and technical ability of the great man'.

One of the great man's brothers, Jermaine Jackson, has even signed up as one of the judges and will cast his expert eye over 'competitors from all backgrounds'.

Hang on a minute, this all sounds very familiar: a dance contest and a big name coming over from the States as a judge. When have we heard that before?

About three weeks ago, as it happens, when it was announced that 'Nasty Nigel', aka Nigel Lythgoe, who headed the panel of experts on ITV's *Popstars* and in the US co-created *So You Think You Can Dance*, was returning to Britain for a UK version of *So You Think You Can Dance* for BBC One early next year.

'Dancers from all disciplines' are being invited to auditions to find 'Britain's favourite dancer', and Lythgoe will be joined on the show by Arlene Phillips, fresh from her departure from... well, you know what.

That's not the end of it. BBC Three has unveiled plans for *Dancing on Wheels*, a competition to find 'Britain's best wheelchair dance talent'.

Any more tv dance contests, and the danger is they will be treading on each other's toes.

Boris blows it

Talking of a putting your foot in it: His minor 'acting' role on *EastEnders* was not one of Boris Johnson's finest moments.

'Such an honour to have you here, Mr Mayor,' gushed Barbara Windsor, playing Peggy Mitchell, as the mayor of London strode into the Queen Vic.

'Please call me Boris,' replied the blonde one awkwardly, while the other blonde said how much she admired 'a man who devotes his life to helping society'.

No wonder the BBC was accused of political bias. Ken Livingstone had been denied a cameo in *EastEnders* when he was mayor as he'd wanted to highlight an environment campaign – deemed too political by the BBC.

Boris's political rivals might be fuming about free publicity for the Tories, but they shouldn't get too worked up. After all, Tony Blair appeared in a Catherine Tate sketch on Comic Relief, and the uncomfortable-looking Johnson hardly did himself any favours. A new star in the Square? Pull the other one, Peggy.

Sally Hillier is deputy editor of Ariel

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PROGRAMME MAKING

Presentation Producer, Radio 7
London
Broadcasting House
7D/Ref: 19834909
📅 19-Oct-09 📅 12 months

Researcher, New Review Programme
Glasgow
5D/Ref: 19608509
📅 08-Oct-09 📅 12 months

Output Directors
London
5D/Ref: 19403909
📅 12-Oct-09 📅 06 months

Schedule Planner, Radio 7
London
Broadcasting House
5D/Ref: 19388409
📅 19-Oct-09 📅 06 months

Section Principal 2nd Violin
Manchester
Under Review/Ref: 16970509
📅 31-Oct-09

JOURNALISM

Assistant Editor (Attachment), BBC 1 Politics Show
London
10D/Ref: 19852009
📅 15-Oct-09 📅 Various

Special Assistant Editor to Head of Newsroom
London
TV Centre
10D/Ref: 19592609
📅 13-Oct-09 📅 12 months

Producer, BBC Sport
London / Salford Quays
9D/Ref: 19744609
📅 15-Oct-09 📅 Various

Entertainment Reporter/BJ
London
TV Centre
7D/Ref: 19827209
📅 16-Oct-09 📅 06 months

Political Analyst, Liberal Democrat Party
London
5D/Ref: 19796709
📅 11-Oct-09 📅 07 months

Production Coordinator
London / Salford Quays
5D/Ref: 19545709
📅 12-Oct-09 📅 Various

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT

Senior Commercial, Legal & Business Affairs Manager
London
Henry Wood House
11D/Ref: 19823809
📅 18-Oct-09 📅 09 months

Manager Staffing, Resources & Administration, BBC Mundo
London
Bush House
9D/Ref: 19468009
📅 18-Oct-09 📅 12 months

Mentor, DV Solutions
London
White City
8D/Ref: 19689109
📅 15-Oct-09 📅 12 months

Senior Fundraising Manager (Major Gifts)
London
Bush House
8D/Ref: 19481909
📅 25-Oct-09 📅 2 years

HR Manager, Global News
London
Bush House
7D/Ref: 19616409
📅 11-Oct-09 📅 06 months

Senior Executive, Digital Insights
London
7D/Ref: 19319509
📅 11-Oct-09

Partnership Executive, BBC Children in Need
London
White City
6D/Ref: 19855109
📅 14-Oct-09 📅 09 months

PA to Head of Knowledge Commissioning
London
TV Centre
4D/Ref: 19840909
📅 19-Oct-09

Training Co-ordinator
London
White City
4D/Ref: 19646409
📅 11-Oct-09

Business Assistant, Russian Service (P/T)
London
Bush House
4D/Ref: 19455909
📅 11-Oct-09 📅 07 months

Sales Assistant (Part-time), BBC Shop
Eastbourne
2H/Ref: 19682909
📅 18-Oct-09 📅 03 months

NEW MEDIA

Multiplatform Commissioning Executive, Drama
London
11D/Ref: 19822809
📅 18-Oct-09 📅 06 months

Content Producer
London
Media Centre
7D/Ref: 19854209
📅 13-Oct-09 📅 05 months

QA Test Analyst, TV Platforms
London / Salford Quays
7D/Ref: 19840509
📅 15-Oct-09 📅 Continuing

Content Producer, Blast Online
London
7D/Ref: 19444709
📅 12-Oct-09 📅 06 months

Broadcast Journalist, Isle of Man
Isle of Man
5/7D/Ref: 1946609
📅 16-Oct-09

TECHNOLOGY

Release Manager
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
9D/Ref: 19680809
📅 08-Oct-09

Operations Engineer
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
7D/Ref: 19680709
📅 08-Oct-09 📅 06 months

Business Coordinator
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
7D/Ref: 19661109
📅 08-Oct-09 📅 06 months

Operator/Senior Operator - South West
Plymouth
5/7H/Ref: 19352809
📅 11-Oct-09

Operator/Senior Operator - South East
Tunbridge Wells
5/7D/Ref: 18918609
📅 16-Oct-09

BBC WORLDWIDE

Production Editor, Youth & Children's Magazines
London
Media Centre
2W/Ref: 18696409
📅 11-Oct-09 📅 06 months

Picture Editor, Youth and Childrens Magazine
London
Media Centre
2W/Ref: 18696309
📅 11-Oct-09 📅 06 months

See Attachment

Another string to the bow

Violinist Simon Robertshaw steps up

I'VE BEEN A VIOLINIST in the BBC Philharmonic in Manchester for seven years. Being behind the camera lens is fascinating and working in the newsroom a dream come true.

I did my camera training at Wood Norton and I'm now on a five month placement with North West regional news through the Stepping Stones scheme. I get to go out with the camera crews and operate DSR 450s for news packages and studio cameras on the newsroom floor.

I'm also shooting much-needed content for the BBC Philharmonic website. I've done interviews with soloists and conductors, backstage footage and concerts from Bridgewater Hall, and I followed the orchestra when they went on a tour of



'The vibe is electric, but the learning curve is massive'

Italy in September: I've known the players for so long, I brought a unique perspective to it which another cameraman wouldn't have had.

I've also learnt how to edit, which means I can cut footage for the Philharmonic website, and I've started filming the orchestra's educational and learning projects. Hopefully that will help us to forge ties with the Salford community when BBC Manchester moves to MediaCityUK.

It's been exciting learning another discipline. The BBC is probably the only employer in the country who would give you the opportunity to change roles in this way, so I feel very lucky.

The vibe at NWT is electric, and people are friendly and helpful, which is a good job because the learning curve is massive. I did a 17 hour day the other day and forgot to eat dinner – but when you are surrounded by such amazing people, you don't even notice.

Been anywhere nice?
Send your attachment stories to Clare Bolt

green room

THE ARIELATOR

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



UPSIDE Senior producer **Andrew Lebentz** is the latest BBC employee to hoist himself into art history on the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square, raising

an already high bar last week by taking his place on the stand in full diving gear. He spent his time waddling from one end of the 1m x 4m space to the other. 'Most surreal moment was when a good friend of mine rang my mobile from Hong Kong to have a chat, while watching me live online – apparently the Chinese staff were captivated,' says Andrew. 'If a bloke dressed as a scuba diver occupying a plinth in Trafalgar Square using a mobile phone to talk to China doesn't count as art, what does?'

DOWNSIDE Stop picking on cooling towers, they've done nothing wrong! Such was the message from the BBC Trust editorial standards committee when they slapped **Panorama** on the wrist last week for a breach of accuracy after one programme used shots of the towers to illustrate a discussion on greenhouse gasses.



While twin towers belching white steam into the atmosphere have long been tv shorthand for power plant/environmental issues/dangerous technology (see *The Simpsons* for one) this usually ignores the fact they actually only emit harmless steam. It didn't deter one diligent viewer who complained of confusion when the voiceover referred to the invisible gas carbon dioxide while the visuals showed the towers.

EARWIGGING

OVERHEARD AT THE BBC

...Oh yes, the Vatican's very big on faxes...

...Sending someone to meet the Taliban? Well, there are a number of options...

...I can deal with cancer but a sore throat really gets me...

...I don't understand how you can train fish to come back!...

...I wouldn't say that was particularly quirky from the point of view of the antelope...

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



THE EYES HAVE IT

EVER GET THE FEELING you're being watched? It looks like a hot new piece of digital modern art – and it is. But this magnificent montage has emerged from World Service's *Outlook*, a programme not usually known for its artistic prowess. It began when Oscar-winner turned artist Joel Grey turned up at the studio with his new book of photographs snapped using his mobile phone, which inspired a request for listeners to send in mobile images of their eyes. Over 220 eyeballs later and *Your Eyes* is the

result, a still-growing montage picturing listeners (of varied species) from as far afield as Thailand, Sweden and Australia. 'On the website we normally have a story and a picture, but this time the picture has become the story,' remarked senior producer Simon Tillotson. 'It's great to see eye to eye with our listeners.' Presenter Matthew Bannister has taken to putting the eyes on his screen when recording the programme, and plans are even afoot to turn it into the new *Outlook* logo – so keep 'em peeled.

WE HEAR THAT...

ANN WIDDECOMBE has been using her column in the Express to sound off on that pressing issue of our time – bad language. Apparently she's heard young people using swear words and it's all the tv 'trendies' fault. 'Perhaps the BBC should issue a swearbox to all its script writers so that they can ask them to put in ten percent of their salary for each bad word used,' reckons Ann. 'That should save the licence payers a mint.' We think it's a *****! great idea.

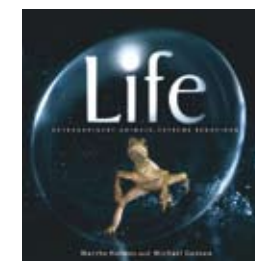
STRICTLY'S EFFECT on the dance classes of the nation has been well documented – as soon as a new series begins, previously barren community halls become packed with flamboyantly dressed couples keen to be transformed into tango-ing titans of dance while keeping fit at the same time. But the show's health credentials took a blow last week with the announcement from noted carbohydrate deliverers Domino's Pizza that its September sales increase was due to 'Strictly Come Dancing and The X Factor, which have encouraged families to stay in on weekend evenings'. At least any extra calories from all that cheese can be swiftly rumba-d away...



IT MAY have nicked the lowercase 'i' prefix from Apple (who hasn't?) but iPlayer has also attained something else that the computer giant still has in spades – cool. CoolBrands (spaces between words are so last year, dahling) has put iPlayer number 20 in its 'definitive list' of the 'worlds coolest brands'. Admittedly there are only 20 in the list, but it's a start. Who knew logging on to catch that *Antiques Roadshow* episode you missed last week was so hip?

GOOD SAMARITAN of the week goes to Husain Husaini, head of programmes at Asian Network, who wouldn't take an out of office auto-reply for an answer when he discovered Radio Derby news and sport editor Mark Saxby's pass in the Gents. Though Mark's cryptic message only revealed he was away 'learning about the recovery position and slings', Husain still scoured the building until he found a first aid course with Mark in attendance. What a nice chap.

Win the book of Life



LIFE – Extraordinary Animals, Extreme Behaviour is this autumn's appropriately epic new David Attenborough-narrated ten part nature documentary series. The accompanying book,

written by Martha Holmes and Michael Gunton, contains all the excitement of the series – from monkeys that go to school, to bears that eat whales, to hunting plants – much of which has never been caught on camera before. To enter to win one of five hardback copies of *Life – Extraordinary Animals, Extreme Behaviour* (BBC Books, rrp £25) just answer this question: What is the largest living species of lizard? Email ariel.competitions by October 12.

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