

# ariel

THE BBC NEWSPAPER

HAPPY 75TH BIRTHDAY  
MAIDA VALE

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**£20M LESS FOR  
TOP EARNERS  
100 FEWER  
SENIOR MANAGERS  
EXTRA PAY FREEZE  
HALT TO BONUSES**

## **A RADICAL REVIEW**

BUT LOWER GRADES UNAFFECTED  
FOR NOW SAYS LYONS - PAGES 2&3





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# 'Brutal truth is we don't need to pay as much'

There's been a radical rethink on senior manager pay and numbers. Michael Lyons and Lucy Adams tell Cathy Loughran it's tough but timely

- The executive remuneration review recommends slicing a quarter off the £79m pay bill of the 634 most senior managers and reducing senior manager numbers by 18 percent to around 520, by 2013. More corporate roles are likely to go than jobs in output areas, the report says. Commissioned by the BBC Trust in February and drafted by management, the new policy will also see: ■ salaries of the nine executive board directors and the BDG (BBC direction group), including the director general's, frozen for a further three years, making it a four year freeze in total;
- senior manager salaries frozen for a further year to at least August 2011
- bonuses for all executive directors suspended until further notice
- bonuses for other directors and senior managers suspended for a further two years
- a review of all senior manager posts as they become vacant;
- greater attention to internal promotion and succession planning to cut down external hiring
- up front information about SM salary 'discounts' against private sector pay.

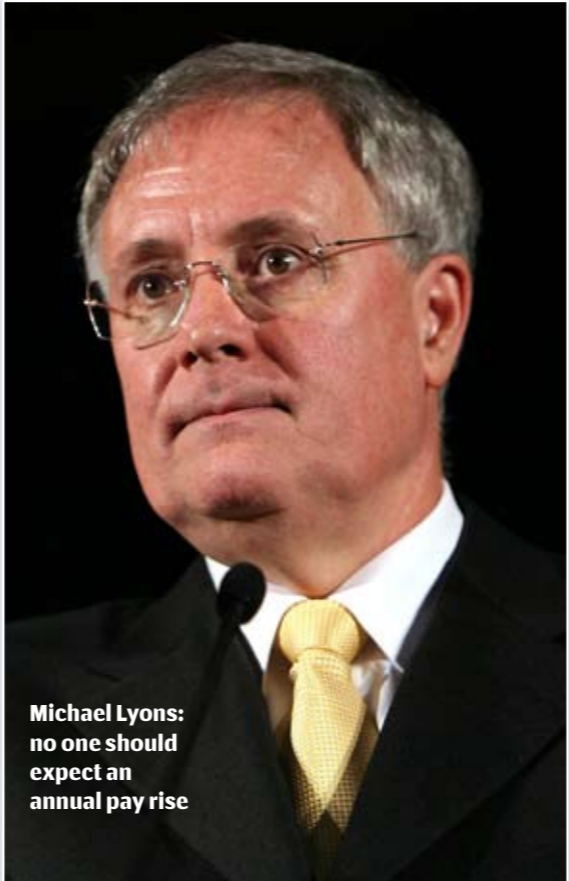
**FOR MICHAEL LYONS**, the business of driving down BBC costs and responding to industry pressures and public mood is not about 'gesture politics'.

The Trust could have followed the headline writers and just slashed the biggest of the six figure salaries: 'That's constantly the focus but it's not the issue,' the trust chairman says.

'We're trying to manage costs in difficult circumstances and we see evidence of being able to strike good deals for new talent, on and off screen. But we're not expecting hair shirt gestures.'

He is quick to make clear that this latest pay review is solely about executive board and senior managers: 'There are no immediate plans to roll out the same principles elsewhere,' he confirms.

'But there is a real challenge here from the trust with a BBC savings target of three percent a



Michael Lyons: no one should expect an annual pay rise



'To simply target the highest paid would put the business at risk' LUCY ADAMS

were 'not going to feel very palatable' to those affected, but that working for the BBC is 'a unique privilege which brings with it unrivalled creative management opportunities'.

Lyons agrees: 'It's a radical review and may seem rough justice for an organisation that's doing well on all performance indicators. But the trust has to preserve the best value on screen and across senior management.

'I believe it is possible to improve efficiency with less people and that must be our objective.'

In fact, some of the review principles are already in practice, says Lucy Adams – a key architect of the review.

'Over the last six months, where we've replaced people at senior manager level, it's been at a 15-25 percent lower rate,' reveals the director of BBC People.

Six months into the job she has her own take

on whether it would have been fairer – as some SMs have suggested – to simply cut pay to the highest earners.

'Among the 634 top managers and nine executive directors there are people at all levels who are paid above and below the market rate. To just target the highest paid, who could earn more outside, would be putting the business at risk,' she told Ariel.

In any case, while there will be no arbitrary

## Staff comments

Among the majority of staff unaffected by the review, there was some support for moves to rein in senior manager pay. 'Laudable but a little masochistic,' was a typical response.

Senior managers themselves were understandably more critical. These were the reactions of some:

'If the trust seriously wants to make a point about remuneration, why not just say everyone over £200k takes a pay cut.'

'SMs are not very well paid, as the next disclosures of the pay of the top 100 decision makers will show.'

'To bracket me at SM2 with Mark Thompson on £800k is absurd. After 25 years service, I feel pretty demotivated.'

'I think the BDG have taken leave of their senses. If they think that it's a sensible or workable recruitment pitch to say that we will expect to pay people up to 80 percent less than their market rate and still secure the best candidates, then they're off their heads.'

'A great many SMs earn considerably less than £100k pa – for these people a 'discount' on a market salary is considerably more significant than a 'discount' on a salary that's already half a million or so.'

## How the pressure built on all fronts



Politicians and commentators have had a field day, says Torin Douglas

economy, or the perennial criticism of top salaries and bureaucracy at the corporation?

It was a year ago this week that the News of the World revealed that 50 BBC executives earned more than the PM. It thundered: 'A staggering £14.3m was paid in salaries to management fatcats.' The following day, in the Sun, David Cameron launched a second broadside, under the headline 'Bloated BBC out of touch with the viewers'. He said the BBC was over-managed and too bureaucratic: 'Jonathan Ross's £6m annual contract costs the equivalent of what 43,000 people pay in their licence fee. And while we are at it, why on earth is the director-general paid over £800,000 a year?'

It caused a stir, but the criticism wasn't new – and not confined to the Conservatives. For several years, top BBC pay and bonuses have been attacked, not least by BBC staff. Many vent their anger every time directors' payments appear in the annual report. The broadcasting unions have regularly criticised 'corporate greed'.

In 2005, the then chairman, Michael Grade, tried to draw the sting by cutting bonus levels from 30 percent to 10 percent. It made little difference. Last summer, public criticism of executive pay rises continued with Bectu saying 'the people at the top continue to feather their nests'. In November, the BBC Trust announced the exec board would waive bonuses for 2009.

## Increased discounts

■ The review spells out for the first time the BBC 'brand' discount for setting senior manager pay – the percentage that public service BBC salaries come in lower than those in the private sector. It takes into account that the BBC is publicly funded (so no share options) as well as factors like its CV-enhancing brand value, greater job security and range of professional opportunity. At the various pay levels that discount is already:

- SM2 – 25 percent
- SM1 – 41 percent
- Exec board – 63 percent
- DG – 58 percent

The aim is for the discount to rise to 50-80 percent for executive board members, with a discounted range of between 30-50 percent applying to SM1s and 20-30 percent for SM2s. The broad ranges of discount reflect different pressures on different BBC job sectors. In journalism and radio, where turnover is low and a job with the BBC may be seen as a career pinnacle, nine percent of SM salaries are over £150k. In FM&T – where a technologist could probably go to Apple or Microsoft for more money – one in five senior managers earn more than £150k.

## Upgrading

**THE SYSTEM OF PAY GRADES** is scattered with seeming anomalies and overlaps between grades can be confusing. For example someone at the top of grade 8 on £50,663 might actually earn nearly £5000 more than someone at the bottom of grade 11. The range of pay within grades also varies widely; for example there is a £24,588 difference between the top and bottom of Grade 11.

There are no fixed salary ranges for SM1 and SM2. Basic salaries are positioned somewhere between 25-50 percent of equivalent roles outside the BBC. So it is conceivable that the top earners in grade 11 could be earning more than someone in grades SM1 or SM2. Some senior managers earning less than lower grade colleagues will have their pay frozen when grade 11s will not.

DAYS CONDITIONS					
Grade	London		Outside London		
	min	max	min	max	
2	18,117	25,627	14,037	21,547	
3	19,753	28,570	15,673	24,490	
4	21,931	31,466	17,851	27,929	
5	24,205	35,400	20,125	31,862	
6	27,050	39,878	22,970	36,341	
7	29,698	44,924	26,160	41,387	
7L	23,375	44,924	19,295	41,387	
8	33,323	50,663	29,785	47,126	
9	37,293	56,935	33,756	53,397	
10	41,264	63,242	37,726	59,705	
11	45,716	70,304	41,178	66,767	

## NEWS BITES

**DIEDERICK SANTER** will step down from his role as executive producer on *EastEnders* in February, after the show celebrates its 25th anniversary. Bryan Kirkwood, who has worked on *Coronation Street* and *Hollyoaks*, will take over. The announcement follows the news that Barbara Windsor is also to leave the show.

**ALEXANDRA BURKE**, winner of last year's *The X Factor*, and runners-up JLS, along with The Black Eyed Peas and The Saturdays, will perform at BBC Switch Live at the Hammersmith Apollo in London on November 8. Around 4000 teenagers are expected to attend the event, to be hosted by dj Nick Grimshaw and Kimberley Walsh of Girls Aloud.

**BBC TOURS** in Manchester has received an accreditation from VAQAS (the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme). The accreditation places BBC Tours on the same footing as other attractions in the region such as The Imperial War Museum North and Chester Zoo.

**BBC WM** and Birmingham Children's Hospital have raised £1,507,106.46 in their joint appeal in aid of children suffering kidney disease. The target was £1.5m, and announcing the final figure last week, breakfast presenter Phil Upton thanked the generosity of listeners.

**INTERVIEWS WITH** women from the 1930s to the 1980s are now available on the BBC Archive in a collection on the Suffragette movement, part of an ongoing series exploring the cultural and political developments that shaped the 20th century. Go to [www.bbc.co.uk/archive/suffragettes/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/suffragettes/index.shtml)

**BBC WALES** is looking for people to participate in new tv series *Snowdonia Farmhouse*, in which two modern day families will be immersed in life in 1890. The series, to be filmed and broadcast in 2010, follows a similar project called *The Coal House*.

**WORLD SERVICE** has agreed a deal with Stitcher.com, the free mobile phone 'smart radio' application, that will see content made available across the globe on handsets, including the iPhone, Palm Pre and Blackberry.

**JACQUELYNE HILL** of Worthing, West Sussex, and Laurence Kilsby from Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, have won Radio 2's Young Choristers of the Year competition, now in its 24th year. Both winners will have the opportunity to appear on national radio and tv including *Good Morning Sunday* and Radio 4's *Daily Service*.

**MARY HOCKADAY**, head of the multimedia newsroom, Jonathan Levy of Sky News and Stephen Cole, a presenter with Al Jazeera, will debate the future of tv news at an event organised by The Media Society at Television Centre on November 10, starting at 5pm. For more details phone 07785 378156. [Johnmair100@hotmail.com](mailto:Johnmair100@hotmail.com)

# CBBC team 'devastated' after guide is killed by elephant

by Sue Llewellyn

Production of CBBC programme *Serious Explorers* has ceased and an investigation is under way after a guide working for the BBC was killed by a charging elephant in Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania.

The tragedy happened last Friday

when former army officer Anton Turner, 38, described as an 'extremely experienced expedition safari and wildlife ranger', was filming with a group of children who were following in the footsteps of the Victorian adventurer David Livingstone.

Three children are believed to have witnessed the incident involving the

elephant. Despite immediate treatment by the doctor travelling with the expedition, the guide died shortly afterwards. Arrangements were made to fly his relatives to Africa, and to bring the children and production team back to the UK.

Marshall Corwin, series producer, who has extensive experience of film-

ing in challenging environments, said: 'Although most of us had known Anton for only a few weeks, he was hugely popular and loved by the entire expedition team. We are all devastated.'

The 'Serious' strand is much loved by CBBC audiences. Previous series include *Serious Amazon*, *Serious Arctic*, *Serious Andes* and *Serious Desert*.

## Pirates and captive talk to Somali service

Somali service interviews were all over the networks last week as they provided the latest news of the British couple held hostage by Somali pirates.

The service's reporter in Mogadishu, Mohamed Mualimu, interviewed by telephone one of the pirates, who made a ransom demand of \$7m, while service head Yusuf Garaad spoke briefly to captive sailor Paul Chandler. Reporter Yusuf Hassan, meanwhile, interviewed officials in Harardhere, which has become the base for a group of ransom-chasing pirates.

'The interviews were used by network and some local stations,' said Garaad. 'The *Ten O'Clock News* used them for three consecutive days as a lead or second story.'

Garaad's video interview with the Somali prime minister earlier last week also made domestic bulletins, as well as being published on the Somali service site, attracting feedback from such places as Nairobi, London and Seattle.

## DG faces tough questions in Lords

by Cathy Loughran

Mark Thompson faced a Lords select committee grilling last week on Worldwide and Channel 4, scheduling *Strictly* against *The X Factor*, releasing the BBC archive and the future of *Lonely Planet*.

But what peers wanted to know first was how often was the BNP now likely to appear on *Question Time*.

'Once a year or less' was Thompson's best guess, based on the party's current electoral support of around two percent, although that judgement wasn't 'a precise algorithmic science', he told the committee.

Challenged about 'competitive scheduling' – a reference to the *Strictly* v *X Factor* clash – at a time when commercial tv revenues were under pressure, Thompson said: 'Overall, weekend schedules have probably been more distinctive and less competitive than last year,' with more factual and fewer acquisitions.

In answer to other questions, the director general guaranteed to protect budgets for children's services and said it remained the BBC's 'aspiration' to release the whole BBC archive online – iPlayer being the important first step.

He also told the Lords that any delay in negotiations over the proposed joint venture between BBC Worldwide and Channel 4 was not of the BBC's making.

And Thompson hit back at rumours about the sale of the controversial *Lonely Planet* travel guide: 'We are not seeking to dispose of *Lonely Planet* because of what's in newspapers,' he said.



Team effort: Mark Coyle (far left) and Democracy Live colleagues at Westminster

## Politics at the click of a button

by Sally Hillier

The BBC has launched an ambitious online service that opens the windows on the UK's political institutions and the European parliament.

For the first time, live and on-demand content from the institutions has been brought together in the same place. Interested in a debate from the Northern Ireland Assembly, a discussion in Brussels, or a meeting of a House of Lords select committee? Simply click on the new BBC Democracy Live portal.

A key feature of the site is its eight-screen video wall, giving access to sessions of parliaments, assemblies and committees. The real trickery, though, is in the on-demand features, on which the BBC has worked closely with FM&T, Siemens and blinkx, the world's largest and most advanced video search engine.

Using a video archive, users can search by individual, institution, issue and keyword. There are guides to the devolved political processes, as well as biographies and other information about MPs and MEPs.

Users can call up speeches and an-

nouncements, and 'track' politicians' appearances, enabling them, for example, to find out the last time their own MP spoke in the Commons.

'We've been knocking around the idea of providing a service like this for a while,' explains Mark Coyle, launch editor. The idea gained currency last year when Mark Thompson

### A key feature of the site is an innovative video wall, giving access to sessions

announced the Digital Democracy initiative – a one-stop shop for content from the democratic institutions. Democracy Live grew from that.

'It has been a complex project because of the new search engine, new website, a new system to put captions on live video for online output and a new way of producing large video files,' says Coyle.

Eleven journalists – four at Millbank, three in Cardiff and two each

in Belfast and Edinburgh – have been recruited to run the website and Georgina Pattinson, formerly in charge of *Today's* online operation, is assistant editor.

The initiative is joint funded by news and the three nations, and involves close co-operation with the BBC Parliament team led by Peter Knowles, with extensive sharing of material. Like BBC Parliament, the new service is expected to appeal to a small, specialist audience although the BBC hopes that anyone with an interest in the people, issues, events and processes that underpin democracy will find it useful.

'We think it could attract 300,000 users a week in the first year of operation,' says Coyle. 'But if a big story breaks, we could be talking 300,000 on that alone.'

Pete Clifton, head of editorial development, multimedia journalism, is equally enthusiastic. 'Democracy Live underlines our public purpose around informed citizenship, highlighting and explaining the work of our democratic institutions,' he says. 'That sounds worthy, but it's very important.'

## BBC beats CNN in Europe

BBC World News is now reaching a bigger audience in Europe than CNN during peak viewing times.

A survey of Europe's top earners and decision makers shows that in the 6am-9am slot the average audience for World News has risen by 24 percent year on year, from 51,000 to 63,000. CNN's audience correspondingly fell from 64,000 to 60,000.

The figure for the 7pm-8pm slot rose by 47 percent year on year from 119,000 to 175,000, while CNN's rose from 158,000 to 165,000.

'It's a terrific milestone,' says Sian Kevill, director BBC World News. 'This proves that European audiences are now actively seeking our content at the most competitive time of day.'

She attributes the audience growth to a strengthened schedule including extending *World News Today* with Zeinab Badawi to an hour, and putting presenters such as Jonathan Charles on the road in places like Moscow and Frankfurt. Further schedule changes are planned.

# The birthday sessions

Maida Vale, one of the most famous recording studios in the world, is 75 years old. **Adam Bambury** went along to the party

Holding court:  
Yusuf Islam

PHOTOGRAPH: BBC PICTURES

**IT'S MAIDA VALE'S 75TH BIRTHDAY** and the place is buzzing. In the cavernous hall of studio one a conductor hops about excitedly, pulling what look like kung-fu moves in front of the BBC Symphony Orchestra as it performs a piece of modern classical music, inspired by the architecture of Frank Gehry. Radio 3's host Louise Fryer has asked the crowd to provide an excited hubbub of conversation in the background of her pre-concert link, but the classical buffs are far too polite and lapse into expectant silence as soon as they sense the broadcast will start.

Over in studio four, where the majority of the late John Peel's many sessions took place, things are a lot more relaxed. The smell of warm lager lingers as Craig Charles's All Star Funk Band – made up of a selection of the 6 Music presenter's favourite musicians – work up a heat in rehearsal, fending off the chill coming through the air conditioning vents of the cosy wooden room. 'It's like a festival in here,' exclaims Charles as he excitedly tells a group of press about being very firmly shushed for being too noisy on his way past the orchestra.

## Restrictions on needle time

Orchestras, funk acts, rock bands hiding in their dressing rooms (the elusive Snow Patrol) – it's easy to get the feeling that the place hasn't changed all that much since its inception in 1934. Graham Bunce is a music studio manager who has worked in the same role at Maida Vale for 35 years. He remembers a time when the production line never stopped rolling: 'Certainly in the 70s every studio had three sessions a day booked, seven days a week. We had to provide each network with live music recordings because there were restrictions on needle time, certainly on Radios 1 and 2.'

'Needle time' meant only a relatively small amount of recorded music could be broadcast by the BBC – a measure put in place to stop 'light musicians' being

put out of business, and one that kept the studios very busy. Any foreign stars touring the country would be brought into the studios to do a session, often at very short notice.

On one such fleeting visit Graham fondly recalls being stopped by Andy Williams's minders from adjusting the singer's mic stand, while his fan club chattered excitedly outside the building.

Dealing with the artistic temperament seems to be an important aspect of everyone's job at Maida Vale. Ted King, an operations assistant who, like

**'Never tell them they're out of tune – just ask them to do another'**

Graham, has been at the studios for 35 years, says he often has to play psychologist in addition to his role rigging and de-rigging the studios. He gives the example of a 'famous Russian concert pianist' who became irate when she was asked to re-record a piece of music ('Never tell them they're singing out of tune – just tactfully invite them to 'do another one, and then we'll use whichever is best', advises Graham. 'You have to keep the turn happy – it's the golden rule'), and blamed her piano stool for her poor performance.

'She kept asking me for a different stool,' remembers Ted, 'until I'd exhausted every stool in the building and she still wasn't happy, saying it was disgraceful we didn't have a decent piano stool here. Then I told her we had one last stool locked away in the 'Proms Room' that only came out for the Proms, and

I could try to get hold of that. I did, and she was thrilled with it. Of course, it was the first piano stool I'd given her...'

I ask the pair what they think of the question mark hanging over Maida Vale's fate – in 2007 a spokesman described the studios 'wholly unsuitable for the 21st century' and said the 'long-term aim for Maida Vale is to close it'.

It seems the question mark has been hanging for quite some time: 'It's always been under threat. The first week I was here I was told that EMI had bought the building and it was going,' Ted laughs. 'We've had models of new buildings, models of this building revamped with different entrances, but it has remained the same.'

## Managers let out for celebrations

Graham acknowledges that the cost of maintaining the studios is high – because it's partially underground it has to be heated and air-conditioned around the clock – but reckons its uniqueness is its greatest asset: 'Someone will always think it would make a convenient saving, but there are no comparable music complexes that could replace the use that the BBC puts it to. While there's a requirement for good music produced in house under the BBC's control, I think Maida Vale will survive.'

Back in Maida Vale studio 3, Yusuf Islam, the artist formerly known as Cat Stevens, holds court as assorted radio types loiter slightly guiltily, waiting for the great man to do *Father and Son*. Between live slots on Radio 2 the singer jams with his band and at one point is cornered by a mob of handshaking senior managers, let out for the birthday celebrations. In their suits they look bizarrely incongruous next to the diminutive grey-bearded Yusuf in his white cardigan and t-shirt. The artist, the crew, and the decision makers with the money – it seems things are always as they have been at Maida Vale.

## MAIDA VALE FACTS

**In the early 1930s** the BBC was searching for space big enough to contain the full BBC Symphony Orchestra. The former Maida Vale Roller Skating Palace on Delaware Road was chosen, and over a 15 month period 100 workers reduced the building to a shell, then reconstructed it.

**The Maida Vale studios opened** in 1934 with five studios and the most modern broadcasting facilities available. The world famous Symphony Orchestra broadcast its first concert from its new home in the same year.

**The building was bombed during WW2** on May 10, 1941 (below), the only fatality a German translator working in



the studios. After the war the large coal-fired boiler rooms were removed, allowing additional recording studios to be added throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

**The BBC Radiophonic Workshop** – creators of the *Doctor Who* theme music – was established in April 1958. The department survived the invention of the Moog and the popularisation of the synthesizer and sequencer, and continued to live up to its reputation for originality right up until it was disbanded in 1998.

**Many a famous face** has passed through the studio. A plaque on the wall in Maida Vale Three marks it as the place where Bing Crosby made his last recording in 1977, days before he died of a heart attack on a golf course in Spain. [bbc.co.uk/history/of/the/bbc](http://bbc.co.uk/history/of/the/bbc)

On demand and open source, internet protocol tv is big news.

**Clare Bolt** meets Richard Halton, the man with a 'virtual team'

# The Canvas connection

Labour of love: Richard Halton, programme director of IPTV

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA GORDON

**The BBC Trust is deciding now if a joint venture partnership between the BBC, Channel 5 and BT to deliver IPTV is workable...**

We're waiting for approval, which should be fairly imminent.

**Canvas has been described as 'connected tv that paves the way for mind-boggling services'. Can you elaborate?**

We talk about Canvas 'democratising' access to the living room. If you want to be on a tv set at the moment, you have to be a big broadcaster with Freeview or Sky. The great thing about IPTV is that it will allow different forms of content, like video on demand or web services, to get to the tv screen. And, like the internet, there are no limits [on the amount].

**What sort of things will punch through best?**

We're talking about the tv set in the living room. The services you develop for that screen have to be televisual, so you can't have a standard webpage with little links and tiny fonts. IPTV has to be big and impactful, immersive and navigable with a remote control.

**Do you think that this is how the majority of people will end up watching tv?**

Hmm. Let me try to paraphrase Bill Gates: he said that people always overestimate how much impact

technology will have in the short term, and underestimate how much impact it will have in the long term. We're not suggesting that everybody will suddenly be interacting with their tv sets all of the time, but I think there's potential for Canvas to change their experience.

**In what ways?**

Well, it will bring a lot more on-demand content within reach of more people. And the sort of interactivity available will probably be more exciting and engrossing than the current Red Button.

**Are you working on new ways to link tv programmes with interactive content?**

We're looking at lots of different ways in which interactivity – as we see it today on the television with Red Button – can change and evolve. It's part of the multiplatform agenda anyway, particularly in News and Sport. We've been running trial services, and at last year's Electric Proms the test service showed different stages and artist information. They are programme extensions really.

**What will IPTV mean for the linear tv channels?**

It could create a real identity around them: audiences could go to the BBC One homepage and have programmes of the day recommended for them. And

the linear channel could become an important navigational tool. If you went to watch *Waking the Dead* and had missed the previous episode you could use the programme on the linear EPG to jump back in time to get it.

**That's quite neat...**

Or if you've just missed *Strictly* – you could turn on, go back in time through the EPG, hit play and instantly watch it.

**What about the social networking aspects of Canvas?**

Think about what you can do today on the internet and take that to a different screen in the house. You could construct formats so people could play along against their friends, which could work well for entertainment formats.

**Who is the team working on Canvas?**

It's a bit of a labour of love. There are a lot of people giving up some of their time, but until we have approval from the trust, it's a virtual team. Kingswood's R&D department is looking at IPTV and a lot of what we're doing is piggybacking on their good thinking.

**Are you still hoping to get set top boxes for Canvas in the shops by next Christmas?**

Yes, but it depends on the BBC Trust. The price is up to manufacturers, but £150-£200 feels about right.

## Compliance? We can help make it creative

by Laura Scarrott

**HER FIRST BRUSH WITH FAME** came when Chris Moyles referred to her on air as 'that stuffy lady' from compliance.

But Claire McLaughlin is the keeper of some very valuable information. From her open plan office in the Broadcast Centre she is one of only eight people who know exactly how the public have voted on *Strictly Come Dancing*. As head of the BBC's interactive advice and contracts unit – or ITACU if you want to be snappy – it's her job to make sure that each and every member of the public who interacts with the BBC is treated fairly, from *Strictly* voters to *Blue Peter* viewers and Moyles's own listeners on Radio 1.

Designed to future-proof the BBC against another competition 'scandal', ITACU manages all of the corporation's competitions, votes, free prize draws, awards and charity appeals. If you want to run any kind of interactive event on any platform, a call to the team is mandatory – yet McLaughlin insists that they are there to make things happen, and not to smother bright ideas in a compliance blanket.

'What we're trying to do is bring back interactive events which are

both creative and compliant,' she says, without a trace of stuffiness. 'People assume that everything is banned and they worry that they'll get fired if they do anything interactive. That's just not the case.'

Of course, if the children of Britain had looked at the *Blue Peter* cat and plumped for 'Socks' in the first place, rather than a name the BBC deemed unsuitable, ITACU might not exist.

Phil Parsons, an exec producer in entertainment, says the unit arrived at a time when production

teams had been 'severely put off' hosting any kind of interactive event. 'The audience love competitions and it wasn't fair to deprive them,' he says. 'The ITACU team has been really helpful in implementing competitions and the world of phone voting is now so complex, it would be almost impossible to do it without them.'

As well as managing phone votes, they advise on new technologies and formats and can help devise new ways to engage the audience. This year they designed Comic Relief's 'text to donate application' which saw the charity raise a record £80m, a mobile project in Bangladesh and oversaw the big Saturday night formats like *Strictly*.

Given that the unit is tasked with improving audience trust, McLaughlin says the increase in the number of people participating in shows like *Strictly* – where voting is up 30 percent this series – suggests they are doing a good job.

Even dissenters like Moyles, who once dismissed ITACU as 'sounding like a Star Wars planet', are coming around. 'He loves us because we're starting to bring things [competitions] back,' McLaughlin confides. 'Now that message is getting across, we are actually being welcomed.'

[tinyurl.com/interactiveevents](http://tinyurl.com/interactiveevents)

## 'WE'RE LESS ANXIOUS'

**ITACU HELPED JOE HARLAND, EXEC PRODUCER, RADIO 1**

**How did you feel about interactive events post 'Socks-gate'?**

Very anxious. While we were confident that our processes were robust, we started to ask endless questions....what if a caller isn't answered? What if someone texts us by mistake – should we let them know?

**How, if at all, does ITACU help?**

They are able to clarify where to draw the line between understandable caution and excessive measures.

**So what's improved?**

We're now confident we can help listeners win tickets to all the big Radio 1 shows, be that Muse in Teignmouth, Robbie at the Roundhouse or the Big Weekend.



**Controversial cats: Blue Peter's Socks (left) started a scandal**

# week@work

Soap Opera: Stephanie McGovern, Matt Bourne and Michael Millar



**MARKET DATA** and Bank of England base rates can be pretty dry stuff, admits Robert Peston's producer Stephanie McGovern. But with the help of radio business reporter Michael Millar she came up with a way of making it more accessible.

'Over the last year business news has become very dominant but we felt that there was nothing the BBC really did to engage young people and others who wouldn't normally take an interest in it,'

explains McGovern. 'So we had the idea for a 90 second weekly round-up that explains everything in a funky way.'

Called Biz Bites, the round-up broadcasts on the News Channel and On Demand every Saturday, but with no budget the duo had to call in favours from friends. 'We begged and borrowed,' admits McGovern. 'The graphics guy donated his spare time to help us out.'

Actor Matt Bourne appears in one of

the sketches taking a bath.

'The idea behind it is that we can tell you the important bits in the same time it takes for Matt to turn into a superhero in a telephone box or, in this instance, run a bath.'

McGovern says the novelty of Biz Bites has earned positive feedback. 'It's a format that can go on developing and something that possibly could be rolled out in other departments.'

## SHAMELESS PLUG



◆ **COLIN WARHURST, TECHNICAL COORDINATOR, MANCHESTER**  
From 2007-2009, I had the audacity to shoot my own feature film, entirely on a PD170 and Z1, with no budget, in Manchester and Manhattan. The end result is a 90 minute Mancunian-themed take on a Woody Allen rom-com, entitled Mancattan.

A year after finishing the edit, the film is having its premiere as part of this year's free Salford Film Festival. Mancattan will be shown at The Lowry Theatre at 8pm on November 21. To see the trailer visit [mancattan.co.uk](http://mancattan.co.uk) (The Salford Film Festival runs Nov 20 until 29 - [salfordfilm-festival.org.uk](http://salfordfilm-festival.org.uk)).



## AI SCORES

◆ Matt Baker's camel milking (as featured in last week's Ariel) provided Around the World in 80 Days with its biggest audience to date of 4.2m (an 18.1 percent share). People tuned in to see Baker and fellow presenter Julia Bradbury navigate their way through Kazakhstan, Russia and Mongolia. The third programme in the series also scored an AI of 85, up two points from the previous week and three points more than the factual average. Viewers of the series, which is raising money for Children in Need, said it was a high quality programme, which they had made a special effort to watch.

## COMING UP



◆ *League of Gentlemen* actor Mark Gatiss will star in his own adaptation of HG Wells's **THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON**. The 90 minute drama about two men who find extraterrestrial life on the moon was commissioned for BBC Four by channel controller

Richard Klein and controller of drama commissioning Ben Stephenson. It will be made by Can Do Productions and executive produced by Jamie Laurenson.

◆ BBC One has commissioned a new drama series by writer Jimmy McGovern for 2010. **THE ACCUSED** will follow a similar format to *The Street* but will revolve around characters who are all accused of a crime. Made by RSJ Productions, it was commissioned by Ben Stephenson and will be executive produced by Poly Hill.

◆ Presenter Nadia Sawalha will meet people who have experienced extreme weather conditions in the UK for a new daytime drama series. **LIVING DANGEROUSLY** is a ten part series for BBC One and will be made by Maverick Television and executive produced by Tanya Gottlieb. It was commissioned by executive editor for daytime and early peak Tracy Forsyth.

◆ Big Talk Productions will delve into the private lives of a young couple in a new comedy series for BBC Three called **YOUNG, UNEMPLOYED AND LAZY**. It will star Russell Tovey (pictured) and has been written by Stefan Golaszewski. Executive editor for comedy, Cheryl Taylor, commissioned the series.



## SPEECH PATTERNS

◆ **DISINTERMEDIATION** ...is an economic expression that describes what happens where the transaction between producer and consumer becomes so transparent that the broker is cut out. Aka cutting out the middle man. With a laptop and an internet connection, who goes to a travel agent to buy a holiday or a dating agency to find a date? Do you see where we're going with this? As broadcasters, we deliver content that is underpinned by broad expertise, but it is still content that we have chosen. With Spotify and Flickr and iPlayer at their fingertips, the audience can consume and create content when and how they want – and they're in danger of cutting us out of the loop. It's a process of disintermediation.

# 2012

## THE BIGGEST TEAM EFFORT OF ALL

BBC

The Olympic Broadcaster  
London 2012

With just under 1000 days until the start of the London games, **Claire Barrett** finds that preparations are steaming ahead - and hundreds of staff are already involved



Winning formula? There are big plans for mobile services

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA GORDON

### Waving the flag: heptathlete Jessica Ennis is among GB hopes for gold in 2012



PHOTOGRAPH: AP PHOTO/DANIEL PHILLIPS

**ROGER MOSEY EXPECTS** the nation to be tighter than Chelsea's back four by the time the Olympic flag is handed over to Rio de Janeiro on August 12 2012. The Union Jack will be working overtime that summer - streaming behind car aerials during the European Football Championships, waved in admiration for a monarch celebrating 60 years on the throne and draped over the shoulders of our Olympic and Paralympic medallists who, if host country statistics serve us well, will be 25 percent up on a bumper Beijing.

'I hope it will bring the UK together,' admits the BBC director of London 2012, who sees New Year's Eve 2011 as the starting gun for a year of Olympic driven cultural, community and sporting events.

If they act as national glue, the London Olympics - now just 1000 days away - are also uniting BBC people from all corners of the corporation around a common purpose. 'Hundreds are already involved,' says Mosey, who expects the games to influence anything from Radio 1's Big Weekend to Sport Relief. 'We've picked out

the landmarks of the year... we're really steaming ahead.'

Currently, all these BBC connections exist as a sprawling family tree - the relationships and responsibilities mapped on a table top-sized piece of paper in Mosey's office. Workstreams are moving at different paces. 'We can't book any rock concert elements yet because we don't know which acts will be at the top in three years time,' Mosey explains, 'but we will be deciding in the next few weeks where our studio on the Olympic site will be.'

#### A bit of an abstraction

Mostly, though, this will be the year for listening. Mosey is visiting every regional centre before Christmas to whip up Olympic ardour and ambition. 'We're inviting people around the BBC to start their own discussions,' he says. 'I've done a lot of this sort of thing in my time and I've had more feedback and follow up from this than anything else - people offering ideas, wanting to be involved.'

Their help will be needed to ensure that the games belong to the w rather than just the capital, with local coverage of the torch relay, for instance, expected to draw in the nation. The pledge from the relay organisers is that the flame will travel within an hour of 95 percent of the population. 'At the moment some may see it as a bit of an abstraction,' accepts Mosey, 'but if you talk to the Aussies - which we did the other day - the torch relay was a massive moment for

Melbourne despite its traditional rivalry with Sydney.'

At the same time, you can't ignore the capital. 'London is massively more diverse than the rest of the nation, massively more international. This could be an opportunity to showcase this city and connect it back to the UK.'

#### Credit crunch Olympics

The next six months should determine whether the opening ceremony is themed around

country or capital - a city that will, of course, have been vacated by BBC Sport after its move to Salford in 2011. Surely that's a case of bad timing?

'You can't make a strategic decision on where the BBC should be located for the next 50 years based on two weeks in 2012,' returns Mosey, diplomatically. 'The BBC did the Manchester Commonwealth Games when sport production was based in London, and did it rather well. It covers the Six Nations in Cardiff, the Open Golf in Turnberry...'

Yes, accommodation and transport requirements may take some planning, but 'the upside is we'll have a state of the art digital production centre in Salford which will play a strong part in the overall production'.

If these have been dubbed the credit crunch Olympics, Mosey is not about to rein in his ambition. He's pledged to make more than 5000 hours of sporting action available to audiences - around double that from Beijing - via additional broadband and interactive streams. 'It will be like having

17 days of multiple FA Cup Finals played all over London, plus Wimbledon, but we made a promise to the audience that if they want to watch centre court while the athletics is being shown on BBC One, they will be able to do so.'

Mobiles are likely to see the biggest change from China. 'We want Olympic content on mobiles, but if you do it in an unregulated way it puts an enormous strain on the mobile infrastructure,' says Mosey, frustrated by his own recent attempts to check the football scores from the Emirates Stadium. 'We can't have the chair of the Chinese Olympic Committee getting off the plane at Heathrow and not being able to get a signal.'

There's still time to talk - to mobile operators, potential partners, LOCOG and the Olympic teams. 'Mark Thompson and I went to Beijing in October 2006,' says Mosey. 'At that point China was really getting into the Olympics; the stadium was under way, test events were taking place and traffic management tested. After next year's World Cup the London 2012 story will start to get very much stronger.'

## THE MASTER STRATEGIST

### TURNING VISION TO REALITY

**'IT WAS THE BEST MOMENT OF MY LIFE,'** sighed a euphoric Dave Gordon on his return home from Singapore in 2005, after London was named host city for the 2012 Games.

But the master strategist, who is leading BBC Sport's operation for the London Olympics, had made a rare error of judgement.

'What about the birth of your two daughters? What about marrying me?' my wife countered. I soon changed it to 'one of the best', chuckles the man who has worked on more Olympic Games than anybody else at the BBC - his first being in 1976.

Marriage rebuilding aside, Gordon has been engaged with turning Olympic vision into reality. 'We're doing a lot of programme planning, production planning, budget planning, site visits...'

He admits that the move to Salford is 'not ideal', but points out that tv sport are a nomadic lot. 'They do an awful lot of travelling. But the reality for the Olympics is that we'll have a core planning team - around 20 to 30 people - based in London for the duration, with reinforcements from Salford arriving a few days before the games.'

The operation will be huge and sprawling, with football and golf taking place across the country. 'We'll have a major presence in the International Broadcasting Centre and on the Olympic park at Stratford. We'll be using Salford to the full, Television Centre and possibly the new W1,' says sport's head of major events.

The BBC is not the host broadcaster, as many believe, but will be asked to broadcast a handful of events on behalf of Olympic broadcasting collective OBS. The tennis seems likely and logical, seeing as

BBC cameras will have been at the Wimbledon venue just a few weeks before, as does the rowing, which the BBC covered for the world in Beijing.

'The domestic operation is our main focus, though - the programme making, commentary, presenting, interview positions,' insists Gordon, 'Our responsibility is to UK audiences.'

The IBC, on the northern part of the site close to Hackney Wick tube, is just a shell at the moment. 'We're working out what space we need and what we can afford.'

And Sport is closing in on studio space, in the heart of the Olympic park, that will afford viewers a backdrop of the stadium, the aquatics arena and the Olympic flame. So far, former US sprinter Michael Johnson is the only member of the on-air team to be revealed. 'Expect some old faces from Beijing alongside some new talent.'

Every sport will be covered, with digital space used to maximum potential. So where should success seekers be looking?

Cycling, rowing and sailing, reckons Gordon. 'They're the three sports we've done so well at in the last few Olympics. Our swimmers are getting better and I've high hopes for the athletes. I just hope the 80,000 in the Olympic Stadium spur them on to some great performances.'

Gordon, who considers London 2012 the 'absolute pinnacle' of his career, says being collared for tickets to big events is an occupational hazard. 'It hasn't been too bad for the Olympics so far,' he muses. 'Everywhere you go in the BBC, everybody wants a piece of the Olympics. That chance to work on the games is the most sought after ticket.'



Rings of confidence: Roger Mosey and Dave Gordon on the site of the old Olympic stadium at White City - the venue for the 1948 games

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA GORDON

**WE COULD SEE TIGER WOODS** bear the Olympic torch aloft as he strides down the 18th fairway at the Open.

The flame may be part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, or turn up in Albert Square, cheered on by the EastEnders' cast.

'We have a lot of creative and exciting plans,' says torch relay editor Carl Doran. 'We want to tie in the relay with some major sporting events and some of our



biggest brands.' The BBC will track the torch on its epic 80-day journey, starting on Mount Olympus in Greece in March 2012. It will then tour the UK, linking in with a huge event in every nation and region. 'The closest many people will get to the games will be when the torch comes to town,' says Doran. The flame will spend its final week in London, on a whistlestop tour of the 32 boroughs. 'The relay is a really exciting part of the Olympic Games, but a lot of people don't realise that yet.'

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## Same job thousands of pounds apart

Can I have a pair of cashmere socks and a silver bangle please? Jay Hunt told Ariel (September 1) it was 'economically sensible' to give them to daytime tv presenters because they don't earn much money. I bet they earn more than me and many of my colleagues at North West Tonight. I present breakfast tv bulletins here in Manchester where, in recent years, we've gone from a team of five to a team of two – me and a director. We haven't received a penny extra for our additional duties and no little pressies

from management either. I don't even get a clothes allowance. Any notion of a hair and make-up artist is just a bonkers dream.

I think the enormous differential in pay between some of the higher profile network news presenters and reporters and us lot in the regions is offensive. I don't care that they earn more, just not a few hundred grand more. I can't think of another industry that discriminates so deliberately between its employees.

**Carol Lowe**, *North West Tonight*

## It's no sacrifice

I don't know whether I am jumping for joy or indifferent about Mark Thompson's latest email about pay for executive directors and senior managers. Maybe it sends out a great message that, in a time of recession, the BBC is taking a close look at how the licence fee is spent and that is all to the good. And I also have no doubt that if someone wanted to knock a large chunk off my pay I would be hopping mad.

So jumping for joy or indifferent? I don't know. What I do know is that I am a little bored with hearing how people who receive vast sums of cash are actually making great sacrifices to work for the BBC. It's certainly hard for me to envisage what sort of sacrifice a person earning more than a hundred thousand pounds is making. If anyone can help me I would appreciate it.

**Denis Nightingale**  
*West Cornwall reporter*

## One more Question

Gary B from Uxbridge  
Jim from Glasgow  
David from Surbiton  
Andy from Liverpool

If you're a regular observer of texts into *Question Time* on BBC One, (Ceefax p155 and by pressing the red button digitally) you'll notice these names cropping up week in week out.

Like many others I text in my comments but never have them published.

In these days of Safeguarding Trust can we be assured that such people really exist and if they do, why are their texts given precedence over thousands of others who never have their voice heard?

**Mike Powell**  
*bj, Radio Solent*

**Chris Berthoud, editor, interactive – news programmes, replies:** *Question Time* receives an average of around 3000 texts each programme and takes great care not to show favouritism, with every text considered on content alone.

Some regular contributors send texts week in, week out and clearly have mastered the art of conveying their views in the most economical way. But we always do our best to restrict any one texter to a single 'appearance' in any programme, and have just started using a new console which

automatically highlights people who have sent multiple texts.

Within the constraints of a single, frantic hour, we try to balance the texts in terms of opinions and their geographical origin and we give priority to texts which include a name and town – making an on-screen appeal at the start of each programme for texters to include those details.

The pithier, most focused texts stand the best chance of appearing, as we only have a very limited display space on screen.

The text team takes its role seriously – this is a direct chance for interaction with the programme and each other – and would stress that no preferential treatment is given to any individual texter.

## Quay to the future

In response to Allan Ramsay's letter about crewing for *Weakest Link* (October 27)... the original article missed out one word that substantially changes the meaning: 'The studio crew are CURRENTLY (ie in London) mostly freelancers.'

When the show transfers to Scotland, we will be largely crewing from the excellent skills base within Pacific Quay.

For the first couple of weeks of its 14 week run next year, we will bring a few of the current team up to Glasgow to ensure a smooth handover and transition for this important programme.

**Mark Munro**  
*production executive, entertainment and events*

## Dam shame

'DAMMING REPORT', read the large opening caption on October 28. Beavers leading the *Ten O'Clock News*? I was pleasantly surprised.

But no – the inquiry in question was about a Nimrod plane crash. Damming must be its author's surname, I concluded – like Laming or Hutton. Wrong again!

A horrible thought entered my mind. Could the caption writer, editors, newsreader and everyone else at the flagship BBC programme be... illiterate? Did nobody spot the basic spelling mistake before it was displayed across the globe as living proof of the decline in our edi-

torial standards? Or was it a case of the emperor's new clothes?

**Tom Jensen**  
*BBC Monitoring*

■ I am not usually the pedantic-type who points out people's spelling mistakes, but I would have thought the *Ten O'Clock News* (October 28) may have taken time to spell check their top headline, before describing a report as 'Damming' (see below).

Surely the correct spelling is 'Damning', as in a verb of damn? I'll be damned if it isn't....

**Richard Price**  
*rights assistant, photo unit*

## A hole to fill

What dreadful treatment of the Aramark staff, who were sacked last week after the 'refurbishment' of the Bush House canteen. It hardly meets the standards of trust and fairness one would expect for contracted out employees of the BBC.

I'm appalled too that during the hard night time shifts done by so many at Bush House there will not be provision for a decent fresh hot meal. This decision has clearly been taken by those who have not worked night shifts. There is no other provider of food at 3am and staff do need to eat outside of office hours in order to work effectively.

**Martha Littlehailes**  
*senior studio manager, radio drama*

**Anne Branigan, head of commercial management, BBC Workplace, replies:** The management of catering staff in London is an issue for the catering subcontractor to handle. However, the BBC has sought and received assurance from them that proper union and staff consultation took place before the staff affected were made redundant.

BBC staff on night shift at Bush House continue to receive a full hot meal service throughout the night including soups and jacket potatoes, lasagne or cottage pie, vegetarian option, hot bacon or sausage baguettes as well as chilled grab and go options eg sandwiches and salads.

There is also a top of the range vending machine offering further hot meal options. Feedback we've received from customers who've tasted the vending machine meals suggests they are comparable in standard to a Marks and Spencer meal.

## Water tight

I have just been charged 10p for hot water at the Bush House canteen. I didn't need the cup as I instantly poured the water over my noodles but was told that the water had to be put in a cup first and I was still charged 10p even when I handed it straight back. Previously, I would just have held my tupperware underneath the urn tap, but the new canteen set up means that people can no longer make their own tea. The urn and teabags are now out of reach. Why? Are we considered neither responsible nor trustworthy enough to make our own drinks any longer?

What happened to change being for the better? Or is this inefficiency purposely done to wind us all up to the point that we stop visiting the basement for food and the space can then be abandoned and all the canteen staff fired in order to save a few quid?

**Lindsay Alexander**  
*WSB, African English daily programmes*

## arielview



**SALLY HILLIER**

## Ashes coverage pays off for 5 live

**WITH FORMER FA** executive David Davies soon to complete his review of sports events that are available free to view, Barbara Slater made a timely plea last week to maintain the current 'listed events' arrangement, which protects the likes of Wimbledon, the Olympics, The Grand National and the FA Cup Final for everyone to enjoy.

'We have a system that works, and we should leave well alone,' the BBC's director of sport told the Westminster Media Forum.

Her case was strengthened by research conducted by Ipsos Mori, which showed that only nine percent of audiences who do not already use a premium pay service would subscribe to watch an event they currently access free on terrestrial tv. 'We believe there is a finite number prepared to pay and that number has plateaued,' said Slater.

A happy consequence of this emerged two days later, when Rajar figures, for the period June 29 to September 20, showed that Radio 5 live Sports Extra attracted a record 963,000 listeners a week over the summer, an impressive 42.5 percent rise. The boost was attributed to the channel's coverage of the Ashes, which was not available on terrestrial tv but shown on Sky Sports. 'We knew many cricket fans would not be prepared to pay to watch, and this gave us a real opportunity,' explained Jonathan Wall, commissioning editor, Radio 5 live.

The digital network had made a concerted effort, he added, to attract cricket lovers with a marketing campaign and initiatives such as 'Cricket in the Park' events in Liverpool and London. It had also worked closely with the BBC sport website, which saw a significant increase in the number of users during the Ashes.

However, despite the popularity of the BBC's radio and online service, many cricket lovers were disappointed they couldn't watch the Ashes on terrestrial tv. As Slater pointed out, it is the big sporting moments that allow people to unite in a shared television experience. Having to pay for the privilege just isn't cricket.

## Ups and downs

The Rajars brought joy too for Radio 4, which has broken the 10 million barrier to achieve its largest audience since current research methodology began in 1999, and Radio 3, which posted its largest audience in five years (2.2 million listeners) in a period that featured the BBC Proms.

But while the network run by Mark Damazer was celebrating its high of 10.22m listeners, the picture was less rosy at the BBC Asian Network, which saw its audience drop to 357,000 from 473,000 a year ago and 405,000 last quarter.

Rajar results swing up and down from one quarter to the next, but any further fall for the Asian Network would be bad news indeed.

*Sally Hillier is deputy editor of Ariel*

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HOLIDAYS

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PROGRAMME MAKING

- Executive Editor, The One Show**  
London  
SM2/Ref: 21163709  
15-Nov-09
- Producer, Radio 1**  
London  
Yalding House  
7D/Ref: 21125609  
11-Nov-09
- Network Development Assistant Producer**  
Cardiff  
7D/Ref: 18395109  
10-Nov-09 06 months
- Assistant Promotions Producer (Job Share)**  
London  
Broadcasting House  
6D/Ref: 20157309  
02-Nov-09 06 months
- Concerts & Events Assistant, BBC Proms**  
London  
Broadcasting House  
4D/Ref: 21119409  
16-Nov-09 Various
- Post Production Assistant, BBC Switch**  
London  
2D/Ref: 20996009  
08-Nov-09 06 months
- JOURNALISM**
- Assistant Editor, BBC Radio York**  
York  
9D/Ref: 21227209  
16-Nov-09
- Assistant Editor, Radio Lancashire**  
Blackburn  
9D/Ref: 21119509  
11-Nov-09 08 months
- Senior Broadcast Journalist**  
Stornoway, Isle of Lewis  
8D/Ref: 21088709  
03-Nov-09
- Production Manager**  
London / Salford Quays  
8D/Ref: 21069209  
16-Nov-09
- SBJ - English Regions Sport**  
Multi Location  
8D/Ref: 20873109  
12-Nov-09 22 months
- Assistant Producer (Development), BBC Weather**  
London  
TV Centre  
7D/Ref: 21145109  
15-Nov-09 15 months
- Broadcast Journalist, BBC Parliament**  
London  
Millbank  
7D/Ref: 21073609  
08-Nov-09 12 months

- Broadcast Journalists, News Channel**  
London  
TV Centre  
7D/Ref: 21070809  
15-Nov-09 07 months
- Broadcast Journalists (Multimedia)**  
London  
Bush House  
7D/Ref: 20829009  
10-Nov-09 12 months
- Broadcast Journalist, News Interactive**  
Bristol  
5/7D/Ref: 21180109  
12-Nov-09
- Broadcast Journalist, BBC Lincolnshire**  
Lincoln  
5/7D/Ref: 21139209  
10-Nov-09
- Broadcast Assistant, BBC Radio Gloucestershire**  
Gloucester  
3/4H/Ref: 21083609  
11-Nov-09
- BUSINESS SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT**
- HR Director, Audio & Music**  
London  
SM2/Ref: 21129309  
09-Nov-09
- Finance Partner, Vision Productions**  
London  
TV Centre  
11D/Ref: 21241909  
15-Nov-09
- Head of High Risk, BBC Safety**  
London  
White City  
11D/Ref: 20152209  
16-Nov-09
- Business Planning Manager**  
London  
White City  
9D/Ref: 21268509  
16-Nov-09
- Communications Manager, South**  
Bristol  
9D/Ref: 21116909  
10-Nov-09
- Research Manager, Audiences & Marketing, BBC Trust Unit**  
London  
9D/Ref: 20913109  
16-Nov-09 06 months
- Diversity Adviser, BBC Trust Unit**  
London  
9D/Ref: 20912909  
16-Nov-09 09 months
- Senior Policy Adviser**  
London  
White City  
9D/Ref: 20011809  
05-Nov-09
- Commercial Manager**  
London  
White City  
8D/Ref: 21149709  
23-Nov-09
- Broadcast Assistant (Satellite Co-ordinator)**  
London  
5D/Ref: 21058009  
12-Nov-09 06 months
- Team Assistant, Direction Office**  
London  
White City  
4D/Ref: 21264309  
10-Nov-09
- Team Assistant**  
London  
White City  
3H/Ref: 21106609  
09-Nov-09 06 months
- Head of Employee Relations**  
London  
White City  
Under Review/Ref: 21188109  
09-Nov-09
- NEW MEDIA**
- Technical Project Manager**  
London  
Broadcast Centre Media Village  
8D/Ref: 21154909  
10-Nov-09
- Senior Accessibility Specialist**  
London  
Broadcast Centre Media Village  
8D/Ref: 21145909  
17-Nov-09
- Business Analyst, BBC ONLINE**  
London  
Broadcast Centre Media Village  
7D/Ref: 21136309  
10-Nov-09 12 months
- User Experience Designer**  
London / Salford Quays  
7D/Ref: 20523109  
10-Nov-09
- Junior Designer, Audio & Music Interactive**  
London  
Henry Wood House  
5D/Ref: 21125809  
10-Nov-09 12 months

- TECHNOLOGY**
- Technical Architect**  
London  
Broadcast Centre Media Village  
10D/Ref: 21084609  
10-Nov-09
- Technical Author**  
London  
Broadcast Centre Media Village  
8D/Ref: 21084509  
10-Nov-09
- Senior Software Engineer**  
London  
White City  
8D/Ref: 16263309  
14-Nov-09
- Producer Moderation Services**  
London  
Broadcast Centre Media Village  
7D/Ref: 20902309  
10-Nov-09 12 months
- Application Support Specialist**  
London  
Broadcast Centre Media Village  
7D/Ref: 16381009  
14-Nov-09 Flexi
- Network Engineer**  
London  
Media Centre  
7D/Ref: 15852609  
14-Nov-09
- Junior Software Engineer**  
London  
White City  
5D/Ref: 21152509  
03-Nov-09
- Problem Manager**  
London  
Broadcast Centre Media Village  
Under Review/Ref: 21084709  
11-Nov-09
- BBC WORLDWIDE**
- Management Accountant, BIS**  
London  
White City  
2W/Ref: 20805809  
05-Nov-09
- PA to Chief Operating Officer, BBC Worldwide**  
London  
Media Centre  
3W/Ref: 21219309  
05-Nov-09
- Art Assistant/Junior Designer**  
London  
Media Centre  
4W/Ref: 21144709  
04-Nov-09

See Attachment

Great to be at uni

Radio Lincolnshire news editor Maggie Curtis enjoys her return to the academic world

**SO HOW LONG ARE THE HOLIDAYS?** It was the question on most people's lips when I told them that I was being 'loaned' to the University of Lincoln and the city's community radio station for a year. But for anyone who thinks returning to academia after years as an sbj is a holiday, think again... My main three objectives were to meet 'real' people and make contacts; develop my management skills and share our current professional standards with journalism students. Lincoln's community radio station, Siren FM, happens to be based in the University of Lincoln: my job as communities editor was to raise the profile of this 24/7 operation. I also wanted to recruit a diverse



I've come back with some great contacts

new base of presenters to move it away from the naturally student-dominated line up. It was very different. You can't expect volunteers to behave in the same way as salaried, experienced BBC employees. Very few work at the speed of light demanded in radio or the tv newsroom, which in itself was a lesson. But the commitment of some of the volunteers, who presented shows at night and on weekends, was impressive. It was refreshing to meet people who were so excited by broadcasting, who would love to do the jobs we take for granted. By the time I left I had recruited and trained another five community presenters, including a local police officer and a mum who wanted to present a programme in Arabic and English. I finished the year with Lincoln's first full day of community radio. We broadcast from a deprived city housing estate. Alongside this I spent time with would-be journalists and producers. To be asked, why do you do it like that? not only made me think, it challenged some of the methods that had become automatic to me as an experienced journalist. Just being there meant I was always on the spot for advice for students and volunteers. It also helped the BBC to cement its relationships with the University of Lincoln and the community radio station. I've come back with renewed inspiration, great contacts and some potential new recruits for the BBC from areas we might never have traditionally reached. And, for the record, I got five weeks' holiday. The loan out didn't extend to a summer lecture tour!

Been anywhere nice?  
Send your attachment stories to Clare Bolt

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Vacancies published on this page are open to BBC Staff. Where indicated (E), external applicants may also be considered. Please contact (quoting the appropriate ref.no.): Recruitment BBC HR Direct, PO Box 1133, Belfast BT1 9GP Tel: 0370 333 1330. Textphone: 028 9032 8478

# DAN CLARKSON & JEFF TURNER

## CBBC PRESENTERS AND POTTED STORY MASTERS



**You both started off as actors. Were you at acting school together?**

**Dan:** I went to Bretton Hall in west Yorkshire, which was once called the Rada of the North.

**Jeff:** I didn't go to drama school. I went to university in Plymouth and studied drama there.

**So how did you meet?**

**Dan:** We were jobbing actors at Madame Tussauds, filling in between all the other jobs that were so readily coming in. We auditioned together, hated each other, then fell in love.

**Ah, the classic rom-com formula...**

**Jeff:** We didn't hate each other!  
**Dan:** I was just trying to add some drama.

**How did the idea for Potted Potter come about?**

**Dan:** A friend of mine got me a job as a 'solo storyteller' in a bookstore. They asked if I could pull together all the Harry Potter stories in 20 minutes for a book launch. Obviously Jeff looks a lot like Harry Potter, so we made it a two-hander.

**Jeff:** Randomly, we ended up doing it on Richard and Judy and on the day it went out, one of the *Blue Peter* editors was watching.

**Dan:** He'd been trying to make the show's book club more exciting: we ended up doing *Blue Peter* for a year.

**That's pretty jammy...**

**Jeff:** We were very lucky. Then *Blue Peter* stopped

**Dan:** ...it went on, it stopped us.

**Jeff:** ...as far as I'm concerned, when we left it stopped. Then we realised we had done absolutely nothing to raise our profile, which was very low but still higher than it would have

been otherwise. So we turned Harry Potter into an hour long show and took it on tour.

**So did you pitch 'Potted Potter' to the BBC?**

**Jeff:** They came to us. We were doing *Potted Big Brother* for Channel 4 and someone from programme development saw it.

**Dan:** They told us they were looking for new writing and presenting talent and would be in touch in the next year. Then three days later they asked us to come in for a screen test.

**Jeff:** Unfortunately we were in deepest darkest Wales for the week doing *Potter*, and our audience of 40 needed us.

**Dan:** There was hardly any signal, so I only heard that they wanted us to replicate Ed and Ocho's *Big Debate* and do a competition between cheese and New York.

**Jeff:** I was actually quite a big Ed and Ocho fan, being an actor working very odd hours, and we were able to piece something together.

**What was your screen test?**

**Dan:** We read Ed's diary and found that he had left some money lying around and also a muffin. Jeff searched for the money and I went through a time vortex to a weird land where I found the muffin...

**It sounds very Mighty Boosh...**

**Jeff:** There were influences knocking around.

**...but you got the gig**

**Jeff:** Yup, they asked us if we'd like to be the new CBBC presenters.

**Dan:** Of course we said we'd have to think about it...

**Is there still a broom cupboard?**

**Dan:** Yes, but it's now a sort of

office. We started doing weekends, and when Ed and Ocho left we covered weekdays afternoons, then mornings until they got Iain and Hacker. It turns out Jeff wasn't as cute as a little Scottie dog.

**Jeff:** I try, I do try.

**So tell me about Potted Pirates and the 'compressed capers'**

**Dan:** It's everything you wanted to know about pirates in an hour.

**Jeff:** And a lot of things you don't.

**'I got to tell children they could turn over to CBBC or watch the inauguration of the first black US president'**

**Do you have a stash of pirate historians behind closed doors?**

**Jeff:** It's just the two of us and the director.

**Dan:** We spent four months researching dates and pirate history and then we found out it was a lot funnier to put on a silly hat and go aaarrrrr. It made the show better, but we have a lot of useless pirate information at our disposal.

**What else are you potting?**

**Dan:** We're doing Potted Pantomime at Christmas in the West End. We're condensing the six most famous pantos into one hour and doing all the parts.

**That's quite ambitious. You**

**must be very good at synopsis.**

**Dan:** We're very good at taking someone else's hard work and shortening it to two minutes.

**Jeff:** It's a bizarre and not overly useful talent to have.

**Dan:** JK Rowling loved that we took years of her work and condensed it into an hour.

**Did you have to ask her first?**

**Jeff:** Her lawyers were fantastic. They could, if they'd wanted to, have turned around and said no.

**Doesn't she have a reputation for being quite litigious?**

**Dan:** I think that's the people around her; she tolerates us like a big sister. She has seen the scripts and the reviews, and the show has done well with critics and audience. It's a loving parody...we're fans of the books and we never set out to take the mick.

**What have been your CBBC highlights so far?**

**Jeff:** I got to tell children that they could turn over to the CBBC channel or stay on BBC One to watch the inauguration of the first ever black president of the United States. That was my absolute favourite. Oh, and meeting Ed the Duck. I thought, my eight year old self would high five me for this.

**Dan:** We've done the voiceover for when the Queen dies. That's what I've told my grandparents. If the Queen dies, watch CBBC and you'll hear my voice.

**Jeff:** We're the sombre voice of children's telly. We have to send the kids over to the CBBC channel in case it upsets them.

**Dan:** We give them a choice. Your monarch has died, but if you want to watch Nev the Bear, turn over!

**Interview by Clare Bolt**

# foreign bureau



**CANDACE PIETTE**

SOUTH AMERICA  
CORRESPONDENT  
BUENOS AIRES

**THE WEDGE** of papers we collect every morning from the news-stand currently comes with a series of specially commissioned prints of paintings of Argentine and Latin American writers. They are a grisly lot. All old men, with balding pates and baggy, whiskery faces. In other cultures you might find a free calendar or poster. But Buenos Aires has a passion for literature. There are fine bookshops everywhere, with attendants who know the stock. And you see people reading books in the wonderful cafes.

The theatre industry is the largest in Latin America; many people go, from all social strata. The city also offers a dizzying array of cultural workshops and courses. Yoga competes with poetry and creative writing alongside chess (taught in primary school!) art, theatre, circus skills and philosophy.

At my local swimming pool, the elderly people doing water aerobics chat about their Portuguese lessons and cookery classes.

**It's a labyrinth where you can easily lose yourself**

But my initial impression was very different. It was that the culture was deeply, darkly corrupt. I formed this image

in a cloud of fury at the airport coming back from a reporting trip to Bolivia. I was greeted by customs officials who opened my box of technical equipment, found I was carrying two laptops and told me I would have to pay \$US3000 of duty for illegal importation.

After many attempts to explain that I used it for my job, they insisted they would have to impound it. They were of course after a bribe. I finally managed to persuade them to allow me to take the laptop back without paying the duty. But during their inspection several valuable items went missing.

Now more settled, I struggle to understand this complex culture, the way the past pulls so hard at people here, and how the city often seems inhabited by ghosts. The ghosts of the 'disappeared' are strongest; the thousands tortured and killed by the military government which ended in 1983. There are monuments, plaques and inscriptions on paving stones where they were last seen or where they were killed.

My abiding impression is that of sadness, that this great country seems to have lost its way. 'The 4th richest in the world in 1940!' taxi drivers and shopkeepers say as they look in disbelief at the antics of their politicians. They are surprised when I say I like it here. It's fascinating. As one of those dead Argentine writers, Jorge Luis Borges, put it, Buenos Aires is a labyrinth where you can easily lose yourself.

# green room

## THE ARIELATOR

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

**UPSIDE** Being dressed in the fearsome garb of Star Wars baddie Darth Maul for Saturday's Halloween celebrations didn't stop business correspondent **Joe Lynam** (pictured) from chasing a breaking news story with all the tenacity of a Sith Lord. Joe got the call from his editor while at a party, calling his contacts at the treasury as he took a taxi home. 'I'm dressed as Darth Maul,' he announced to his interviewee, who laughed and answered, 'And I'm dressed as a vampire!' Amusing metaphors abound: has the BBC turned to the dark side? Or is the treasury sucking the blood out of the banking system?



**DOWNSIDE** Sixteen years after becoming pint-pulling matriarch Peggy Mitchell in *EastEnders*, **Barbara Windsor** has announced she is calling it a day to, as she puts it, 'spend a bit more time with my old man, as he's not getting any younger'. Perhaps she'll also spend time reflecting on her achievements over the years, which are many and varied. In 1976 she was given the first ever Rear of the Year award, and she once ran a boozer in Buckinghamshire with then husband, publican Stephen Hollings – the latter experience no doubt aiding her in the rendering of her immortal catchphrase 'Get out of my pub!'



## EARWIGGING

OVERHEARD AT THE BBC

...I brought a spare pair of trousers in today in case these ones fall apart...

...They don't have any bacon and sausage and they haven't got any sausage and bacon either...

...How can it be five to 10? All I set out to do was write an email!...

...Come and smell my sweaty foot...

...Will somebody zip that bear up at the back; he's exposing himself!...

...Do butternut squashes grow on trees?...



## ONE FOR THE ALBUM

**CAUTION ALL STAFF** who have taken an in-house production course in the last 40 years – thanks to an illicit deal with a mysterious figure in deep White City car park we have your team photos. So be careful in your dealings with your friendly neighbourhood staff newspaper, or you may find your sepia-tinged self from 20 years ago staring out from the page. You may think that gigantic collar, ill-advised moustache or bizarre pose were a thing of the past, but

you'd be wrong. Here are four people who may not have messed up too much in the fashion stakes, but can serve as an example: **Stephen Frears**, director of *The Queen* and other films, looking a bit like an extra from *Animal House*; **Jeremy Paxman** displaying an early incarnation of his trademark incredulous smirk on a film training course; newsreaders **Michael Buerk** and **Angela Rippon** looking, well, like they always have done. So play nice.

## SUGAR GETS STITCHED UP

**CAN YOU IMAGINE** a knitted Alan Sugar lurking among the rest of your childhood cuddly toys? He'd have the teddy bears devising an entrepreneurial scheme to make money by washing cars in Lego town in

no time. Yes, the chilling vision of a four year old child acting out *The Apprentice* using a plush menagerie presided over by a fearsome knitted Alan Sugar is surely an example of kids learning about the joys of capitalism just a little too young. Fortunately the pictured doll is not a merchandising wheeze from Worldwide (although...) – he is just one in 10,000 pieces of 'user generated content' that have been published in BBC Blast's online gallery. Other content sent into the Blast Showcase by creative 13-19 year

olds includes the head of a corpse (it's a prop, but jaded crime writers looking to crowbar some internet action into their work should take note of this potential horror plot line, example title: 'I know what you UGC'd last summer'), an original take on James Bond, and plenty of portraiture. It's great stuff, submitted in a variety of media – proof multi-platform content is the future even if the kids are blissfully unaware of such acronyms. [tinyurl.com/bbc-blastshow](http://tinyurl.com/bbc-blastshow)



## WE HEAR THAT...

**HAS FEARLESS** inquisitor Andrew Marr now fallen out with be-quiffed singer Morrissey, perhaps due to the views expressed in his recent BBC Two series exploring the history of modern Britain clashing with the Smiths singer's somewhat conservative views on the old empire? It would appear so: 'Marr: there's no Twitter between me and Morrissey' trumpeted News Online last week. Then we remembered that the guitarist in the Smiths is called Johnny Marr. Oh, well...

**IT'S NOT** just senior managers who are feeling the pinch of our brave new world of pay policies. 'They don't pay you very well do they, the BBC?' moaned Yusuf (formerly Cat Stevens) in between live spots on Radio 2 during Maida Vale's 75th birthday celebrations. A murmur of agreement from the star-struck audience of crew and loitering radio types would appear to suggest that they do not...

**WAS THAT** a smile on Sian Williams's face as she followed up a *News at Ten* report on how one in five British companies won't pay any money towards staff Christmas parties this year? Was there just a hint of irony in her cheery pronouncement of 'ho ho ho' after the report, which somehow neglected to mention the BBC? Sian wouldn't be drawn on the matter: 'News has managed to find a free venue for our party, though we've got to pay for our drinks, which seems fair,' she told Green Room. 'You can't really expect wassailing to come out of the licence fee.' If we knew what 'wassailing' was, we'd surely agree...

**THE THICK** of it producer Adam Tandy has hinted that the New Labour parodying series may not actually come to an end if the party passes over the reins of power in the next election. 'I don't think we want to let the other side off entirely,' he told the Evening Standard. 'We're having a think about that.' They'll be hard pressed to find another Alastair Campbell (inspiration for foul-mouthed force of nature Malcolm Tucker)...

## Win a Children in Need tech cover



**IF YOU'RE** worried your portable electrical equipment is looking a little worse for wear, liven it up and trumpet your charitable credentials at the same time with the new Children in Need phone and mobile covers from wrappz.com. Created in the style of Pudsey's bandana, the Wrappz are made of 3M vinyl and a proportion of each sale goes to the charity. Ariel has four mobile phone covers and one laptop cover to give away. To win one of these, just answer this question: Which fruit is also the name for a brand of mobile phone? Email ariel competitions by November 9, stating mobile or laptop. If mobile, please check on the Wrappz website that your phone is one of the models listed.