

BBC Charter Review Consultation
Dept for Culture, Media & Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street
LONDON
SW1Y 5DH

11th March 2004

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Charter Review

We respond to the points in order of the 'Your Say' leaflet, adding that this omits to list Ceefax and BBCi as publicly funded services!

Value Most – In order of preference we value drama, real comedy, educational, arts and news but sport we do not watch at all, which is considerable more prevalent than generally admitted.

Adapt – Info relating to Freeview is **appalling** despite writing to the BBC to clarify things. Plus the Radio Times do not know what's going on!

Think – We have had Freeview for almost two years (ie DTT pre-Freeview) and find it very good especially BBC FOUR TV.

We also appreciate BBC2, Radio 4 and Radio 3 except for **too much jazz** at peak times etc. Television needs to drastically reduce the amount of **sex/swearing**, which only highlights the bankruptcy of ideas. Can things fall any lower?

With an **ageing population** we need far more programmes that cater not so much or the elderly but cut down the amount aimed at the nations' Yoof! Hopefully, when Freeview's BBC3 is almost universal perhaps the sane can reclaim BBC1 etc.

The BBC state; '*Our purpose is to enrich peoples lives with programmes and services that entertain*'.

We ask therefore if a new **BBC radio station** could be considered that devoted itself to knowledge/documentary programmes. There is a gap on the airwaves for programmes like Horizon etc that would easily adapt to radio. A specialised **Radio 8** ought to be considered.

TV has BBC TWO and BBC FOUR as alternatives to the 'popular' BBC ONE but there is no alternative to Radio 4 except perhaps Radio 3 which is primarily music of course.

A Radio 8 might well incorporate Schools programmes and Open University, plus programmes like University Challenge and other similar output. With four national and 40 odd local pop music stations from the BBC it would seem that one knowledge station should not be too much to ask for.

What is also needed is a **new TV comedy** to replace 'Fools & Horses' but equally I doubt whether this is ever possible!

Commercial – We simply comment on all those TV programmes that have either been given or sold to UKTV? It is unbelievable that programmes made with public money are never to be seen again by the majority. This practise has deprived people of some very good programmes and moreover deprived BBC 1, 2 and 4 of much needed repeats. Even with Freeview one can only receive two UKTV channels (UK History and UK BrightIdeas) while there are some 7 others that now cost money to view. These were paid for with our license fee but then half-inched. Whom are we funding?

As regards other commercial activities the public simply do not know what is happening. We need to know what the set-up. For instance what is the set up as regards **BBC America** etc.

Paying - We support the retention of the license fee, albeit we're inclined to advocate its collection through the council tax, or whatever it will be called, so as to remove the 20% that the Post Office take for collecting it. This could of course be spent on programmes.

Moreover, this system would greatly help those on benefits who would not then not pay as much as the those earning £ thousands or hundreds of thousands of pounds.

We definitely do not want the BBC commercialised.

Organised - There is a need to co-ordinate information that emanates from the BBC. They need to take care of the finer detail and also remember that it is a public service.

Additionally, infinitely more care is needed at the BBC to prevent broadcasting similar programmes at the same time on different channels and stations. Especially, we hate BBC1 & BBC2 showing sport at the same time, because this is not 'public service broadcasting'.

~~The BBC might be employing those with GCSEs but it is evident that common sense is short in supply.~~

Regulation - Government should stop interfering with the BBC especially since we the people pay for it.

The public should have a greater say, which could be done through public meetings around the country as an ongoing process.

The Board of Governors needs to represent all classes rather than just the middle class as evidenced.

Finally - We despair at the fact that details of the public meetings with ministers will only appear on the Internet. With official figures showing only 25% of the population with ready access to the net these meeting are only going to attract a certain type! What's the matter with also using Ceefax and BBCi ?

I thank you for considering our views.

Yours,


Mr & Mrs A Adams

PS Freeview - We bought an ex ITV Digital box because we were told (by Dixons) it could do more than the average box. But with the recent advent of the digital Teletext on 4 we discovered that our box is not programmed to receive it !

Since we foresaw other innovations not being available through this box we sold it and purchased another that could receive the new teletext. Then, just weeks later we see that Top Up TV are supplying 10 channels for a modest fee for a card which is inserted into the ex ITV box. We can't win can we.

So will someone please take control of what's going on and relay it to us in the real world.