

8th March 2004

BBC Charter Review Consultation
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street
London SW1Y 5DH

Dear Consultation,

• **What do you value most about the BBC?**

On TV: we value most the news, documentaries and true life stories and experiences. Natural history is excellent and so is Songs of Praise. The coverage of sports is 1st class.

On Radio we value our local radio station BBC Bristol which is very friendly and keeps us up-to-date with local news, travel and weather and invites listener participation.

• **What do you think of the television, radio and online services the BBC provides?**

To us the most useful online service the BBC provides is the 24 hour news channel. As far as the regular television channels are concerned we feel that there is often too much violence, swearing and sex scenes. We avoid watching all these programmes. This of course applies right across the board including all TV channels and not just the BBC.

• **Should the BBC run commercial services?**

Yes, if this helps to raise cash for the BBC. But no advertising please on any channel!

• **How should we pay for the BBC?**

The licence fee has worked well - those who want TV pay for it. Funding should not come out of our taxes.

• **How do we ensure that the BBC is properly accountable to the public?**

The BBC should meet standards of decency, avoiding swearing, blasphemy, violence

and sexual content. These standards are written into the present Charter but are being ignored. In the past, we have on a number of occasions raised questions of unacceptable content in certain programmes. We have pointed out the statements in the BBC Charter concerning the standards of decency which the BBC should adopt in broadcasting programmes but we have never received an answer appreciating our views or agreeing with the objections we have raised. The answers always tell us that swearing, or extreme violence, or explicit sex are O.K. in this case because the "context requires it". The Charter requires the BBC to avoid this context! The BBC does not at the present time, act in accordance with its Charter in these matters. We would like to see stricter regulation of matters of common decency.

The BBC and ITV appear to change the boundaries all the time and they allow programmes to get worse and worse, so that in the end, there's not much for discerning people to watch.

Yours sincerely,

 

Bernard Brown

Renee Brown