

6/8/01

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Tessa Jowell MP
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
2 to 4 Cockspur Street
London
SW1 5DH

23/7/01

Our Ref EB

Dear Tessa Jowell

37th Charles Wells Cambridge Folk Festival 26, 27, 28 & 29 July 2001

I am writing to express my support for the new BBC Digital Radio Proposition currently known as 'Network Y'.

I am writing from the perspective of Folk Music. I am responsible for the organisation of the Cambridge Folk Festival for Cambridge City Council. Cambridge is widely regarded as the premier Folk Festival in the country, where we showcase artists from a diverse range of acoustic and folk music.

Although Radio 2 gives significant coverage to Folk Music it is, of course, impossible for them to cover a very broad range of folk music due to the nature of their proposition which covers popular culture, music and other specialist music.

I would, therefore, offer my support for the new digital proposition which would allow for fuller and in-depth coverage of musicians who do not gain mainstream, daytime support in the current range of radio stations available to the public. There are a number of major artists who currently do not gain heavy support from the existing range of services such as Kate Rusby, Kathryn Williams and John Prine for instance. Their music is influential and of a standard which deserves a national broadcast platform.

I am particularly pleased that the station will not just reflect commercial hits but will reflect influential music. This is particularly important in the area of folk music where many of the main exponents are not business-focussed but are interested solely in music for music's sake. There is a rich seam of folk music which does not gain commercial success itself but which is important to the musical development of the United Kingdom and from which the more commercial artists draw inspiration.

Cambridge City Council Leisure Services
The Guildhall Cambridge CB2 3QJ
Telephone 01223 457000



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

It is also an exciting development that live music will be a key element. There is most certainly an audience for quality live music in addition to the provision currently to be found on both Radio 1 and 2. I believe that further support for live performance in the United Kingdom would help to ensure the lifeblood of music in this country. It is in the area of live performance where the most exciting musical developments occur and this should be reflected on national radio.

I am also enthusiastic about the intention to reflect the BBC's musical archive. It is essential for the continued success and development of the United Kingdom's music scene that we acknowledge our heritage.

I hope, therefore, that once you have completed your public consultation process that you agree to the Network Y proposition.

Yours sincerely



Eddie Barcan
Festival Co-ordinator

