

# **Submission for the Secretary of State's review of BBC 7**

**March 2004**

## **Contents**

**Section 1:** The vision for BBC 7

**Section 2:** What makes BBC 7 distinctive

**Section 3:** BBC 7 as a multimedia service

**Section 4:** Editorial review of BBC 7

**Section 5:** Appraisal of BBC 7's performance

**Section 6:** Performance of BBC 7 against the Secretary of State's  
conditions of consent

**Section 7:** The way forward for BBC 7

**Appendix 1:** BBC 7 schedule

## Section 1: The vision for BBC 7

The radio industry in the UK is dominated by music stations, with comparatively few speech networks on offer from either the BBC or commercial radio. Of the BBC speech stations, Radio 4 appeals more to older listeners than to the young. Its schedule is driven by its news and current affairs programmes, which can prove alienating to younger listeners who perceive the station as too intellectually demanding and exclusive. Five Live aims to be more accessible in tone and appeals to a younger audience than Radio 4's, but its remit is restricted to news and sport.

BBC 7 was created to grow a new generation of speech radio listeners by offering a different kind of spoken word network to any on offer elsewhere. There would be no news, current affairs, sport or phone-ins on BBC 7. Instead, the network brings listeners speech programmes from the BBC's vast archive including classic and contemporary comedy, readings and drama. It also offers some new commissions in comedy and drama in sub-genres such as science fiction and horror, which are rarely found elsewhere on BBC Radio. In addition, BBC 7 provides daily speech programmes for children of a kind which has been unavailable for the past decade.

For a new generation of listeners, this is a chance to hear some of the classics for the first time; for older listeners, it gives an opportunity to hear again many of their best-loved programmes. BBC 7 also gives the licence fee payer better value for money by providing access to archive programmes from the established networks, very little of which is otherwise repeated.

BBC 7 was granted consent to launch by the Secretary of State on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2001, and launched on Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup> 2002, offering an average seven hours of comedy, seven of drama and readings and four of children's programming every day, with a greater emphasis on comedy on Saturdays and drama on Sundays. In the summer of 2003, it extended its hours, adding another hour each of drama and comedy. On its first birthday, in response to requests from many listeners, BBC 7 moved to broadcasting 24 hours a day, which increased both comedy and drama to nine hours each.

To mark the launch, and raise the profile of BBC 7, Radio 4 simulcast two hours of the network's first evening on the air. This gave listeners to both networks the chance to hear Paul Merton introduce some typical output; classic and contemporary comedy such as *Hancock's Happy Christmas*, *The Goons*, and *Knowing Me, Knowing You* and an equally wide range of drama, including *Fatherland* and *Dr Who*, and readings of *Alice in Wonderland* and Philip Pullman's *The Ruby in the Smoke*.

At the same time, BBC 7 commissioned a poll amongst BBC Radio listeners to identify the Nation's Favourite Comedian. About 5,000 people voted by phone and internet in the month running up to the launch. The result proved the enduring attraction of classic comedy, with Tony Hancock coming top, the Goons second and Kenneth Horne third. The highest ranking comedians still active were the team behind *I'm Sorry, I Haven't a Clue* at number four, with *The Two Ronnies* and Billy Connolly at numbers nine and ten.

The results of the poll were carried widely in both the national and regional press, generating useful publicity for the launch of BBC 7. This publicity, combined with a major BBC marketing campaign and the increased availability of DAB receivers in the

shops for Christmas 2002, meant that BBC 7 was one of the main forces for the early growth of Digital Radio. A DRDB survey of consumers buying DAB sets at that time suggested that a fifth of those who had bought DAB Digital Radio sets in order to receive a particular station said they had done so to get BBC 7.<sup>1</sup> The influence of BBC 7 on DAB set purchases continues to grow with latest figures released indicating BBC 7 is responsible for over a quarter of DAB purchases amongst those buying to receive particular services<sup>2</sup>.

Manufacturers also viewed BBC 7 as key to driving DAB Digital Radio sales.

**"We believe BBC 7 is the catalyst for the take-up of Digital Radio."**

***Leslie Burrage, Chief Executive Roberts Radio Ltd***

As well as DAB Digital Radio, BBC 7 is also available on digital cable television, digital satellite television, Freeview and online.

---

<sup>1</sup> Claritas research, commissioned by the Digital Radio Development Bureau Jan-Mar 03

<sup>2</sup> Claritas research, commissioned by the Digital Radio Development Bureau Oct-Dec 03

## Section 2: What makes BBC 7 distinctive

**“..an entertainment network with something for everyone.”**  
**Elisabeth Mahoney, *The Guardian*, 20/12/02**

BBC 7 plays an important role in the BBC's portfolio of speech networks. The network was designed to bring a new audience to speech radio by offering a unique mix of entertainment and children's programming, without news bulletins, weather or phone-ins. It has an easily understandable schedule, with programming divided into zones for Comedy and Drama which are broadcast at the same time each day. BBC 7's presentation style is fresh and irreverent, and overall, its tone and structure make it accessible and welcoming for new listeners to speech radio. BBC 7 is carefully scheduled to complement Radio 4, so that the networks offer a choice of listening as far as possible.

The network aims to engage audiences with literature and poetry, entertain with comedy and support British talent by bringing its work to a broader audience. In particular, BBC 7:

### **a: Makes the BBC's speech archive available to listeners**

BBC 7 draws on classic and contemporary archive in comedy, drama and entertainment from all the BBC networks, plus a small amount of the best archive from international broadcasters, such as Garrison Keillor's show from Minnesota Public Radio. It offers classic and contemporary plays and books, performed by world class actors. It also broadcasts genres less well-represented on Radio 4, such as science fiction, fantasy and horror.

### **b: Repackages classic programmes for a new audience**

BBC 7's schedule offers programmes brought together in zones, such as Classic Comedy in which two programmes in the same genre are offered back-to-back. This is completely different to the way Radio 4 is scheduled. By creating these zones, and by using credible and well-known figures in the comedy world like Paul Merton, Tony Hawks and Phill Jupitus to set classic comedies in context for the audience, BBC 7 encourages new listeners to discover vintage programmes like *The Navy Lark* and *Round the Horne*, as well as those old enough to remember hearing the original transmissions. The same techniques are used to attract listeners to drama zones. For example, the Crime and Thrillers zone is broadcast daily from 1-2 pm, repeated from 8-9 pm in the evening.

### **c: Supports new writing**

BBC 7's output is not all from the archive. It has commissioned new comedy performance, *Spanking New on 7*, and supports new writing, both for children and adults. It commissioned Alan Bennett to write a monologue for Dame Thora Hird,

which was recorded two months before her death for transmission early in 2004. Working with the BBC's existing initiatives for new writers, Writersroom, BBC 7 will also offer a platform for writers new to radio to have their work broadcast.

It has also commissioned new writing for children by established children's writers who have never written for radio before, such as Neil Arksey and Debi Gliori. These stories were broadcast in the daily live magazine show, *Big Toe*.

BBC 7's nearest commercial equivalent is Oneworld, a 24-hour digital speech station whose output is mainly unabridged readings, available commercially and licensed from audio publishers such as Macmillan and Chivers. It broadcasts a very small amount of drama licensed from Naxos audio publishers. It does not originate any drama, readings or comedy, but does offer a small amount of children's programming.

### **d: Broadcasts original programming for children**

One of the key elements of the network is its children's programming. Every day, BBC 7 broadcasts two hours of stories for 4 – 7's, *Little Toe*<sup>3</sup>, and the first national live speech-based programme aimed specially at children aged 9 - 11, *The Big Toe Radio Show*. *Big Toe* is a two-hour magazine programme, offering its audience news, reviews, interviews, science, debate and around fifty minutes of stories every day, delivered free from advertisements and commercial pressure.

Oneworld offers three hours of stories for children a day, which, like their adult output, are drawn from commercially available readings, and a weekly half-hour magazine, *Squawkbox*. With repeats, it provides 23 hours a week.

### **e: Connects with listeners through live events**

*Big Toe* has presented outside broadcasts from Brighton, from *The Edinburgh Festival* and from the CBBC Prom in Hyde Park (which was also webcast). It also broadcast a special edition for Christmas 2003 featuring the poet Benjamin Zephaniah reading his poems to a live audience of 150 children.

### **f: Innovates**

Technically, the whole network is innovative, as it is the only BBC speech network to be broadcast by a pre-scheduled playout system. This keeps costs and staffing to a minimum.

*Big Toe* has also broken new ground in its studio environment which is quite unlike any other. Rather than putting children appearing on the show through the potentially intimidating process of sitting at a table in the studio and speaking into a microphone, they wear baseball caps and lapel mics. The caps are colour-coded to allow the production staff to identify the speakers' microphones and the children are free to roam round the studio which is furnished with sofas rather than a central table - and even to move into the office space outside the studio. This has unquestionably

---

<sup>3</sup> Transmitted 7-8 am and repeated 3-4 pm, just before *Big Toe*

contributed to the enjoyment of the children taking part as they find the whole process fun and engaging.

**"Thanks so much for having us on the show! I really enjoyed being part of the Big Toe team....when I grow up, I would like to be a reporter just like you."**

***Ben***

The new informal style of studio is going to be used by other programmes, for example by Radio Five Live, and it is being assessed for ideas to be incorporated in radio studios in the new BBC building in central London.

## Section 3:

### BBC 7 as a multimedia service

BBC 7 was created as a fully multimedia and interactive service. It is available via DAB Digital Radio, online, and through digital cable television, digital satellite television and Freeview.

#### Online

The BBC 7 website generated just over 2.7m page impressions in January 2004. It offers a detailed schedule, information about programmes, competitions, a particularly popular children's site linked to *Big Toe* and *Little Toe*, and the chance to listen live to the network. Initially, BBC 7 was unable to offer listeners the chance to listen online "on demand" (via the BBC Radio Player) to its archive material, because of issues with obtaining rights. New material, including *Big Toe* and unabridged readings, has been available on demand for a week after transmission since April 2003.

Listeners are encouraged to e-mail BBC 7 with comments and suggestions and the best are featured on-air. In response to a number of requests via e-mail and the website, the network changed its Sunday schedule from a pick of the week's programmes, *7 on 7*, to drama, in particular longer plays running up to 90 minutes.

Online competitions are run regularly and are a popular feature with users, with *Know Your Place* proving particularly successful. This was a descriptive writing competition with the winners having their work read on-air by the station's announcers, as well as being made available online in text and audio. Future plans include more poetry competitions, a *Listener of the Month* feature and interactive story writing. The network's Head of Programmes issues a weekly e-mail newsletter to subscribers, giving information about future plans and programming and canvassing their opinions on a wide range of topics.

In March 2003, when BBC 7 ran a Vagon poetry competition to coincide with its broadcast of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, hundreds of listeners submitted their own Vagon poems, many of which were read on-air over a four-week period. Even though the competition is now closed, listeners continue to submit poems suggesting there is an appetite for this sort of creative writing initiative.

BBC 7 also has a flourishing message board with a small but passionate community increasing in size every week. As BBC 7 is a largely pre-recorded network, the message board is not used in the same way as on other networks, where it can provide live input into programmes on-air. On BBC 7, the message board provides listeners not only with a chance to comment on output and debate issues such as the portrayal of teenagers in sitcoms, and whether jokes in classic comedies which would now be considered unacceptable should be censored, but also to suggest programmes they would like to hear on-air in the future.

For example, when Barry Cryer presented a series of *Comedy Greats*, highlighting the best comedies of each decade, the final programme in the series was composed of programmes nominated by the listeners on the website. Similarly, in autumn

2003, message board users were canvassed for their Christmas comedy favourites, and some of these were then broadcast during the festive season.

The children's programmes have their own website which receives up to 40,000 page impressions each week. The most popular elements include the competitions, the opportunity to listen again to the programme via the Radio Player, and to listen separately to the different story episodes. Children can listen back to stories for up to a week after they were first broadcast. There is also the chance to take part in music making games, to visit the 'virtual studio' and to e-mail the programme with comments and ideas for the 'your stuff' page.

### **Live text services**

On DAB Digital Radio receivers, BBC 7 offers a full live text service which gives information about the programme on-air and what is coming up. For example, where possible it gives the original transmission date of archive programmes, brief details of the cast of dramas, a synopsis of the action in previous episodes of a serial and, in the case of *Big Toe*, it is updated live every day as the programme is broadcast. Live text is also available on Freeview and the network wants to extend this service to other digital television platforms as bandwidth and platform operators allow.

## Section 4:

### Editorial review of BBC 7

#### The schedule

To differentiate BBC 7 from Radio 4, and to make it simple for new listeners to navigate the network, programme genres are streamed into zones for Comedy and Drama, stripped across the week at the same time. These zones are further divided to appeal to all ages and to exploit the diversity of the material in the BBC archive.

For example, the **Comedy Zone** includes the following strands:

- **Classic Comedy:** e.g. *Hancock's Half Hour*, *The Goons*, *Dad's Army*;
- **Panel Games:** e.g. *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*, *Just a Minute*, *The News Quiz*;
- **Contemporary Comedy:** e.g. *Dead Ringers*, *Absolute Power*, *Little Britain*;
- **Late Night Comedy Club:** stand-up comedy such as *4 at the Store*, *Stand Up America* and the new comedy commission *Spanking New on 7*.

Each of the zones is introduced by a single presenter to emphasise their distinctiveness from each other, so, for example, the morning Drama Zone, from 9 am to noon has one presenter, then another takes over for the lunchtime comedy slot.

The zones are repeated at least once within the broadcasting day to give the listeners the opportunity to catch programmes they have missed. To provide a real choice for the listener, contemporary comedy is scheduled in the breakfast time slot between 8 am and 9 am and then repeated in the evening.

Audience research has shown that comedy is one of the easiest access points for speech radio while drama is one of the most difficult. Young people who have grown up with television find it hard at first to follow a radio drama, having difficulty identifying the different characters by voice alone. Radio drama is also an extremely expensive genre of programming, which means that virtually all original work is produced by the BBC. Yet radio drama is a vital part of the cultural life of the UK, offering writers, directors and actors opportunities to perform at every stage of their careers. Without a continuing audience for radio drama, these opportunities will be lost.

While Comedy is the main way in which BBC 7 has been encouraging newcomers to speech radio, in the schedule it is balanced by popular drama and readings.

The **Drama Zone** includes the following strands:

- **Classic Drama:** this ranges from the complete Dickens dramatisations available in the archive to major landmark productions like *The Forsyte Chronicles*;
- **Crime and Thrillers:** from the complete canon of *Sherlock Holmes* to dramatisations of contemporary writers like Ian Rankin;
- **7<sup>th</sup> Dimension:** the science fiction, fantasy and horror strand, with programmes ranging from *Earthsearch* to *Dracula*;
- **Award-winners:** an opportunity to broadcast some lesser-known dramas which have won major radio industry awards, such as Anthony Minghella's *Cigarettes and Chocolate* and Lee Hall's *Spoonface Steinberg*;
- **Readings/Bestsellers:** daily readings of the works of well-known authors, such as Louis de Bernières' *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* and Iain Banks's *The Crow Road*.

## Children's programmes

Ahead of launching BBC 7, the BBC commissioned research<sup>4</sup> into what children would like from a radio programme just for them: an 'adult-free zone'. The children interviewed wanted music, competitions, quizzes, interviews and to have their voice heard. They were frustrated with what was on offer: "*There's hardly anything suitable for us on the radio, it's all grown up things,*" said one. Another said, "*They think the adults listen to radio. They don't think we listen to it or like it.*"

To encourage this new audience to listen to speech radio, BBC 7 created two different programmes.

### The Little Toe Radio Show

*Little Toe* is for younger listeners aged between four and seven and is designed to appeal to parents seeking an alternative to television, particularly at breakfast time. It is a simple format: one presenter introduces five different stories that are serialised across the week. The content is carefully chosen to appeal to the youngest of children, with stories including many well-known from the BBC archive, such as Stephen Fry reading *Jennings*; Andrew Sachs reading *Wiggly Park* from the old BBC Radio 5; and Alan Bennett reading *Winnie the Pooh*. On Saturdays and Sundays, *Little Toe* provides a showcase for children's dramas, such as *The Railway Children*. New abridgements of popular stories including Humphrey Carpenter's *Mr Majeika* and *Big George* by Eric Pringle have been specially commissioned for *Little Toe*.

*Little Toe* has showcased many of the best known dramatisations from the BBC archive including *Jungle Book*, *The Nutcracker*, *The Mouse King*, *The Demon Headmaster*, *The Railway Children* and *The Wizard of Oz*.

---

<sup>4</sup> Childwise Project Zebedee July 2002

## **The Big Toe Radio Show**

*The Big Toe Radio Show* is on every afternoon between 4 and 6 pm, and is aimed at 9-11 year olds. It's a daily live magazine programme which features news, interviews, discussions, reviews, music, competitions and 50 minutes of specially commissioned stories every day. Around 800 children have come in to sit on the *Big Toe* sofa since the launch in December 2002. On *Big Toe*, children are not just listeners, they're broadcasters too.

As part of the *Big Toe* team these children take part in every aspect of the show. Working with the professional presenters in the specially designed studio, they:

- talk about themselves;
- interview guests;
- take part in the competitions and quizzes including the popular word games *Pull My Toe* and *Big Toe Tennis*;
- read cues;
- report events;
- introduce music;
- take part in drama workshops, book clubs, drumming, performance, poetry and cookery.

There has been no shortage of children willing to take part. Schools, drama groups, clubs and organisations are invited, and children from places around the country including Leicester, London, Winchester, Suffolk, Co. Durham, Pontypool, Orpington, Bristol, Colchester, Hereford, Birmingham, Cambridge, and inner London have taken part in the studio. Children from Northern Ireland have also participated down the line from a studio there.

Guests have included the astronomer Anton Vamplew, who appears regularly discussing eclipses, planets and space travel; poets, including Ian McMillan, Benjamin Zephaniah and John Hegley; authors such as Anne Fine, Jacqueline Wilson and Philip Pullman; musicians, both classical and pop, some of whom play live in the studio; physicists; explorers; dramatists; and experts in every form of wildlife from bees and spiders to dolphins and chimps. There's a regular science guest covering everything from the science of laughing to sound.

**"It's good to talk about real science and encourage everyone, no matter how old, that science is interesting, relevant and can be fun....the children in the studio were really involved. I was really impressed."**

***A frequent contributor, Caitlin Watson of the Institute of Physics***

The philosopher Dr Stephen Law has discussed topics such as *Can machines think?* and *How do I know that what I see around me is real?* Children have taken part in debates on the war in Iraq, domestic violence, internet dangers and bullying. Every Friday, *Big Toe* joins up with CBBC's *Newsround* to bring children up to date on the key news stories that week.

***Margery Tate, Learning Mentor at Longbenton Community College, Newcastle, accompanied two of the six children who went to interview Margaret Hodge, Minister for Children, at the end of October 2003. Afterwards, she wrote to Big Toe,***

***"Well done on such an imaginative and interesting show for young people. It really is vital to involve them in issues in this way. They really do care."***

### **Reporters' Club**

In August 2003, the programme launched a Reporters' club which now has approximately 350 members aged 15 and under. They are based in every region of the UK, including Birmingham, Cardiff, Doncaster, Dumfries, Liverpool, Llanelli, Maidstone, Newcastle, Sheffield, Southampton and York, with international members in Hungary and China.

Each week club members are asked to telephone in reports about what interests them; so far they have submitted pieces about a wide range of subjects including films, pets, families, holidays and the NHS. Between seven and ten interviews are broadcast every Sunday when *Big Toe* is handed over to the reporters. The programme is planning to organise a Big Brainstorm for would-be reporters early in 2004.

### **Special events**

*Big Toe* has also produced some outside broadcasts. Three *Edinburgh Festival* programmes in August 2003 were staged at the Pleasance Theatre, in front of an audience of up to 60 children. Guests included the poet John Hegley and author Jacqueline Wilson. Another broadcast came from Brighton during its Festival in May 2003, and featured Alice's Garden, a band made up of 14- and 15-year olds. *Big Toe* co-hosted another broadcast with Blaze Radio, a station set up by a group of schools in Wembley, NW London. The young people who took part made features and co-presented the programme with *Big Toe* presenters Jessie Aru and Katie Trinder.

150 children attended a special Christmas 2003 show at the Drill Hall in London featuring pop groups, comedians and Benjamin Zephaniah, who read his own poems, including one in defence of turkeys. Afterwards, every child in one class which attended wrote to thank the programme team.

***"Thank you for inviting us to Big Toe. We were very amused...we really enjoyed it, especially Benjamin Zephaniah, the poet who told us about turkeys."***

***Ali, West Acton primary school.***

## Children's readings and dramatisations

In addition to the live interactive element of the magazine programme, there are also five story episodes each day. The stories are scheduled across a week and on Sundays, the programme usually includes a complete story divided into seven or eight episodes. This allows a child listening to the whole programme to hear a story from start to finish.

*The Big Toe Radio Show* has commissioned more than 100 abridged readings of leading children's authors, including Philip Pullman, Jacqueline Wilson, Anne Fine, Michael Morpurgo, Roald Dahl, Morris Gleizman, Paul Jennings, Philip Ridley, Joan Aiken, David Almond, Geraldine McCaughrean, Eoin Colfer, Terry Pratchett and many more. In addition, *Big Toe* has commissioned new writing from popular authors Debi Gliori and Neil Arksey who both took on difficult and controversial issues. Debi Gliori's story, *The Pits*, dealt explicitly and humorously with ideas of good and evil, while Neil Arksey created a compelling tale in *Brighton Rocks* of a girl who moves with her single mum to a new town and makes friends with an asylum seeker next door.

On Christmas Eve 2003, *Big Toe* broadcast an archive dramatisation of John Masefield's *Box of Delights* in its entirety. There was also a Christmas Pantomime written especially for the programme and further new drama will be commissioned for *Big Toe* in 2004.

Many of the best known authors have also appeared on the programme and offered it support, including Anne Fine (while Children's Laureate) and Michael Morpurgo, the current Children's Laureate. Readers have included Natalie Casey, Sheila Hancock, John Sessions, Ralf Little, Adrian Edmondson and Kathy Burke.

The stories are abridged into 10 minute episodes and the emphasis in production is to make them accessible and fresh to a new audience, some of whom may not be keen on reading. Cartoon-style sound effects and chart music encourage children to stay with stories they might not have thought they were interested in.

**"I think the production was outstanding and was totally awestruck at Andrew MacIntosh's amazing interpretation of my story. Deeply impressive. He squeezed every ounce of meaning out of the text and even had me in floods of tears at the old chef's explanation of how to get into heaven and also when Succototh dies. And heck, I knew the story in advance. So, laurels to everyone involved in making *The Pits* so brilliant".**

***Debi Gliori, children's author who wrote *The Pits* especially for *The Big Toe Radio Show*.***

The integration of *Big Toe* and *Little Toe* teams with the team producing the children's show *Go4It* on Radio 4 has benefited both programmes. The two teams work alongside each other in the same office space designed to appeal to children who visit. Working together means the teams can swap ideas and contributors. Readings commissioned by *Big Toe* in their distinctive style have also been repeated on *Go4It* on Radio 4; for example, *The Lottie Project* by Jacqueline Wilson and Neil

Arksey's *Brooksie*. *Go4It* stories in the BBC archive have also appeared on *Little Toe*.

## Comedy

There are four daily Comedy Zones of an hour each: Contemporary; Classic; a Classic and Contemporary mix; and Stand-up, Satire and Sketch.<sup>5</sup> Programmes are stripped across the week in sub-genres and scheduled in a way which makes them easy to find: for example, during the Classic Comedy zone at lunchtime, *The Goons* are broadcast on Mondays, *Hancock's Half Hour* on Tuesdays, *Round the Horne* on Wednesday and so on.

## Comedy features

While older listeners may be inclined to revisit classic comedies they remember from the Fifties and Sixties, it was felt that younger listeners needed more to attract them to these archive programmes. To give the shows a context and to provide new listeners with more information, a dedicated three-hour slot was created each weekend in which well-known and authoritative figures in the world of comedy highlight a specific group of programmes. Examples include:

- Barry Cryer's review of comedy, decade by decade, from the Fifties to the present day;
- Mark Radcliffe's *Comedy Winners*, featuring award-winning comedy shows like *On the Town with the League of Gentlemen*, *Radio Shuttleworth*, *Sean Locke – 15 Storeys High*;
- *Comedy Controllers*, in which high-profile performers like Paul Merton, Phill Jupitus, and Galton & Simpson, introduce six of their favourite comedy programmes and explain their choice;
- *Radio Heads*, a recent strand in which former heads of BBC Radio Light Entertainment introduced selected programmes from their respective time in charge.

Strands have also been created by pulling together disparate series with common factors, such as *Radio Roots*. These are comedies which originated on radio then moved to television, such as *Knowing Me, Knowing You*, *Dead Ringers* and *Goodness Gracious Me*. Another strand features television favourites re-recorded for radio, like *Dad's Army* and *Steptoe and Son*.

## New comedy commissions

While most of the comedy is sourced from the archive, BBC 7 felt it was important to make its own contribution to the genre. To maintain its distinctiveness as a network, it commissioned programmes in a genre which does not get much exposure

---

<sup>5</sup> Contemporary from 8-9 am, repeated 10-11pm; Classic comedy from 12-1, repeated 7-8pm and 5.30-6.30 am; Mixed from 2-3, repeated 9-10 pm, and Stand-up, satire and sketch comedy from 11pm-midnight, repeated 4.30-5.30 am.

elsewhere on radio - new stand-up comedy. The programmes, for the late-night Comedy Club slot, were researched and produced by young producers from the BBC's Radio Light Entertainment department. The first series of seven programmes, *Spanking New on 7*, was recorded in London, but as the producers were given a specific brief to find new talent from across the UK, the second series came from Manchester. The talent search is on for the third series.

Amongst the performers taking part in *Spanking New* who have also won comedy awards in 2003 are Alex Horne (Perrier Best Newcomer nominee, Edinburgh 2003), Seymour Mace (City Life Comedian of the Year, Manchester 2003), Miles Jupp (Perrier Best Newcomer nominee, Edinburgh 2003), Howard Read (Perrier Best Newcomer nominee, Edinburgh 2003) and Rhod Gilbert (BBC New Comedy Award winner 2003).

## Drama and readings

As with comedy, one of the key challenges of broadcasting archive drama and readings has been to find creative ways of scheduling them to draw in a new audience. One way of doing this has been to pull together styles of dramas and broadcast them in specific time zones stripped across the week so the audience knows what to expect and when.

In the **Classic Drama** strand can be found many books perhaps more familiar to the audience as films, such as dramatisations of Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* and Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. More modern work has included *Room at the Top*, *The Handmaid's Tale* and Alan Bennett's *Talking Heads*. We are scheduling at least two Shakespeare productions for summer 2004 in a world theatre season.

At the request of listeners, the Sunday schedule was changed to accommodate long-form drama which is now rarely available on Radio 4, and this has allowed dramas such as *Moonfleet* and *The Postman Always Rings Twice* to be broadcast.

**Crime and Thrillers** has proved to be a strong and popular category for BBC 7 listeners, and the network devotes two hours a day to it. The most popular series have been based on books such as Agatha Christie's *Hercule Poirot*, *Sherlock Holmes* and Sara Paretsky's contemporary V.I. Warshawski novels, about a female private investigator in Chicago. There has also been a warm reception for series specially written for radio, such as *The Julie Enfield Mysteries*, *McLevy*, the adventures of a police detective in Victorian Edinburgh, and *Baldi*, crime stories solved by a Dublin-based priest.

**The 7<sup>th</sup> Dimension** slot, featuring science fiction, fantasy and horror, has proved particularly attractive to the young male audience and is a genre distinctive to BBC 7. Archive productions include the classic *Journey into Space*, but this slot also offers radio adaptations of television productions like *Blake's 7* and *Dr Who*.

**Readings** occupy 90 minutes of the schedule every day. These are abridged into 15 minute episodes, covering both classic and contemporary fiction and non-fiction. It offers listeners a wide range; non-fiction has varied from Tony Benn's *Diaries* to Paul Theroux's *The Great Railway Bazaar* and Anthony Bourdain's *Kitchen Confidential*.

Fiction offerings have included Iain Banks's *The Crow Road* and Louis de Bernières' *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*.

### **Unabridged readings**

One of the network's commitments was to broadcast unabridged readings, which are not available elsewhere on BBC Radio. This has meant BBC 7 has had to commission its own readings for this strand, from producers in London, Manchester, Scotland and Belfast. As with the new comedy commissions, BBC 7 was keen to maintain its distinctiveness by commissioning readings which would not have been chosen by other BBC networks, so has selected works for the **Crime and Thrillers** and **7<sup>th</sup> Dimension** strands. Many of the **7<sup>th</sup> Dimension** readings were of novels which became successful films, including John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*, Angela Carter's *The Company of Wolves* and Daphne du Maurier's *The Birds*. The **Crime and Thriller** readings were chosen from best-selling contemporary writers, including Dick Francis's *Dead on Red* and Ian Rankin's Inspector Rebus mystery *Death is Not the End*.

### **Drama features**

In the same way as a dedicated three-hour comedy slot was created at weekends to help give context to archive comedy, there have been a number of features about drama, such as: *Men, Martians and Machines*, a selection of radio science fiction series chosen by author James Follett; *Radio Soaps*, a history of radio serial dramas from *Mrs Dale's Diary* to *The Archers*, presented by Timothy Bentinck, who plays David Archer in *The Archers*; and *A Tribute to Peter Tinniswood*, celebrating the work of a much-loved writer and radio dramatist, broadcast in collaboration with Radio 4.

### **Poetry**

This has proved to be a difficult genre to schedule within the network and one that is more popular with traditional Radio 4 listeners than with the BBC 7 audience. Initially poetry was brought in through the Comedy Zones, when BBC 7 broadcast two series of work from both Roger McGough and John Hegley. For older listeners, the work of the comic writer Marriott Edgar, including monologues such as *The Lion and Albert*, has proved popular.

More traditional poetry is also broadcast such as the selection used to mark St Valentine's Day in 2004 with five 15 minute programmes based on *The Nation's Favourite Poems*.

*Big Toe* has frequently featured poets such as Benjamin Zephaniah, John Hegley, Andrew Collett and Ian McMillan on its output. The poets and the children are set a task at the start of the programme and, off-air, they work together to create a poem. Their progress is followed throughout the programme until, at the end of the show, they perform the final version to the listeners.

***Ian McMillan has welcomed Big Toe's interest in poetry.***

**"Children have a natural feel for poetry. The great thing about the programme is that it exploits their love of words. Too often, when they're writing poems in school, it's to achieve targets. On Big Toe, writing poetry is all about excitement, joy and fulfilment."**

## Section 5:

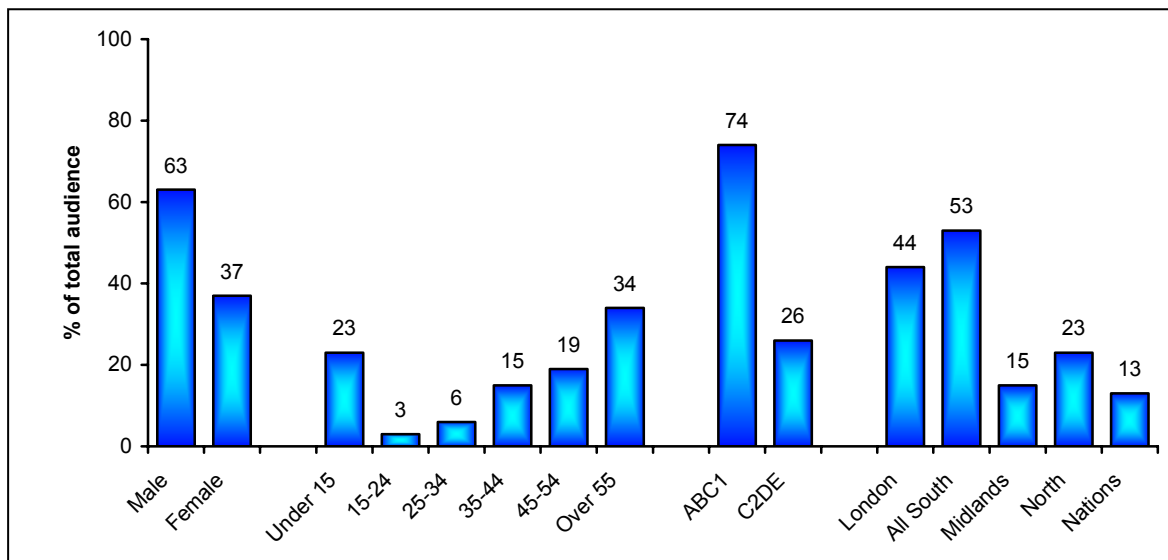
### Appraisal of BBC 7's performance

#### Audience Figures<sup>6</sup>

So far, BBC 7 has only had two quarters of research results from the industry body, Rajar, for the six months ending in December 2003. As this is a new network, available on digital platforms only, the samples are small and need to be treated with some caution. In order to even out fluctuations caused by sample shortfalls, the figures for the new services will be looked at across the six month period. These figures show that BBC 7 has a share of 0.1% and a weekly reach of 244,000 people over the age of 15, rising to 317,000 if those aged 4-14 are included – an audience of 74,000 children. On average, listeners spend 4 hours a week listening to the network and 13% of their total radio listening is to BBC 7. The most popular parts of the schedule are Classic Comedy with 189,000 listeners, 7 Drama with 73,000, *Little Toe* with 59,000 listeners, and *Big Toe* with 45,000.

#### Audience Profile

The audience profile is different to Radio 4's profile in that although like Radio 4 the majority of the 15+ BBC 7 audience is over 45, the large number of children brings the average age of the listener down to 41 (compared to 52 for Radio 4) and 29% of the audience have children under 15.



Compared to Radio 4, whose audience is evenly spread between men and women, there is a male bias of 63% amongst the 4+ BBC 7 audience. 74% of the audience are ABC1 and the station has a southern bias.

The audience is also digitally aware:

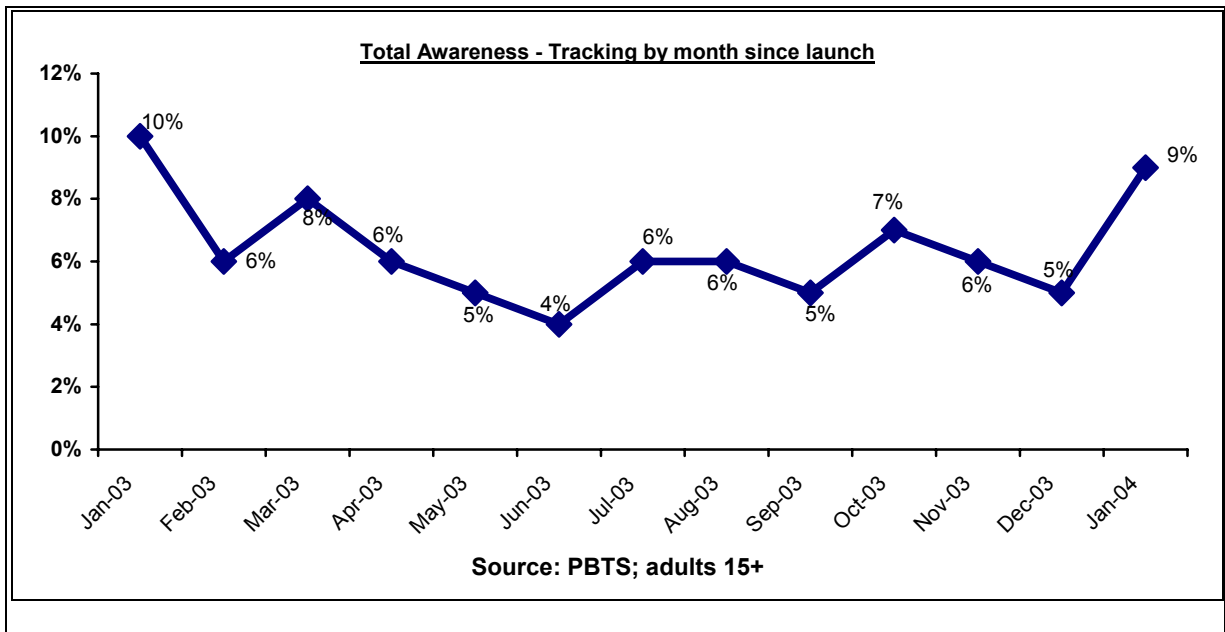
- 59% use the internet every week;

<sup>6</sup> Source: RAJAR/IPSOS-RSL 6 months to Dec '03; 4+

- 83% have digital television; and
- 77% of these have listened to radio via digital television.

### Audience Awareness

In terms of network awareness, BBC 7 achieves a slightly lower average awareness than the other stations<sup>7</sup>, although it was the last station in the portfolio to be launched. However, telephone research commissioned by the BBC and conducted by TNS PhoneBus in July 2003 (18th-20th) showed that more people were more likely to positively identify the correct name of BBC 7 than any other BBC digital network. This research was based on a representative sample of 1,024 adults (16+).



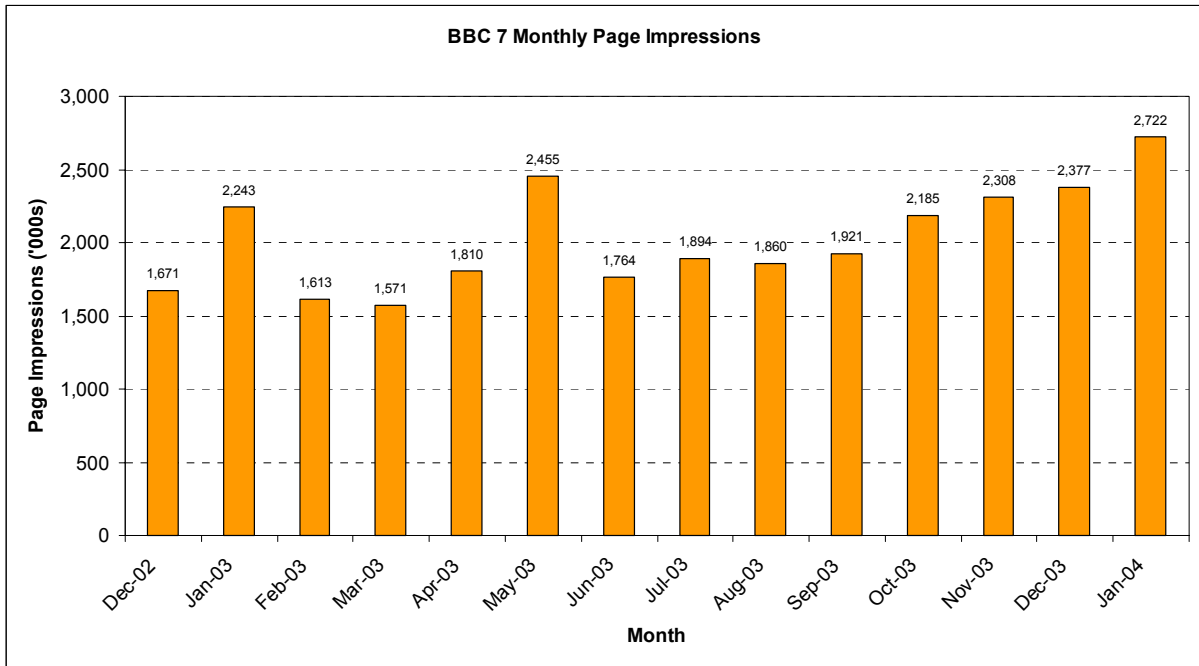
### Audience Approval

The BBC monitors “approval” of services on a monthly basis, asking people (for services they are aware of) to give them marks out of ten, where 1 is very unfavourable and 10 is extremely favourable. Although there is an insufficient sample for reliable approval scores by month or quarter for BBC 7, the consolidated approval score for the 12 months to January 2004 is 7.8 out of 10. This compares with 7.1 for BBC Radio as a whole<sup>7</sup>.

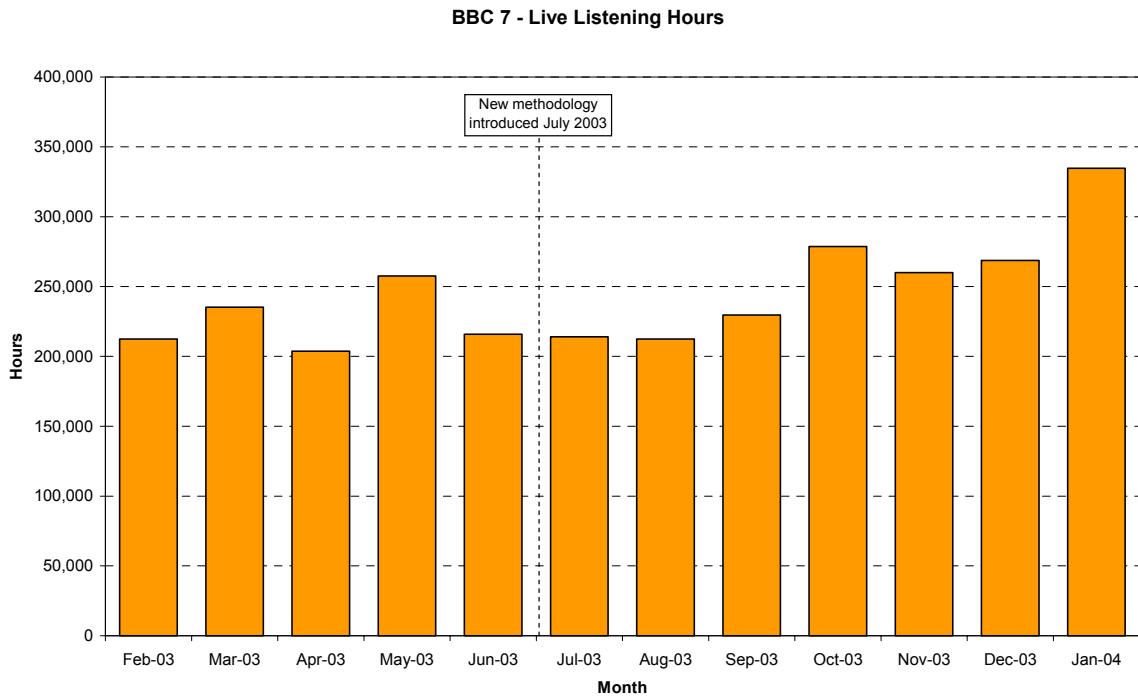
### New Media Performance

Monthly page impressions to the BBC 7 website have gradually grown from December 2002 to January 2004. The particular increase in January 2003 was due to the impact of the launch campaign in December, while the May 2003 increase can be attributed to the launch of audio on demand for *Big Toe*. Page impressions currently stand at 2.7 million in January 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Pan BBC Tracking Survey, adults 15+

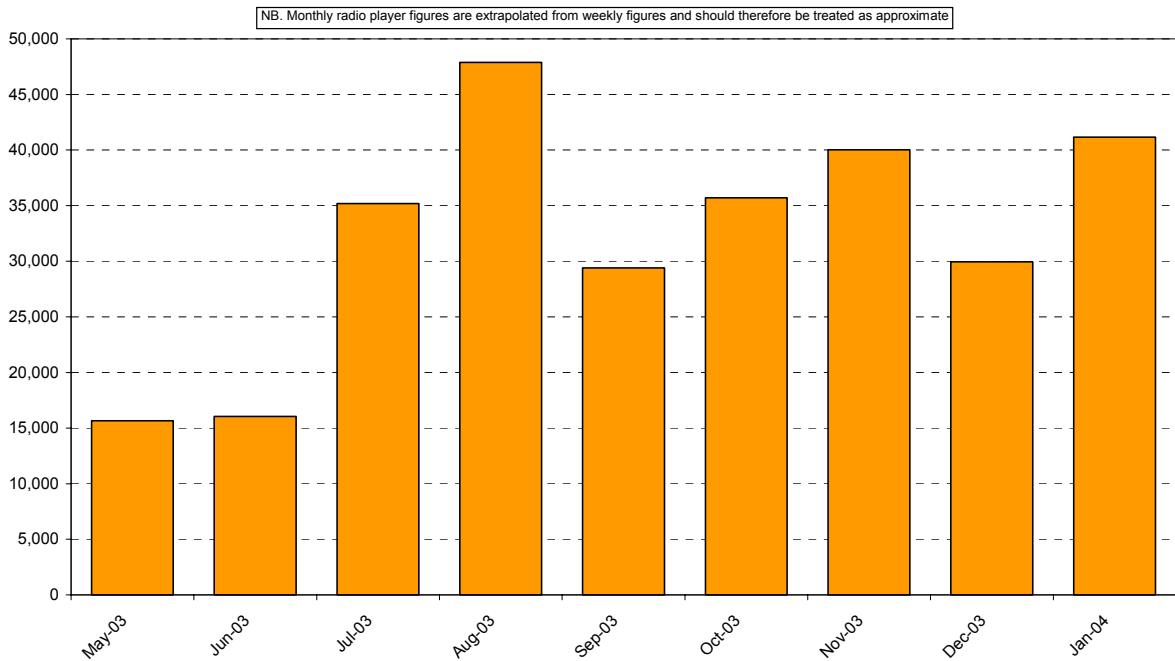


Monthly hours of listening to live programming online have increased by 58% to over 330,000 hours in the six months from August 2003 to January 2004.



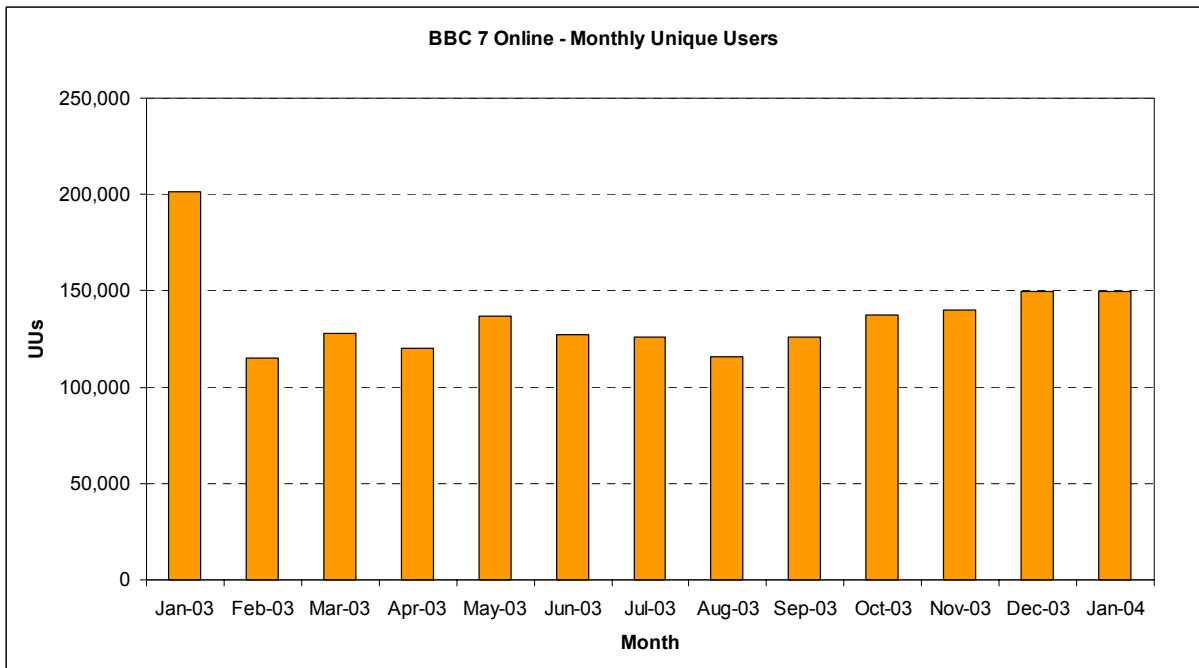
Audio on demand requests via the website peaked in August 2003.

**BBC 7 AOD - Monthly Requests**



The number of monthly unique users has stayed fairly regular following the initial peak in January soon after the service was launched<sup>8</sup>.

**BBC 7 Online - Monthly Unique Users**



### Audience response to BBC 7

<sup>8</sup> Unique user figures register the number of unique computers to visit a site over a given period and are the best approximation of unique individuals visiting a site currently available.

The audience has responded positively to BBC 7 right from the start. Two days after launch, the network had received more than 5,500 e-mails of support from listeners and they have continued to express their appreciation as the year has gone on.

They have commented, in particular, on how BBC 7:

- Meets a real audience need for quality entertainment

**"I'm writing to let you know that I think that Radio 7 is the best thing that has happened to radio in a long time – all the best bits from Radio 4 with a whole lot more. I'm just sorry that I can't spend all day listening to it."**

*Listener, 04/01/2003*

**"Your station is what the British people have been crying out for years and ignored. Well done to the person who finally listened."**

*Listener, 25/12/2002*

**"The best thing that has happened to light entertainment in many years, please go on forever."**

*Listener, 23/03/2003*

**"BBC7 You Have Excelled Yourself! What a superb Christmas comedy line up! You have scheduled a wonderful selection of Christmas Special programs that otherwise never get heard. Well done! A very happy Christmas for us all."**

*Listener, 19/12/2003*

- Provides a new alternative to TV viewing

**"Brilliant! I now watch very little TV and spend most of my time tuned into BBC 7. Why did no-one think of doing this before?"**

*Listener, 20/12/2002*

**"My wife and I bought our Pure digital receiver on the strength of BBC 7 going live and it has certainly been the best £99 we have ever spent. Neither of us can remember the last time we switched the telly on. Please consider us for any type of research that you might be carrying out. Best wishes to you all and thanks for such a great service."**

*Listener, 28/06/2003*

**"Congratulations, your brilliant new radio channel is without doubt the best thing since bread (never mind the slicing!) Television, digital or otherwise, is now running a firm second to BBC 7 in our household, although I must admit to straying back to Radio 4 occasionally....Please keep up the excellent work,**

**you have been a real life-saver this Christmas and now have at least three disciples spreading the good word about 7 to the populace at large about your good selves."**

***Listener, 28/12/2002***

**"Great station, love the content, we've just upgraded to broadband specifically so we can rely better getting all the progs."**

***Listener, 18/01/2003***

Approval of BBC 7 is not restricted to the UK. E-mails and message board comments come from all round the world:

**"Brilliant – BBC 7 is excellent and long overdue. Thanks very much. To improve? Please repeat the whole day's cycle overnight. You stop too early and start too late!"**

***Listener, Hungary, 17/12/2002***

**"We love Seven, we love World Service, we love Four. And we thank all of you at BBC."**

***Listener, New York City, 12/12/2003***

### **Industry reaction**

Many writers and dramatists have welcomed the network and the additional platform it provides for their work even though payments for transmissions on BBC 7 are small, reflecting the expected small audience for digital radio in its early stages. The established radio writer Wally K. Daley changed his mind about allowing his work to be broadcast on BBC 7 after visiting the network, as this extract from an e-mail he sent his agent (copied to the BBC) shows:

**"Some time ago I wrote to say none of my work could be broadcast on BBC 7 – I subsequently met Mary K and had a tour of the studios, and agreed that as soon as the new contract was in place I would be happy for all my work to be broadcast on BBC 7."**

***Wally K. Daley, 29/9/2003***

As the network's first year of broadcasting came to an end, the original rights agreements had to be renegotiated. The main bodies representing writers and their agents (the Authors' Agents Association, the Personal Managers Association, the Publishers Association, the Society of Authors and the Writers Guild of Great Britain) wrote to their members encouraging them to take up the offered contracts, citing the increased audience that BBC 7 is offering them.

The Editor of the unit responsible for *Big Toe* and *Little Toe* has twice been invited to participate in conferences on the future of Children's Programming on Radio and TV.

### **Press response**

Reaction from newspapers has been favourable from the start. Radio critics, notably Phil Doust of the Guardian and Chris Campling of The Times, quickly treated BBC 7 as equally deserving of coverage as the analogue networks.

**"Tune in at 8am or 9pm and what do you find but only the boldest attempt I know to cram the finest British radio comedy of the past 50 years into a three-hour box."**

***Chris Campling, The Times***

**"I found bliss on Saturday morning on BBC 7"**

***Gillian Reynolds, Daily Telegraph 26/8/2003***

**"..for many listeners, it's the network they've been waiting for, Radio 4 as they remember it in their dreams."**

***David Sexton, Sunday Telegraph, 21/12/2003***

With previews of programmes appearing in the papers, demand rose from the audience for press listings of the schedule. Prompted by the BBC 7 launch, the Daily Telegraph and the Radio Times began to publish listings, and this has proved beneficial to all the other digital networks. Coverage of digital radio stations is continuing to increase, with Radio Times doubling the pages it allocates to digital radio at the start of 2004.

**"This is a reminder of the great wealth of good programming that is going out on the Beeb's recently launched channel."**

***Terry Ramsey, Evening Standard***

Interest in the network has also been expressed by broadcasters from other countries, with visitors from Malta, Sweden and Germany. In May 2003, World DAB, a forum of international broadcasters and equipment manufacturers, invited BBC 7's Managing Editor to give a presentation on how attractive programme content can drive DAB Digital Radio sales.

### **Awards**

In its first year on air, BBC 7 won the Sony Radio Academy Gold Award for Station Sound. Its distinct on-air image gives the network a unique character which ensures that it stands apart from any other in the radio market place. It defines the network as inclusive, informal, engaging, witty and fun. The use of “natural-sounding” voices from all across the UK sets the network apart from its more traditional rivals. The use of contemporary music is aimed squarely at a young audience. BBC 7’s trails and jingles are groundbreaking in quality and style. The Sony Radio Academy judges chose its on-air sound as the Gold Award winner because:

**“BBC 7 reflects beautifully the entertainment values of its programming throughout its presentation sequences. The writing style of its promotions is loaded with ideas, flair and wit. It is sure to capture the hearts of anyone who shares its passion for great radio comedy, stories and drama.”**

***Judges’ citation for Station Sound Award, Sony Radio Academy Awards 2003***

## Section 6:

### Performance of BBC 7 against the Secretary of State's conditions of consent

The network was given permission to launch by the Secretary of State for the DCMS with two conditions:

- **The service must offer BBC speech programmes, both contemporary and archive, covering comedy, drama, stories, features and unabridged readings. Parts of the schedule will be devoted to programmes for children.**

Over its first year, BBC 7 has broadcast approximately 6000 hours of classic archive speech programming, ranging from *Round the Horne* and *Hancock's Half Hour* to *Journey into Space* and *Paul Temple*. It has also transmitted about 500 hours of contemporary archive, such as the comedy impressions show *Dead Ringers*, Iain Banks's *The Crow Road* and a dramatisation of Vikram Seth's novel *A Suitable Boy*, previously broadcast on Radio 4.

It has produced contextual features dealing with subjects appropriate to its output, such as radio soap operas and the history of comedy. It has also provided innovative re-packaging of archive programmes around themes such as *Comedy Winners* and *Radio Heads*, with often high-profile presenters giving the listeners context and background information to the selected programmes.

In its first year, BBC 7 commissioned 40 hours of unabridged readings and 14 hours of new comedy. These commissions were deliberately selected in genres which are popular on BBC 7, such as crime, science fiction and horror writing and stand-up comedy.

Children's programming is broadcast for four hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year. *Big Toe* is the only live daily speech programme for children on national radio, and since launch, approximately 800 children have participated in the programme as part of the presentation team. It has covered topics from science and poetry to philosophy and current affairs, and broadcasts 50 minutes of stories for children every day.

- **The service must not be developed at the expense of programming on Radio 4.**

By appointing Helen Boaden, the existing Controller of Radio 4, as Controller of BBC 7 as well, the BBC has ensured that this condition is met. BBC 7 has been carefully scheduled to complement Radio 4 and to offer the listener to speech radio a genuine choice. The schedulers of both stations work in collaboration to avoid editorial clashes, and when possible, to promote joint events such as the *Peter Tinniswood Tribute*, celebrating the life and work of one of radio's most popular dramatists who died early in 2003. There is frequent cross-trailing of appropriate material on each network.

If Radio 4 is planning to repeat a programme, arrangements are in place to ensure that this happens before BBC 7 transmits it. BBC 7 has its own programme budget, and Radio 4's budgets are completely unaffected by the existence of BBC 7.

### Other conditions

Although they were not specified by the Secretary of State in granting permission to broadcast, other commitments were made by the BBC to the DCMS about BBC 7. These are set out below.

9 January 2001

**BBC 7 will take the best BBC Radio speech programmes, both contemporary and archive, and offer comedy, drama, stories and features with unabridged readings from the world's great literature.**

BBC 7's drama and readings output has included some of the world's greatest literature from writers such as Dickens, Tolstoy, Jane Austen, C S Lewis and Vikram Seth.

**Freedom from commercial pressures will enable the network to serve the licence payer with a unique high quality speech-based service.**

BBC 7, in common with all BBC Radio services, is free from commercial pressures and adverts which is an especially important factor for the children's output. All the material transmitted on BBC 7, whether archive or newly-commissioned, meets the BBC's traditional standards of impartiality, quality and authority, and is produced in accordance with the BBC's Producer Guidelines.

BBC 7 is unique in that it is the only radio network fully exploiting the BBC archive in comedy and drama.

21 May 2001

**BBC 7's key distinction will be its ability to offer newly commissioned work to its audience, and to breathe new life into the BBC's current and archive output, adding unabridged readings and special programmes for children that maintain the BBC's standard in commissioning and producing speech radio.**

In its first year, BBC 7 commissioned a total of 54 hours of its own material in unabridged readings and comedy, as well as broadcasting a wide range of classic and contemporary archive output. It broadcasts four hours a day of children's programming which is produced in accordance with BBC standards. BBC 7 is commissioning eight mini dramas via the BBC Writersroom – a new BBC writing initiative – to be broadcast in the autumn.

**Audiences at work are unable to hear much of the wealth of drama commissioned by Radio. Radio 4 gets more requests for the afternoon plays to be repeated than any other aspect of its schedule.**

BBC 7 has transmitted approximately 2,500 hours of drama and readings over the past year and a similar amount of entertainment and comedy. In both genres, material has been a mixture of classic and contemporary archive.<sup>9</sup> Radio 4 no longer gets so many requests for the *Afternoon Play* to be repeated because it is available for listening on-demand online for up to seven days after broadcast.

---

<sup>9</sup> BBC 7 schedules archive repeats of Radio 4 Drama daily at 1000, 1100, 1300, 2000, midnight and 0100.

**In addition to showcasing the best of BBC Radio's existing speech programming, BBC 7 will also feature regular, newly-commissioned content including:**

- **Original drama and readings for children**

*Big Toe* has commissioned more than 100 new abridged readings from all the best children's authors, including Philip Pullman, Jacqueline Wilson, Roald Dahl and Terry Pratchett. It has also commissioned some brand new writing by established children's writers like Debi Gliori and Neil Arksey.

BBC 7 has not yet been able to commission new drama for children. Throughout 2003 and early 2004, the BBC has been negotiating a new framework with the Writers' Guild of Great Britain (WGGB) to allow the making of new programmes on the digital networks.

When the BBC commissions a new drama script from a writer, the basic terms of the contract between the two parties are governed by an overarching agreement between the WGGB and the BBC. Until the new agreement is signed, no writer can be contracted to write a script for BBC 7. It is hoped that it will be signed in spring 2004 in time to broadcast new interactive drama for children this summer.

- **A daily children's magazine programme**

*Big Toe*, the daily children's magazine programme, has been transmitted for two hours every day since launch.

- **Unabridged readings**

BBC 7 has commissioned 40 hours of unabridged readings in genres which are specific to the network and particularly popular with its listeners. However, unabridged readings have proved to be less popular than drama on BBC 7, as listeners can hear a wide range of unabridged readings on Oneworld, the commercial radio network, on which unabridged readings are the core of the schedule.

- **Poetry forums for interactive audiences**

*Big Toe* has featured poets and their work several times throughout the year, and children have been encouraged to create their own short poems in workshops on-air. For adult listeners, the Vagon poetry competition offered them the chance to write their poems and post them on the website. Many of the poems were read on-air. *Know Your Place*, a similar creative writing exercise, although in prose, proved equally popular with the listeners, and BBC 7 hopes to offer its listeners further chances for creative writing through its website in the future.

**The BBC has created a New Writing department with a brief to commission bold, innovative drama for radio. Co-commissioning by BBC 7 with Radio 3**

**and Radio 4 will give a platform for new writers to learn their craft and have an outlet for their work.**

As the needs of the Radio 3, Radio 4 and BBC 7 audiences vary considerably, co-commissioning has not proved possible. However, BBC 7 has commissioned eight 15 minute plays from the New Writing initiative, which will be broadcast in the autumn on BBC 7 and then offered to Radio 4.

**BBC 7's schedule will be designed to fit around listeners' lifestyles and other listening habits. For example, when *Today* is on Radio 4 in the morning, BBC 7 will offer an alternative range of programming for young children. There also will be children's programmes scheduled for that period when children are being driven to and from school, and we'll be able to offer more at times when they are available to listen more, such as the school holidays.**

*Little Toe* is transmitted every day from 7 to 8 am, with a repeat at 3 pm, just before the live daily *Big Toe* transmission from 4 to 6 pm. During school holidays, there is more output suitable for children: readings previously transmitted on *Little Toe* are broadcast elsewhere in the schedule; and a family serial such as Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows* or Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is broadcast in the morning drama slot.

**BBC 7 will enable us to offer plays and readings in different ways for audiences, whether they currently listen to Radio 4 or not:**

- **At certain points of the day, you will always be sure of hearing a programme with a broad theme; for example 1950s comedy, detective stories, unabridged classic readings or Shakespeare.**

BBC 7's innovative scheduling draws programmes together in zones, such as Classic Comedy or Crime and Thrillers, so the listener learns what to expect and when. Audience research suggests that one in four of the BBC 7 audience does not listen to Radio 4, which is precisely the group that the network is targeting.

**We will offer our listeners the opportunity to hear some Radio 4 output at a later time than the normal schedule. For example, we would like to repeat the *Afternoon Play* from Radio 4 every evening at 6 pm.**

We decided against automatically repeating the *Afternoon Play* each day, essentially because this would limit Radio 4's options for repeating it – and the Secretary of State required that BBC 7 must not schedule programmes at the expense of Radio 4.

BBC 7 does offer Radio 4 output at different transmission times to the original, so drama can be heard in the evenings, and at weekends. As BBC 7 broadcasts the best of the archive, selected Radio 4 afternoon plays are broadcast daily at 1100 and repeated at 0200.

In addition, the *Afternoon Play* is available on audio on demand through the Radio 4 website for up to seven days after broadcast.

**We will repackage *Woman's Hour* readings and drama so that the audience can hear the whole story in one go.**

The Radio 4 *Woman's Hour* readings and drama, broadcast daily from Monday to Friday, are repackaged into omnibus editions which BBC 7 broadcasts on Sunday at 0945, repeated at 2245.

18th July 2001

- **BBC 7 will have a budget of around £4m allowing it to bring the best of current and archive BBC drama, comedy, readings and poetry to listeners, plus new commissions, particularly for children.**

BBC 7 now has an annual budget of £5m which has allowed it to fulfil this condition.

- **BBC Radio is already reinventing children's radio with *Go4It* on Radio 4. BBC 7 will extend this with daily original programming for children, which appeal to children's openness to storytelling, their inquisitiveness and ability for imaginative exploration.**

BBC 7 has fulfilled this condition by its wide-ranging daily output in *Little Toe* and *Big Toe*.

- **BBC 7 will give additional airtime to new cutting edge comedy.**

BBC 7 offers listeners a chance to hear new comedy recently transmitted on Radio 4 and 14 hours of entirely new commissioned work in the regular late night *Comedy Club*.

- **It will increase the opportunities to listen to the high quality drama and comedy the BBC commissions every day.**

BBC 7 fulfils this condition through its ten hours each of drama and comedy transmitted every day.

- **BBC 7 will differ from Oneword in many ways.**

Oneword is the other national digital-only speech radio station in the UK. It is a commercial network with advertising, primarily broadcasting book readings, which are available commercially as audiobooks.

Oneword also broadcasts magazine programmes, mainly on literary topics, and author interviews. The network originates 30 minutes of comedy each week, as well as bringing listeners vintage comedy and drama, mainly from the USA.

For children, there is a weekly half-hour magazine programme, *Squawkbox*, originated by the network, plus around three hours a day of story readings, mostly sourced from audio publishers.

BBC 7 broadcasts eight hours of full-cast dramatisations daily. These are mainly sourced from the BBC sound archive and many of the productions are unavailable commercially (as audiobooks) and cannot be heard on any other network. Some productions, such as the *Paul Temple* mysteries have not been heard as a full radio series since the 1960s.

The BBC has an archive of classic comedy which has become an important part of Britain's heritage, with programmes such as *The Goons*, *Hancock's Half Hour* and *Round the Horne*. BBC 7 is the only network giving listeners access to these comedy treasures.

With two hours of live programming for children and two hours of stories every day, BBC 7 provides - and originates - more speech programming for children than any other radio network.

- **Its programme budget is five times greater so that:**

**It will feature original UK writing for radio regularly**

BBC 7 features original UK writing for radio on both its adult and its children's output, with new comedies and stories written specially for the BBC.

**It will feature original UK production for radio on a daily basis**

BBC 7 features original UK production for radio daily in *Big Toe*.

**It will feature original UK comedy**

BBC 7 features original UK comedy, both that first commissioned and broadcast elsewhere on BBC Radio and its own comedy commissions.

**It will feature regular poetry readings**

BBC 7 features readings by established poets such as Roger McGough, John Hegley, Ian McMillan, Benjamin Zephaniah and John Dowie.

**It will broadcast long-form drama**

BBC 7 broadcasts long-form drama twice a day on Sundays.

**This will be a significant increase in investment into UK arts production.**

BBC 7 has invested in new output for children, both new writing and radio adaptations of existing stories, read by actors. Since launch, it has exclusively commissioned 40 hours of new output for its 7<sup>th</sup> Dimension and Crime and Thrillers strands and 14 hours of new stand-up comedy.

While the fees paid by BBC 7 were set to reflect the low audiences expected in its first few years, writers, actors and directors have also welcomed the network because of its contribution to disseminating their work and to building a new

generation of listeners to speech radio. Its very existence represents a significant investment by the BBC into UK arts.

## Section 7:

### The way forward for BBC 7

BBC 7 is the youngest of the BBC's digital radio networks, having only been on air since 15 December 2002. It received a positive response from the audience, the industry and the press. First audience figures suggest that it is already making an impact, with an audience of 317,000 age four and over. Its immediate plans are to build on the work that has been done, and to refine the offering to make it even more attractive to the target audience.

Further ways of providing context and information around the archive will be heard in 2004. For example, in *Producer's Choice*, BBC drama producers will choose five of their own favourite productions and explain why and give some background to the work in an introduction. These plays will then be stripped across the week. In addition, re-broadcasts of the original Carleton Hobbs version of the *Sherlock Holmes* stories will be introduced by Nick Utechin, a former BBC producer who is now editor of the *Sherlock Holmes Journal*.

In 2004, BBC 7 will continue to commission and broadcast new stand-up comedy with a new series of *Spanking New on 7*. There will be further unabridged readings, and original drama in the fantasy and science fiction genres. There will be original interactive drama for children, broadcast on *Big Toe*.

Working with the BBC's new writers' initiatives, the network will offer a platform for writers new to radio, and sometimes new to writing altogether. In 2004, the network plans to broadcast at least 30 *Two Minute Tales*, original material specially commissioned for the network.

The *Big Toe* production team is in discussion with leading children's writers about commissions for new stories and dramas in innovative formats such as "pass it on" stories, in which one author writes five episodes before handing the story on to another writer.

Online, there are plans to improve the message board, introducing more topics and subjects online as part of the network's overall intention of inspiring and informing other communities of interest in the areas of comedy, drama and readings. It is also hoped that BBC 7 will be able to offer archive material on demand via the Radio Player from spring 2004.

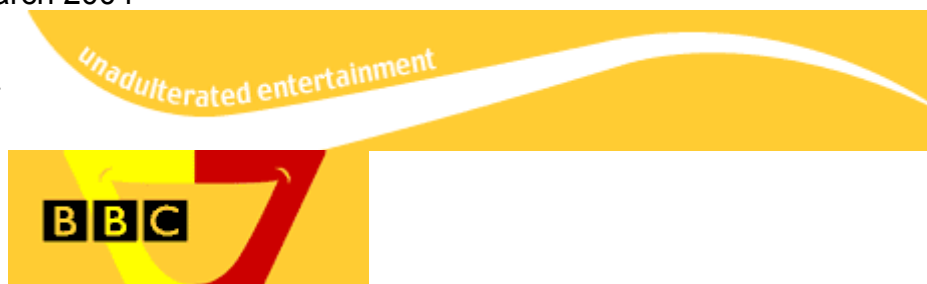
Overall, the network will work across its schedule on-air and online to bring more people into its audience and to enjoy two of the most basic human pleasures – to share a joke and to be told a story.

# Appendix 1:

## BBC 7 Schedule

03-09 March 2004

3 March 2004  
[Text only](#)  
[BBC](#)  
[Homepage](#)  
[BBC Radio](#)



### What's on – Week to view PRINT THIS PAGE

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
05:00-05:30 <a href="#">Big Booth Too</a>	05:00-05:30 <a href="#">Jeremy Hardy Speaks to the Nation</a>	05:00-05:30 <a href="#">The Curried Goat Show</a>	05:00-05:30 <a href="#">The Boosh</a>	06:00-07:00 <a href="#">Garrison Keillor's Radio Show</a>	05:15-06:30 <a href="#">South Riding</a>	05:30-06:00 <a href="#">I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue</a>
05:30-06:00 <a href="#">The News Quiz</a>	05:30-06:00 <a href="#">Quote. Unquote</a>	05:30-06:00 <a href="#">Just a Minute</a>	05:30-06:00 <a href="#">Many a Slip</a>	07:00-08:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	06:30-07:00 <a href="#">The Burkiss Way</a>	06:00-06:30 <a href="#">The Goon Show</a>
06:00-06:30 <a href="#">Hancock's Half Hour</a>	06:00-06:30 <a href="#">Round the Horne</a>	06:00-06:30 <a href="#">The Navy Lark</a>	06:00-06:30 <a href="#">I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again</a>	08:00-09:15 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	07:00-08:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	06:30-07:00 <a href="#">Dad's Army</a>
06:30-07:00 <a href="#">Stephie and Son</a>	06:30-07:00 <a href="#">Yes Minister</a>	06:30-07:00 <a href="#">After Henry</a>	06:30-07:00 <a href="#">Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads?</a>	09:15-09:45 <a href="#">Uncle Dynamite</a>	08:00-08:30 <a href="#">The Now Show</a>	07:00-08:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>
07:00-08:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	07:00-08:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	07:00-08:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	07:00-08:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	09:45-11:00 <a href="#">South Riding</a>	08:30-09:00 <a href="#">Radio Active</a>	08:00-08:30 <a href="#">Smelling of Roses</a>
08:00-08:30 <a href="#">Parsons and Naylor's Pull-Out Sections</a>	08:00-08:30 <a href="#">Whose Line is it Anyway?</a>	08:00-08:30 <a href="#">In Conversation With</a>	08:00-11:00 <a href="#">The Comedy Controller</a>	11:00-12:00 <a href="#">Laughter in the Air</a>	09:00-09:15 <a href="#">Core Coren</a>	08:30-09:00 <a href="#">Chambers</a>
08:30-09:00 <a href="#">Brothers in Law</a>	08:30-09:00 <a href="#">People Like Us</a>	08:30-09:00 <a href="#">Dead Ringers</a>	11:00-12:00 <a href="#">Martin Chuzzlewit</a>	12:00-12:30 <a href="#">Beyond Our Ken</a>	09:15-09:30 <a href="#">Kes</a>	09:00-09:15 <a href="#">Core Coren</a>
09:00-09:15 <a href="#">Facts and Fancies</a>	09:00-09:15 <a href="#">Facts and Fancies</a>	09:00-09:15 <a href="#">Facts and Fancies</a>	12:00-12:15 <a href="#">The Fosdyke Saga</a>	12:30-13:00 <a href="#">Ray's a Laugh</a>	09:30-09:45 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	09:15-09:30 <a href="#">The Count of Monte Cristo</a>
09:15-09:30 <a href="#">Kes</a>	09:15-09:30 <a href="#">Kes</a>	09:15-09:30 <a href="#">Kes</a>	12:15-12:30 <a href="#">The Fosdyke Saga</a>	13:00-14:30 <a href="#">Events on a Hotel Terrace</a>	09:45-10:00 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>	09:30-09:45 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>
09:30-09:45 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	09:30-09:45 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	09:30-09:45 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	12:30-13:00 <a href="#">The Michael Bentine Show</a>	14:30-15:00 <a href="#">The Random Jottings Of Hinge And Bracket</a>	10:00-11:00 <a href="#">The Forsythe Chronicles</a>	09:45-10:00 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>
09:45-10:00 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>	09:45-10:00 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>	09:45-10:00 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>	13:00-14:00 <a href="#">Sword of Honour</a>	15:00-16:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	11:00-11:45 <a href="#">Producers Choice: Janet Whitaker</a>	10:00-11:00 <a href="#">Tom Jones</a>
10:00-11:00 <a href="#">No Name</a>	10:00-11:00 <a href="#">Sons and Lovers</a>	10:00-11:00 <a href="#">Far From the Madding Crowd</a>	14:00-15:00 <a href="#">Garrison Keillor's Radio Show</a>	16:00-18:00 <a href="#">The Big Toe Radio Show</a>	11:45-12:00 <a href="#">South Riding</a>	11:00-11:45 <a href="#">Producer's Choice: Janet Whitaker</a>
11:00-11:45 <a href="#">Producer's Choice: Peter Wild</a>	11:00-11:45 <a href="#">Producer's Choice: Peter Wild</a>	11:00-11:45 <a href="#">Producer's Choice: Peter Wild</a>	15:00-16:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe</a>	18:00-18:30 <a href="#">Journey Into Space</a>	12:00-12:30 <a href="#">I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue</a>	11:45-12:00 <a href="#">South Riding</a>
11:45-12:00	11:45-12:00	11:45-12:00 <a href="#">South Riding</a>			12:30-13:00 <a href="#">The Goon Show</a>	12:00-12:30 <a href="#">The News Quiz</a>

<a href="#">South Riding</a>	<a href="#">South Riding</a>	12:00-12:30 <a href="#">Many a Slip</a>	<a href="#">Radio Show</a>	18:30-19:00 <a href="#">The Blade of the Poisoner</a>	<a href="#">Horses</a>	12:30-13:00 <a href="#">Hancock's Half Hour</a>
12:00-12:30 <a href="#">Quote, Unquote</a>	12:00-12:30 <a href="#">Just a Minute</a>	12:30-13:00 <a href="#">I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again</a>	16:00-18:00 <a href="#">The Big Toe Radio Show</a>	19:00-19:30 <a href="#">Beyond Our Ken</a>	13:30-14:00 <a href="#">Terminus</a>	13:00-13:30 <a href="#">Father Brown Stories</a>
12:30-13:00 <a href="#">Round the Horne</a>	12:30-13:00 <a href="#">The Navy Lark</a>	13:00-13:30 <a href="#">Paul Temple and the Alex Affair</a>	18:00-18:40 <a href="#">The Twilight Zone</a>	19:30-20:00 <a href="#">Ray's a Laugh</a>	14:00-14:30 <a href="#">Millport</a>	13:30-14:00 <a href="#">Bolt</a>
13:00-13:30 <a href="#">The Blackburn Files</a>	13:00-13:30 <a href="#">The Toff and the Runaway Bride</a>	13:30-14:00 <a href="#">Radio Detectives</a>	18:40-19:00 <a href="#">Temple of the Winds</a>	20:00-20:30 <a href="#">The Burkiss Way</a>	14:30-15:00 <a href="#">Dad's Army</a>	14:00-14:30 <a href="#">Legal, Decent, Honest and Truthful</a>
13:30-14:00 <a href="#">Raffles</a>	13:30-14:00 <a href="#">Bitter Medicine</a>	14:00-14:30 <a href="#">The House of the Spirit Levels</a>	19:00-19:15 <a href="#">The Fosdyke Saga</a>	20:30-21:00 <a href="#">The Random Jottings Of Hinge And Bracket</a>	15:00-16:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	14:30-15:00 <a href="#">Steptoe and Son</a>
14:00-14:30 <a href="#">All the Young Dudes</a>	14:00-14:30 <a href="#">Big Town All Stars</a>	14:30-15:00 <a href="#">Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads?</a>	19:15-19:30 <a href="#">The Fosdyke Saga</a>	21:00-22:15 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	16:00-18:00 <a href="#">The Big Toe Radio Show</a>	15:00-16:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>
14:30-15:00 <a href="#">Yes Minister</a>	14:30-15:00 <a href="#">After Henry</a>	15:00-16:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	19:30-20:00 <a href="#">The Michael Bentine Show</a>	22:15-22:45 <a href="#">Uncle Dynamite</a>	18:00-18:30 <a href="#">The Day of the Triffids</a>	16:00-18:00 <a href="#">The Big Toe Radio Show</a>
15:00-16:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	15:00-16:00 <a href="#">The Little Toe Radio Show</a>	16:00-18:00 <a href="#">The Big Toe Radio Show</a>	20:00-21:00 <a href="#">Garrison Keillor's Radio Show</a>	22:45-00:00 <a href="#">South Riding</a>	18:30-18:45 <a href="#">Core Coren</a>	18:00-18:30 <a href="#">The Day of the Triffids</a>
16:00-18:00 <a href="#">The Big Toe Radio Show</a>	16:00-18:00 <a href="#">The Big Toe Radio Show</a>	18:00-18:30 <a href="#">The Day of the Triffids</a>	21:00-00:00 <a href="#">The Comedy Controller</a>	00:00-00:30 <a href="#">Journey Into Space</a>	18:45-19:00 <a href="#">Kes</a>	18:30-18:45 <a href="#">Core Coren</a>
18:00-18:30 <a href="#">The Day of the Triffids</a>	18:00-18:30 <a href="#">The Day of the Triffids</a>	18:30-18:45 <a href="#">Facts and Fancies</a>	00:00-00:40 <a href="#">The Twilight Zone</a>	00:30-01:00 <a href="#">The Blade of the Poisoner</a>	19:00-19:30 <a href="#">I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue</a>	18:45-19:00 <a href="#">The Count of Monte Cristo</a>
18:30-18:45 <a href="#">Facts and Fancies</a>	18:30-18:45 <a href="#">Facts and Fancies</a>	18:45-19:00 <a href="#">Kes</a>	00:40-01:00 <a href="#">Temple of the Winds</a>	01:00-02:00 <a href="#">Laughter in the Air</a>	19:30-20:00 <a href="#">The Goon Show</a>	19:00-19:30 <a href="#">The News Quiz</a>
18:45-19:00 <a href="#">Kes</a>	18:45-19:00 <a href="#">Kes</a>	19:00-19:30 <a href="#">Just a Minute</a>	01:00-02:00 <a href="#">Martin Chuzzlewit</a>	02:00-03:30 <a href="#">Events on a Hotel Terrace</a>	20:00-20:30 <a href="#">Horses</a>	19:30-20:00 <a href="#">Hancock's Half Hour</a>
19:00-19:30 <a href="#">Quote, Unquote</a>	19:00-19:30 <a href="#">Just a Minute</a>	19:30-20:00 <a href="#">I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again</a>	02:00-03:00 <a href="#">Sword of Honour</a>	03:30-04:45 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	20:30-21:00 <a href="#">Terminus</a>	20:00-20:30 <a href="#">Father Brown Stories</a>
19:30-20:00 <a href="#">Round the Horne</a>	19:30-20:00 <a href="#">The Navy Lark</a>	20:00-20:30 <a href="#">Paul Temple and the Alex Affair</a>	03:00-06:00 <a href="#">The Comedy Controller</a>	04:45-05:15 <a href="#">Uncle Dynamite</a>	21:00-21:30 <a href="#">Millport</a>	20:30-21:00 <a href="#">Bolt</a>
20:00-20:30 <a href="#">The Blackburn Files</a>	20:00-20:30 <a href="#">The Toff and the Runaway Bride</a>	20:30-21:00 <a href="#">Bitter Medicine</a>			21:30-22:00 <a href="#">Dad's Army</a>	20:00-20:30 <a href="#">Father Brown Stories</a>
20:30-21:00 <a href="#">Raffles</a>	20:30-21:00 <a href="#">Bitter Medicine</a>	21:00-21:30 <a href="#">Big Town All Stars</a>			22:00-22:30 <a href="#">Radio Active</a>	20:30-21:00 <a href="#">Bolt</a>
21:00-21:30 <a href="#">All the Young Dudes</a>	21:00-21:30 <a href="#">Big Town All Stars</a>	21:30-22:00 <a href="#">After Henry</a>			22:30-23:00 <a href="#">The Now Show</a>	21:00-21:30 <a href="#">Legal, Decent, Honest and Truthful</a>
21:30-22:00 <a href="#">Yes Minister</a>	21:30-22:00 <a href="#">After Henry</a>	22:00-22:30 <a href="#">People Like Us</a>			23:00-00:00 <a href="#">The Remains of Foley and McColl</a>	21:30-22:00 <a href="#">Steptoe And Son</a>
22:00-22:30 <a href="#">Brothers in Law</a>	22:00-22:30 <a href="#">People Like Us</a>	22:30-23:00 <a href="#">Whose Line is it Anyway?</a>			00:00-00:30 <a href="#">The Day of the Triffids</a>	22:00-22:30 <a href="#">Chambers</a>
22:30-23:00 <a href="#">Parsons and Naylor's Pull-Out Sections</a>	22:30-23:00 <a href="#">Whose Line is it Anyway?</a>	22:00-22:30 <a href="#">Dead Ringers</a>			00:30-00:45 <a href="#">Core Coren</a>	22:30-23:00 <a href="#">Smelling of Roses</a>
23:00-23:30 <a href="#">The Very World of Milton Jones</a>	23:00-23:30 <a href="#">Giles Wemmbley Hogg Goes Off</a>	22:30-23:00 <a href="#">In Conversation With</a>			00:45-01:00 <a href="#">Kes</a>	23:00-23:30 <a href="#">The Nimmo Twins</a>
23:30-00:00 <a href="#">Jeremy Hardy</a>	23:00-23:30 <a href="#">Giles Wemmbley Hogg Goes Off</a>	23:00-23:30 <a href="#">The Mark Steel Solution</a>			01:00-02:00 <a href="#">The Forsythe Chronicles</a>	23:30-00:00 <a href="#">Big Booth Too</a>
	23:30-00:00 <a href="#">The Curried Goat Show</a>				02:00-02:45 <a href="#">Producer's Choice: Janet Whitaker</a>	00:00-00:30
	00:00-00:30					

<a href="#">Speaks to the Nation</a>	<a href="#">Day of the Triffids</a>	23:30-00:00 <a href="#">The Boosh</a>			02:45-03:00 <a href="#">I Don't Know How She Does It</a>	<a href="#">The Day of the Triffids</a>
00:00-00:30 <a href="#">The Day of the Triffids</a>	00:30-00:45 <a href="#">Facts and Fancies</a>	00:00-00:30 <a href="#">The Day of the Triffids</a>			03:00-03:15 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	00:30-00:45 <a href="#">Core Coren</a>
00:30-00:45 <a href="#">Facts and Fancies</a>	00:45-01:00 <a href="#">Kes</a>	00:30-00:45 <a href="#">Facts and Fancies</a>			03:15-03:30 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>	00:45-01:00 <a href="#">The Count of Monte Cristo</a>
00:45-01:00 <a href="#">Kes</a>	01:00-02:00 <a href="#">Sons and Lovers</a>	00:45-01:00 <a href="#">Kes</a>			03:30-04:00 <a href="#">Radio Active</a>	01:00-02:00 <a href="#">Tom Jones</a>
01:00-02:00 <a href="#">No Name</a>	02:00-02:45 <a href="#">Producer's Choice: Peter Wild</a>	01:00-02:00 <a href="#">Far From the Madding Crowd</a>			04:00-04:30 <a href="#">The Now Show</a>	02:00-02:45 <a href="#">Producer's Choice: Janet Whitaker</a>
02:00-02:45 <a href="#">Producer's Choice: Peter Wild</a>	02:45-03:00 <a href="#">South Riding</a>	02:00-02:45 <a href="#">Producer's Choice: Peter Wild</a>			04:30-05:30 <a href="#">The Remains of Foley and McColl</a>	02:45-03:00 <a href="#">South Riding</a>
02:45-03:00 <a href="#">South Riding</a>	03:00-03:15 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	02:45-03:00 <a href="#">South Riding</a>				03:00-03:15 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>
03:00-03:15 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>	03:15-03:30 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>	03:00-03:15 <a href="#">Ladies of Letters.com</a>				03:15-03:30 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>
03:15-03:30 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>	03:30-04:00 <a href="#">People Like Us</a>	03:15-03:30 <a href="#">This Sceptred Isle</a>				03:30-04:00 <a href="#">Chambers</a>
03:30-04:00 <a href="#">Brothers in Law</a>	04:00-04:30 <a href="#">Whose Line is it Anyway?</a>	03:30-04:00 <a href="#">Dead Ringers</a>				04:00-04:30 <a href="#">Smelling of Roses</a>
04:00-04:30 <a href="#">Parsons and Naylor's Pull-Out Sections</a>	04:30-05:00 <a href="#">Giles Wembley Hoqq Goes Off</a>	04:00-04:30 <a href="#">In Conversation With</a>				04:30-05:00 <a href="#">The Nimmo Twins</a>
04:30-05:00 <a href="#">The Very World of Milton Jones</a>		04:30-05:00 <a href="#">The Mark Steel Solution</a>				