

Review of BBC Four against Consents and Commitments

March 2004

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Summary of channel proposition and commitments

BBC Four launched in March 2002 aiming to be the most intellectually and culturally enriching channel on television, with an ambition to play a positive role in British cultural life both on and off-screen, and to deliver an international perspective to its audience.

The channel was designed to offer “a rich mix of serious cultural and factual programming in a single editorial proposition” in a television market where the competitive offering consists of highly specialised niche channels. Combining that concept with a high degree of originally commissioned, UK originated programming, BBC Four offers a distinctive proposition.

In addition to the on-screen offering, the channel plays a role off-screen, working with other parts of the BBC to sustain links with cultural institutions around the UK and to support and be a part of the nation’s artistic life.

BBC Four is also committed to an international perspective throughout its programming, as reflected in the daily news bulletin, the range and scope of current affairs and documentaries, and in our cultural coverage, from international cinema to world music and the best of classical performance.

The Secretary of State granted approval for BBC Four in September 2001 on the basis of a set of requirements. These conditions and the commitments set out in the information provided by the BBC determine the scope of the channel.

We are now able to report on 21 months of activity to date.

The structure of this document is designed to address these commitments in a methodical way. Section Two deals with the commitments that relate to how the channel is delivered at an overall level: this includes commitments relating to standards, genre mix, target audiences and its relationship to other BBC channels.

Section Three addresses the commitments at a more detailed level, mainly relating to programming: this includes levels of original programming, individual genre commitments, and interactivity.

Section 4 refers to the contribution of the channel to the UK broadcasting industry in terms of UK and/or regional production, independent production companies and the channel's relationship with the UK's cultural sector.

Section Five sets out the key challenges for BBC Four going forwards.

Section 2: Assessment of BBC Four against commitments relating to the channel overall and how it is delivered to the audience

2.1 Standards

The DCMS requires that "high general standards in all respects (and in particular in respect of content, quality and editorial integrity) will be maintained in relation to the service"

An assessment of quality and standards on a quantitative scale is difficult to achieve, but the channel aims to fulfil the condition on a number of levels, spanning audience and critical appreciation, levels of investment in programming, awards won and presence in preview sections of the press.

Enthusiasm among the audience, opinion formers and the press, both broadsheet and tabloid, point to the channel's success in delivering a high quality proposition:

"Thought provoking, absolutely excellent...best thing that's happened to television for years and years" BBC Four viewer, London

"Why I Love BBC Four"
Title of a feature article by Toby Young, Guardian

"...any channel that regularly turns out documentaries, dramas and live concerts of the quality we have seen deserves nothing but praise" Daily Mail Weekend, 28 December 2002

BBC Four has a high proportion of specially commissioned programmes with an emphasis on quality and production values, including close-to-analogue investment levels for the key (9pm) originations, to support the audience's high expectations of quality from the BBC.

In terms of awards, within 21 months, the channel has won 27 major UK and international awards, a unique achievement for a digital-only channel. It was awarded Runner-up in the GEITF Digital Channel of the Year category, and in 2003 received an impressive 11 nominations in the Grierson awards, equal to Channel 4. In 2004 BBC Four also received several nominations for the RTS Programme Awards.

BBC Four has also earned a disproportionate presence in the digital channel preview sections of the press, with strong support from the specialist previewers. Research on multi-channel picks of the day/previews for the month of April 2003 showed that BBC Four was second only to the long-established Film Four in gaining previews/picks.

2.2 Target audience

The consent letter from the DCMS echoed the BBC's aim for the channel to appeal to "anyone interested in culture, arts and ideas", and added that BBC Four should "maximize the public value by attracting and engaging the widest possible audience"

With the widest possible audience in mind, BBC Four's primary measure of audience performance is reach. Weekly reach has been trending upwards over time and was 1.7 million people per week (5.7% of available audience) in November 2003. Since launch, over 11 million unique viewers have watched a BBC Four programme. (*Reach being defined as watching for a minimum of 15 consecutive minutes.*)

The audience has proved to be broad, although inevitably the viewer profile is skewed towards more educated viewers and away from children and very young adults. BBC Four's content is not aimed at children and has a lower proportion of comedy and entertainment than the vast majority of channels. It has a higher proportion of long-form programming which naturally leads to a viewing profile skewed towards viewers aged 30 and over.

In November 2003, around 60% of viewers to BBC Four were ABC1s. Within this very broad group, the channel attracted a slight majority of C1 viewers over AB, and shows a more even profile than niche channels such as Classic FM TV.

In terms of age profile, 25% of BBC Four viewers in November were aged 16-34. Over 40% were aged 35-54, and a third were aged 55 or above. This is a younger profile than many other comparable multi-channel channels, e.g. Classic FM TV, History Channel, UK Drama, and is on a par with channels such as Discovery and Film Four.

BBC Four has been reasonably successful in attracting geographically diverse viewers, although the viewing profile still shows a skew towards the South of England. In November 2003 weekly reach in the London area was a point above the national average (6.9% compared with UK average of 5.9%). Across the 11 BBC English regions, 5 areas outperformed London in terms of weekly reach – three were in the South of England, and the remaining two were North-East and East regions. Reach in Wales and Scotland was within half a percentage point of the national average.

Extensive qualitative research since launch has revealed a loyal core of BBC Four viewers who value the channel highly, and the channel's offering as something for "anyone interested in culture, arts and ideas" appears to be well understood by the audience.

"It's somewhere you go to that stimulates your mind...it gives you something to contemplate where most stuff on most other channels most of the time is escapist" BBC Four viewer, London

We recognize the need to address issues of awareness and perception to continue extending the channel's potential audience beyond the loyal core, and we are pursuing measures to tackle them.

2.3 Genre mix

The consent letter from the DCMS stated that the service must deliver "culturally enriching and innovative programmes covering a broad mix of programme genres. These genres must include news, in particular, global news and current affairs, philosophy, science, history, art, performance, music and film"

BBC Four's programming offer falls largely under four broad headings with approximately 50% of hours in Factual programming, 20% Performance, 10% Film and 10% News and Current Affairs, as well as small amounts of Drama and Comedy within the channel's distinctive remit.

Within the broad headings, the channel has spanned the full range of subjects requested in the conditions - and more - and an analysis of hours and spend by genre is set out below.

	Full Year 020302 – 010303 (1 st Year from Launch)		Full Year 010402 – 310303 (BBC Financial Year 02/03)		8 Months To Date 010403 – 301103 (BBC Financial Year 03/04)	
	Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%
News	275	10.4	299	11.2	230	12.7
o News	121	4.6	120	4.5	78	4.3
o Current Affairs	154	5.8	179	6.7	152	8.4
Performance	436	16.6	447	16.7	333	18.4
o Music	417	15.8	431	16.1	306	17.0
o Dance	19	0.7	16	0.6	27	1.5
Film	293	11.1	280	10.5	179	9.9
Factual	1,409	53.4	1,415	53.0	931	51.6
<i>Of which</i>						
o Philosophy	26	1.0	26	1.0	15	0.8
o Science	101	3.8	103	3.9	47	2.6
o History	209	7.9	209	7.8	204	11.3
o Arts	640	24.3	655	24.5	474	26.3

Individual genres are reviewed at more length in section 3.

An examination of comparative schedule breakdowns of BBC Four and channels broadcasting programming of similar genre illustrates how BBC Four's range and level of UK originations makes it distinctive (as the recent market impact study by Oliver & Ohlbaum confirms)

2.4 Relationship with BBC One and Two

With regard to the role of the channel within the BBC TV portfolio, the DCMS conditions state that "this service must not be developed at the expense of music and arts programmes on BBC1 and BBC2"

The launch of BBC Four has not seen any diminution in the provision of music and arts programming on BBC One and BBC Two. In fact hours and spend on the analogue channels have increased from the pre-launch position.

The BBC offered specific commitments to at least 245 hours of music and arts programming on BBC One and BBC Two via its Statements of Programme Policy in 2003/04.

Finally, analogue audiences have further benefited from the 'digital dividend' of the BBC Four zone on BBC Two and programmes co-commissioned by BBC Two and BBC Four that might otherwise not have been made.

Music and Arts programming	BBC One	BBC Two	Total	of which BBC Four on Two
Hours				
BBC Financial Year 00/01	27	220	247	n/a
BBC Financial Year 01/02	28	231	259	n/a
BBC Financial Year 02/03	55	270	325	8
BBC Financial Year 03/04	54	294	348	44
Spend (£m)				
BBC Financial Year 00/01	4.1	21.5	25.6	n/a
BBC Financial Year 01/02	4.7	19.8	24.5	n/a
BBC Financial Year 02/03	10.6	23.1	33.7	0.21
BBC Financial Year 03/04	9.4	25.5	35.0	0.75

Source: BBC Annual Report and current 03/04 forecasts

Note: The reduction in hours and increase in spend on BBC One from 55 to 54 in 2003/04 reflects the fact that 2002/03 was an unusually high year for arts due to the Golden Jubilee in summer 2002.

Section 3: Assessment of BBC Four against commitments relating to what the channel delivers at a detailed level

3.1 Originally produced and commissioned programming

The DCMS conditions state that "around 70% of air time must be dedicated to originally produced or commissioned programming, including repeats of that content"

The channel has delivered 'around 70%' original programming in the period under review.

	1 st Year from Launch 020302 - 010303	BBC Financial Year 02/03 010402 - 310303	BBC Financial Year 03/04 YTD 010403 - 301103
TX Hours	1,706	1,772	1,230
% of Total TX Hours	66.2%	68.0%	73.0%

3.2 Individual genre commitments

As described in section 2.3, BBC Four's programming offer falls largely under four broad headings of News and Current Affairs, Factual, Performance, and Film. Each is considered in more detail below.

3.2.1 News and Current Affairs

The DCMS conditions state that news should include "in particular, global news and current affairs". In addition the BBC committed the channel to "provide an in-depth 'global news' bulletin every day, genuinely broadening the BBC's current news service provision and offering something currently unavailable on free-to-air television in the UK, appealing to multicultural groups in the UK, business people, and those interested in global news and cultural affairs"

BBC Four currently features around 30 hours of News and Current Affairs programming per month.

The World (formerly *BBC Four News*) broadcasts on weekdays from 8.00-8.30 pm. It is commissioned from BBC World ensuring a global agenda unique in the UK free-to-air television market. Programmes typically feature around three main stories to ensure issues are given in-depth treatment, often including discussion with unexpected contributors (e.g. writer and director Spike Lee on George Bush, playwright Dario Fo on Berlusconi), to deliver a more rounded picture and a deeper understanding of the world we live in.

BBC Four's Current Affairs offering is delivered via a combination of documentary and discussion programming. The channel has brought innovation in the genre in the form of programmes such as *The Situation Room* and *Holidays In The Axis of Evil*, a series offering informal and accessible insights into some of the world's most volatile regions, as well as through large scale event nights on terrorism, ecology and global politics.

3.2.2 Factual

In its submissions to the DCMS, the BBC made commitments in respect of Documentary that it would be "regularly given space to run at greater length" to "explore subjects in more depth", and to "co-produce or acquire the best documentaries from around the world"

In respect of Debate, Comment and Discussion programming, the channel is committed to give the genre "primetime space for the first time" and to offer "serious, intellectual debate and interviews on subjects such as philosophy, science and history"

BBC Four shows approximately 1,400 hours of Factual programming per year, around 50% of total broadcast hours, and has delivered some exceptional and award-winning titles across a variety of subjects including Art (*The Strange World Of Barry Who?; Goya: Crazy Like a Genius*), Science (*Double Helix - The Story Of DNA; Superfly*), History (*The King Of Communism; The Other Side of Armageddon*) and Philosophy (*The Cultured Ape; The End Of Capitalism*).

Of those hours, approximately a quarter are attributable to long form programming running more than 60 minutes and appreciation for the depth of coverage has been acknowledged in feedback from our qualitative research.

"It goes into things in more detail, it's not just a surface sound-bite or a surface wash on the subject, it tends to be deep, it tends to be more interesting" BBC Four viewer, Manchester

The weekly *Storyville* strand offers audiences the best international film-making and the channel has acquired and co-produced around 50 titles per year, with highlights to date including *The Trials of Henry Kissinger*, *Journeys with George*, and *Etre et Avoir*.

Debate, comment and discussion programming has been delivered across series such as *The Talk Show*, *Dinner with Portillo* and the *...talks to...* series. BBC Four originates on average an hour of discussion or interview programming per week, all of which has its premiere in peak, supplemented by repeats at other times.

Programmes have featured an impressive list of voices and guests, including 'one-on-one' specials with thinkers and key cultural figures as diverse as Bernard Williams, Toni Morrison and Quentin Tarantino, and longer-form debate programming (60 minutes or more) has encompassed subjects such as the relationship between India and Pakistan and the Earth Summit.

3.2.3 Performance

In its submissions to the DCMS, the BBC made commitments in respect of Performance to widen the range and volume of coverage, with "performance from the Nations and Regions, including coverage of key festivals around the country" and a "commitment to classical and specialist music...and a world music agenda"

Performance on BBC Four spans music, dance and theatre, and the channel broadcasts around 40 hours per month (17% of total hours).

Of this, approximately a third is sourced from the Nations and Regions, including coverage of festivals and events from around the country such as BBC Singer of the World from Cardiff, the Leeds International Piano competition, the Cambridge Folk Festival, the Brecon Jazz Festival and Celtic Connections.

Classical performance (music, ballet and dance) has a regular presence on the channel with a Saturday night slot, augmented by one-offs, events and competition heats such as *Young Musician of the Year*. Highlights have included *Sophie's Choice* and *The Tempest* live

from the Royal Opera House and *Fidelio Live* from Birmingham as well as extensive coverage of the fortnight of Proms.

Non-classical music, in a regular Friday night slot, follows a diverse agenda including world, folk, jazz and soul music. A successful series of 60-minute world music *BBC Four Sessions* has showcased artists such as Salif Keita, Baaba Maal, David Byrne and Eliza Carthy. In folk, jazz and soul, examples of the wide range of artists featured include Richard Thompson, Herbie Hancock and James Brown respectively.

In theatre, the channel has brought a number of significant theatrical relays to the screen including *Richard II Live at the Globe*, *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg*, *Three Sisters* and Peter Brook's *Hamlet*.

3.2.4 Film

In respect of Film, BBC Four promised that "world cinema will find a more secure home than any other free-to-air service" and the offer would be "non-mainstream...widening choice of multicultural films"

BBC Four's commitment to international cinema has become a cornerstone of the channel's offer and enabled it to reclaim a 'lost' market.

"The best thing on BBC Four without a doubt for me is the movie on Saturday night, the world cinema – that alone is almost worth having digital television for" – BBC Four viewer, Manchester

BBC Four broadcasts two foreign-language films per week, a contemporary one, often a free-to-air premiere, in the *Saturday Cinema* slot at 9pm, and a classic midweek at 10 or 10.30pm. These are supplemented by English-language film specials and seasons.

BBC Four has been investing in the distribution of new world cinema titles in a pre-buy deal, which raises the profile of the films and brings BBC Four branding into cinemas. Recent titles have included excellent films such as *Goodbye Lenin*, *Russian Ark* and *The Man Without A Past*.

In late 2003, the channel launched the *BBC Four World Cinema Award*. Nominated by the public, critics and film experts, the audience can vote for the shortlisted international film it thinks deserves the Audience Award.

3.3 Interactivity

The DCMS conditions state that "various forms of interactivity should be developed as part of the service" and it should "help reach out and stimulate viewers who might not otherwise seek out BBC4"

New media applications were conceived as a significant element of the BBC Four proposition, and the audience is well served with a web site of around 1,500 pages and interactive television services including programme-specific and 24/7 text content and enhancements for special events and seasons. With the exception of the web site, all are available via the red button on the television remote control handset.

These applications have provided an array of opportunities for the audience to interact with the channel and its content.

www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour offers programme support, exclusive content (including audio archive, music and interview clips, interviews), listings, voting, live chat, competitions and crosswords. It has enjoyed strong growth in users and usage since launch and from a base of 60,000 unique users and 355,000 page impressions in March 2002, volume has more than tripled to 213,000 and 1.3m respectively by November 2003.

The enhanced television 24/7 text service supports five channel priorities per week with interviews, background information and competitions specific to particular programmes. The service has played a key role in delivering enhancements for special events - for example *Richard II*, a live broadcast from the Globe Theatre in London accompanied by simultaneous text commentary written by a theatre critic and specially prepared pre-performance and interval content. It proved a milestone in the channel's interactive offering and attracted more e-mails praising the production than any other BBC Four programme:

"The kind of broadcasting that makes one glad again that television was invented. A magnificent theatrical feast, with an enriching and useful enhancement in the interactive accompaniment...Superb" viewer email

BBC Four's interactive offering has enabled the channel to "help reach out and stimulate viewers who might not otherwise seek out BBC Four" by enhancing the cross-promotion potential of BBC Four output

on other BBC services and also by offering content that stands alone, independent of the television channel output with significant appeal in its own right.

The interactive elements of BBC Four programming often provide a platform for editorial cross promotion on other BBC services. For example, in Television, the voting element of the recent *Black Flash* series on the history of black footballers in the UK provoked discussion around the possible winner across BBC One's *Football Focus*, 5Live and 1Xtra, whilst the launch of the BBC Four World Cinema Award on *Film 2003* gave the channel exposure to both the BBC One Tuesday night audience and the extended audience of viewers to the BBC Two repeat. In Radio, the interactive element of the Proms on BBC Four, for example, enhanced its cross-promotion coverage on Radio 3.

There are numerous access points throughout BBCi for BBC Four's new media offerings that help extend the potential reach of its output. BBC Four is well represented on www.bbc.co.uk in the News, History, Science, Nature, Music, Film and English Regions sections and the channel's monthly marketing priority regularly finds space on the main site's home page. Similarly, the channel's interactive television offerings often find a place in the interactive menus of BBC One and BBC Two that are accessed by pressing the red button.

Finally, the website offers deep, stand alone content, including audio interviews from the BBC archive, a virtual art gallery in *Painting The Weather* and a cryptic crossword that bring an extended audience to the BBC Four proposition. Of *Painting the Weather* one viewer commented

"What a brilliant concept! Going to an exhibition at home – so pure – so simple. This is what the digital age can do for those who don't live in London" Feedback via email

3.4 Reflecting diversity

The DCMS set out the condition that "Within its defined scope the service shall stimulate, support and reflect the diversity of the UK"

BBC Four's commitment to an international and multicultural agenda has made it one of the most diverse on television, and the channel was recognised for its work at the Campaign for Racial Equality's *Race In*

The Media 2003 awards, at which it was commended in the Broadcaster Of The Year category

The channel aims to reflect the UK's cultural life as widely as possible, especially in music and performance as outlined in section 3.2.3, whilst in documentary the channel has broadcast multiple stories covering issues of race and disability.

In respect of disability, the channel's output included a week of programmes on Stephen Hawking, *Care House*, which took an in-depth look at a residential home for people who are learning disabled, and a documentary on the singer Robert Wyatt. The channel also recently broadcast from the Edinburgh Festival the first television recital by Thomas Quasthoff, the great thalidomide-disabled singer and in the new year will take part in a cross channel season on disability timed to coincide with the Paralympics.

The channel also maintains a breadth of presenting talent from a range of ethnic communities. In news and topical programming, presenters like Nisha Pillai, Robert Beckford and Maria Misra have all made contributions. Andrea Oliver is one of the channel's key faces, presenting jazz and world music programmes which feature artists from across the globe.

3.5 Promoting digital take-up:

The DCMS stated that "The BBC will maintain a vigorous campaign across the full range of its services to promote the uptake of digital television and radio services and equipment generally, and across all platforms".

Specifically in relation to BBC Four, the consent noted that "within the wider audience (BBC Four's) genres are expected to drive digital take-up amongst an older age group which has been more resistant to digital take-up"

BBC Television's portfolio strategy has helped promote digital television by exposing the new services to a wider audience. For BBC Four this has taken the form of a "BBC Four on BBC Two" channel zone with in 2003/04 around 100 hours of the channel's content being broadcast on the analogue service reaching on average 1.4 million viewers in analogue homes, as well as other forms of cross promotion including trails, premieres of BBC One and BBC Two programming on

BBC Four and direct programme tie-ins (such as a documentary on BBC Four following a BBC One programme).

In research, the audience to which BBC Four was found most likely to appeal (AB's aged 45+) represents a group among which penetration of digital television had been traditionally low. Whilst specific research on the extent to which individual channels are driving take-up Freeview is not yet available, external research shows homes taking Freeview are more likely to be ABC1 than viewers in terrestrial homes and older than Sky homes (73% of DTT homes found to be 'mature adult' / 55+ (non-family) compared to 47% of Sky homes). This suggests that BBC Four, along with channels such as UK History and BBC News 24, is helping to drive take-up of digital amongst these audience groups.

Feedback from audience research further supports the notion that BBC Four itself is making a unique contribution to digital take-up in the UK.

"I'd simply stopped watching television...When I found out about BBC Four, I didn't only have to get a box, I had to get my TV out of the loft" BBC Four viewer, London

3.6 Sensory impairments

The DCMS conditions state that "consideration be given to promoting the understanding and enjoyment of each of the new television services by viewers with sensory impairments; and that the BBC Governors should monitor the levels of subtitling, signing and audio description provided on each new service, and apply to those levels from time to time the same targets which they apply from time to time to existing BBC digital channels"

In order to deliver to viewers with sensory impairments the BBC has set targets for subtitling, audio description and signing which increase over time. The agreed targets, expressed as percentages of total transmission hours, have all been met in full during the periods under review, and are as follows:

	2002/03		2003/04	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual to date
Subtitling	40%	43.5%	50%	58.7%
Audio Description	4%	4.4%	4-6%	5.4%
Signing	2%	2.2%	2-3%	2.3%

Section 4: Assessment of BBC Four against commitments relating to how the channel contributes to the UK broadcasting industry

4.1 EU/EEA programming

The DCMS conditions state that "around 70% of output should be made in the EU/EEA"

The condition reflects the role of BBC Four as a distinctive service in the multi-channel landscape and the channel has met or exceeded the target in the periods under review.

	1 st Year from Launch 020302 – 010303	BBC Financial Year 02/03 010402 – 310303	BBC Financial Year 03/04 YTD 010403 – 301103
TX Hours	2,271	2,308	1,586
% of Total TX Hours	88.2%	88.6%	84.8%

4.2 UK regional and independent production

The consent letter from the DCMS required that "a proportion of programme production must be allocated to companies based outside London"

The BBC has overarching commitments to levels of regional and independent production to which BBC Four contributes. The channel's own ambitions to achieve this contribution include sourcing at least one third of performance output from outside London, managed through BBC Wales Music.

Since launch, hours and spend allocated to companies based outside London are as follows:

	1 st Year from Launch 020302 - 010303	BBC Financial Year 02/03 010402 - 310303	BBC Financial Year 03/04 YTD 010403 - 301103
TX Hours			
○ BBC	86.3	90.9	57.7
○ Non-BBC	56.1	56.0	55.1
○ Total	142.4	146.8	112.8
% of Total Hours	31.4%	32.0%	44.1%
Spend (£'000)			
○ BBC	6,865	6,753	3,621
○ Non-BBC	4,143	4,096	3,439
○ Total	11,008	10,849	7,060
% of Total Spend	32.2%	33.1%	43.4%

4.3 Cultural Sector

In its submissions to the DCMS, the BBC outlined a role for the channel as "a significant new patron of the arts" which would also "extend the reach of arts institutions around the UK"

BBC Four has become an important new part of the BBC's commitment to the nation's cultural life, through the broadcast of new and distinctive performance, arts journalism and external events. It works with other parts of the BBC to sustain links with cultural institutions around the UK.

Music

In music, more than a dozen events and festivals have received their first significant television broadcasts, including the Cambridge Folk Festival, Brecon Jazz, St Magnus and Celtic Connections. The channel has worked closely with specialist promoters to support minority music genres such as world, folk and jazz, often mounting special concerts under the *BBC Four Sessions* banner.

Existing BBC events such as the Proms and *BBC Singer of the World* have benefited from more broadcast hours than ever before.

Compared to around 18 hours of Proms coverage on BBC Television in 2001, there were 50 in 2003 of which 30 were broadcast on BBC Four.

The channel's partnership with the Barbican Centre has funded the creation of permanent technical rig for live broadcasting, which has significantly reduced the cost of performance capture.

The launch of BBC Four has also made possible a substantial extension of BBC Television's partnership with the Royal Opera House, doubling the number of broadcast pieces and making a wider range of ROH activities accessible to audiences.

Visual Arts

BBC Four's Arts Reports strand has worked with the UK's major art galleries to make key exhibitions available to a national audience, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti at the Walker Gallery in Liverpool and Max Beckmann at Tate Modern.

In the contemporary art field, BBC Four is media partner for the *Becks Futures* competition, which showcases young and emerging talent in the visual arts. Other competitions given television coverage for the first time by BBC Four include the Gulbenkian Museums Prize and the new Designer of the Year Award. In total some 50 cultural events have been given coverage by the channel since launch.

Currently in preparation is a major new exhibition at Tate Britain of 1960s British Art, inspired by BBC Four's upcoming series on this theme – the first time a major exhibition of this kind has been initiated by a television series.

Film

BBC Four has actively supported the foreign-language film distribution sector in the UK. Alongside its regular *Saturday Cinema* slot, the channel pre-invests in new releases, enabling distributors to make more prints and do more publicity, increasing the reach of international film in cinemas around the UK. The channel's regular DVD Collection programme consistently reviews products from specialist DVD distributors.

As a further step in its promotion of the sector, BBC Four has recently launched its own annual *World Cinema Award*, to recognize the best film not in the English language released each year.

The channel has also supported the world of independent short film-making by mounting one of UK television's most ambitious short films festivals – *The Shortest Night*, an eight-hour marathon in June 2003.

Theatre

BBC Four has worked with theatre producers in both the commercial and subsidized sectors to bring some of the best theatrical performances to a television audience, including Eddie Izzard in *A Day In The Death of Joe Egg*, Kristin Scott-Thomas in *Three Sisters* and Kyle McLachlan and Woody Harrelson in *On An Average Day*. The relay of *Richard II* from the Globe Theatre was the first ever live television transmission of a Shakespeare play and opened up this key venue for the first time to audiences across the UK.

The channel has also made television versions of acclaimed recent plays, including Michael Frayn's *Copenhagen* and the National Theatre's production of Kwame Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen*.

BBC Four's own two-week *Pinter at the BBC* season was the most significant television retrospective ever devoted to a living playwright, and included a new adaptation, *The Dwarfs*, which was subsequently staged at the National Theatre

Literature

BBC Four stepped in as sponsor for the Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction when the original sponsorship lapsed, and the channel has successfully worked with the Prize's organisers to raise its profile as a media event, while maintaining its prestige and distinctiveness.

More generally, across its output the channel has discussed or showcased the work of more than 130 writers and poets, often featuring books from smaller, specialist publishers. On occasion BBC Four has focused in depth on the work of a single author: a season on the work of JG Ballard included *Home*, a new adaptation of his short story *The Enormous Space*, which Ballard described as "superb, one of the very best adaptations of my fiction I've ever seen".

Section 5: Key Challenges

The challenge of extending **BBC Four's** appeal beyond its initial core audience is already being met with some success, but there is still huge potential for growth. Many people who would value BBC Four have not yet made the transition to digital television. We will ensure that our promotion and marketing campaigns make these sections of the audience fully aware of what the channel has to offer, and how they can receive it. We will also continue to offer analogue viewers opportunities to view BBC Four programmes on our terrestrial channels, such as the regular BBC Four programmes scheduled on BBC Two zone, to allow viewers to benefit from their digital investment as well as raise awareness of what the channel has to offer.

With its distinctive remit, BBC Four will continue to evolve to keep pace with the UK's dynamic creative and artistic sector. In particular we have ambitions for BBC Four to grow its impact and presence in the UK's cultural life by using its brand to build partnerships with other cultural institutions, and acting as a catalyst and showcase for new kinds of creative expression. Our vision is of a channel that is strongly valued for its contribution to the UK's cultural life, as well as to the landscape of broadcasting.

BBC Four will build on the breadth and depth of its factual, discussion programmes, arts and culture output as well as deepening its international coverage but will also continue to invest in new dramas and theatrical films as well as intelligent and original comedy. We plan some enhancement of the budget to achieve this. The channel's experiments with innovative drama have been well-received and we have ambitions to increase investment in theatrical relays, pieces authored for television as well as adaptations. We will further expand our commitment to the Proms and will seek new ways of providing topical coverage of developments across the arts, media and cultural world, to give this audience an even more in-depth service. We also expect BBC Four's international remit to become increasingly important as UK culture becomes even more diverse and globally-connected, and will extend our global network of partnerships with specialist producers and cultural broadcasters.

And in time, we would hope to be able to respond to our audience's desire for the channel to extend its broadcast hours. This would represent a genuine extension of choice for UK TV daytime audiences, and would also extract greater value from the channel's core programming investment.