



CAMPAIGN *for*
REGIONAL
BROADCASTING

Midlands

...AS NOT SEEN
ON TV

ON TV
...AS NOT SEEN



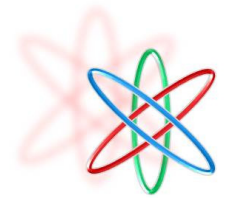
A spotlight on the BBC in the Midlands

**An evaluation of the current situation and ideas
to help re-establish the BBC in its largest region**

Prepared by the Campaign for Regional Broadcasting Midlands

February 2015.

The Campaign for Regional Broadcasting Midlands is a community grassroots campaign that aims to promote the Midlands as a place to create and make television, radio & film. There has been a gradual migration away from the region by the major broadcasters and as a result, this important, diverse and highly populated region is now virtually absent from the airwaves.



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6 pages of ideas to re-establish the BBC in the Midlands!

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900 million reasons to read this document.

9 billion reasons why this issue is important, for the Midlands.

The BBC is currently funded by a Broadcast Receiving Licence - this has been the case since 1927 and the system is currently under review by Parliament. The BBC raises just over 25% of its total Licence Fee income from its Midlands region and like everywhere else, we pay £145.50 per household. In years past, the BBC spent a substantial part of this in the region. Decisions were made over the last fifteen years or so that have resulted in this no longer being the case. The majority of the Midlands licence fee – over 90% in fact, is now spent elsewhere. This has had a significant effect on the broadcast freelance market in the region and the Midlands has all but disappeared from the national TV & radio schedules.

The BBC claims that for every £1 it spends, £2 of economic benefit is generated for local economies. The Midlands is missing out on such a benefit, for to be equal with all other English regions the BBC would need to spend at least £473 million per annum here. It currently spends only some £80 million.

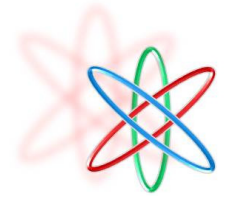
Such equal BBC spending would result in a £900 million benefit to the creative economy of the Midlands (using their formula) every year. Or £9 billion over ten years!

This Campaign wishes to rectify the policy of neglecting the Midlands; to help revitalise a local broadcast freelance market; to create hundreds of highly skilled jobs and to boost our creative economy.

We also want to see and hear the Midlands on the national networks, to reverse our invisibility in the national debate and for the BBC to truly represent the heart of the nation.

“...the BBC’s spending out of London helps to rebalance the economy geographically, spreading the benefits of growth across the UK”

The ‘Economic Value of the BBC’. Published by the BBC, 2012.



Introduction

It seems to be the season for BBC bashing. We note that as the Charter renewal negotiations draw near, various interests have aimed their sights, or at least their keyboards or their printing presses at the BBC. We would like to think that we are not BBC bashers, far from it. This Campaign is a firm supporter of publicly funded broadcasting – for good reasons.

We acknowledge the immense cultural contribution that is made by the BBC and the contribution it makes in promoting the United Kingdom throughout the world. Would this country be a better place if the BBC was privatised; commercialised in some way, or sold off?

The quality and breadth of British broadcasting is known throughout the world, and for that we must be thankful for the BBC. Its influence ripples across production sectors and also helps to ensure that British commercial broadcasting and programme making are amongst the best and most diverse in the world. We cannot be sure that such high standards would be maintained across most public service broadcasters if it were not for the competition that they face, from the publicly funded BBC.

It is precisely because we appreciate the benefits of the BBC that we are concerned by the manner in which the Midlands has been treated: it seems to us that over many years, previous management regimes came to regard their biggest English region as some sort of cash cow. Whilst increasing funding to all other nations & regions, they were also able to protect central expenditure with constant and ultimately massive spending reductions in one region (the one that pays the most licence fee income). This ever-rising transfer of licence fee income out of the Midlands has inevitably been at the expense of jobs, facilities and production in the region. This is hardly a fair and equitable use of public funds, and tests the support of what should be loyal licence fee payers.

Using data provided in various BBC publications, it may surprise you to learn of the huge disparity between BBC spending in the Midlands and all of its other regions. Until the Midlands sees operational expenditure that is equal to all the other nations and regions, then the redistribution of BBC spending outside of London is not complete.

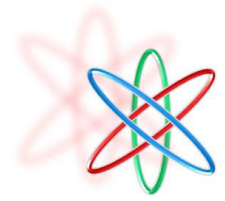
The recent past can't be undone, but the immediate future is now in the hands of Lord Hall, Peter Salmon, the heads of networks and production and numerous others. It is in their hands to reverse the BBC's contraction in the Midlands, to serve their largest group of licence fee payers more fairly. The BBC will rediscover its heartlands and reinforce the loyalty of a quarter of those who pay for it.

This document has been prepared to help the BBC re-establish itself in a lost region, although ultimately it is for the BBC to decide how it will do that.

The BBC would be spending £473 million per annum in the Midlands, to bring the region to parity with what it already spends in its North and South of England (excluding London) regions.

Currently it isn't even close. It spends only some £80 million.





A better deal for the Midlands

Between 2009 and 2014, BBC operating expenditure in its nations & regions increased by an impressive 35%. Of the 6 BBC nations & regions outside London, expenditure increased in 5.

One region saw a decrease. Operating expenditure in the BBC Midlands region (which includes the East of England) decreased substantially (and ironically) by... 35%.

It is now the region that sees the lowest operational spend in England; lower than Scotland or Wales and only marginally higher than (or equal to) Northern Ireland. Yet it remains the largest BBC region (both in terms of the £942 million licence fee that it pays every year, or the 25.3% of the UK population that live in it) with a distinct identity of its own. The Midlands is at the heart of the country. The region was home to Shakespeare, Elgar, Darwin and Elliot and is now home to some of our youngest and most diverse communities. If the BBC does not address itself to and represent all of these communities, we fail to see how it will be able to justify the licence fee.

We estimate that operating expenditure in the Midlands has reduced to £80 million in 2014, which represents just 8.5% of the licence fee paid by the region. Of this, only some £18 million is spent on national television & radio network production - which does not buy the region much airtime.

The net annual transfer of the licence fee out of region has increased to £862 million, which represents 91.5% of what the Midlands pays: the highest transfer out of any region, by far. This in turn has an extremely deleterious effect on the wider creative sector.

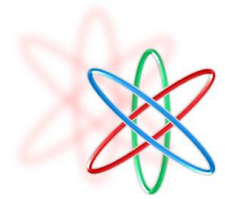
Clearly, something is amiss with BBC regional spending policy. One group of licence fee payers – the largest group in fact, are not seeing the same return of their £145.50 licence fee as other regions do. If the BBC was to spend the same in the Midlands as it does in its North & South of England regions (not including London) then we would see operating expenditure increase from £80 million to £473 million every year. That would equate to hundreds of extra jobs, new opportunities to bring on young talent and a massive boost for our creative and digital economy.

The Midlands is the missing link. All the strides that have been made in regional expenditure and production in the last few years are over-shadowed by the decline in this one region. This one missing link could easily (and enthusiastically) become an essential and strategic component of the BBC, once again.

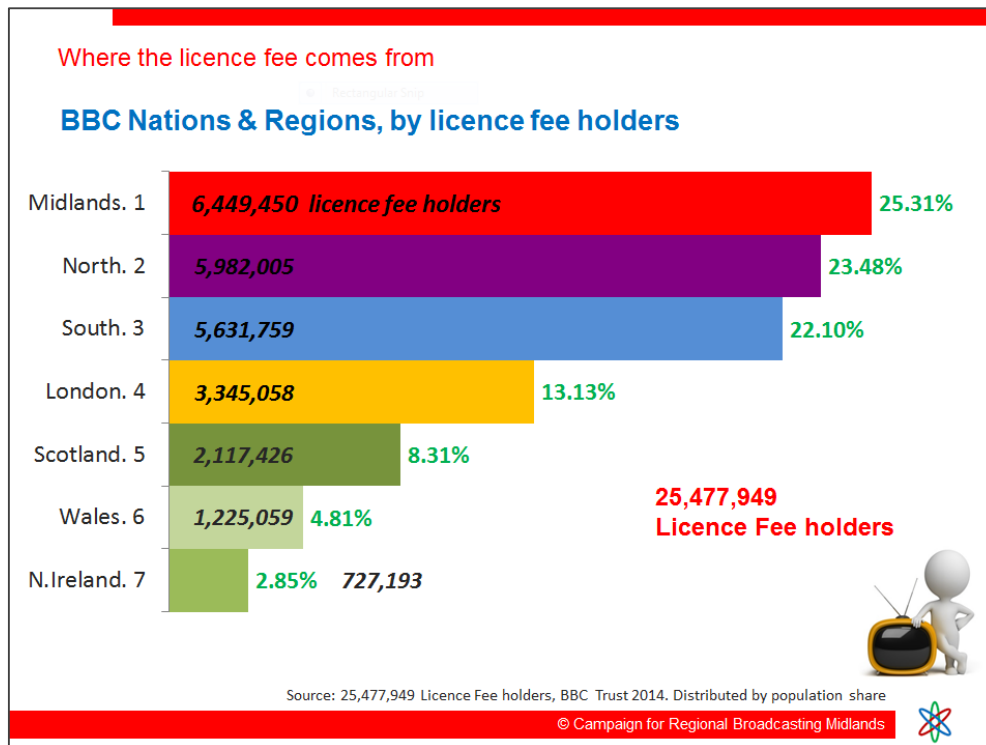
In this document, in a positive and friendly spirit, we present some ideas for the BBC in the Midlands. We want to see better representation for the region in the national schedules and to carve an equal place for it in the BBC production landscape.

We welcome the increases in regional expenditure elsewhere and believe that the BBC is enriched by them. However, there is one piece of the regional spending jigsaw that is still missing and which remains to be filled. The biggest piece: The Midlands

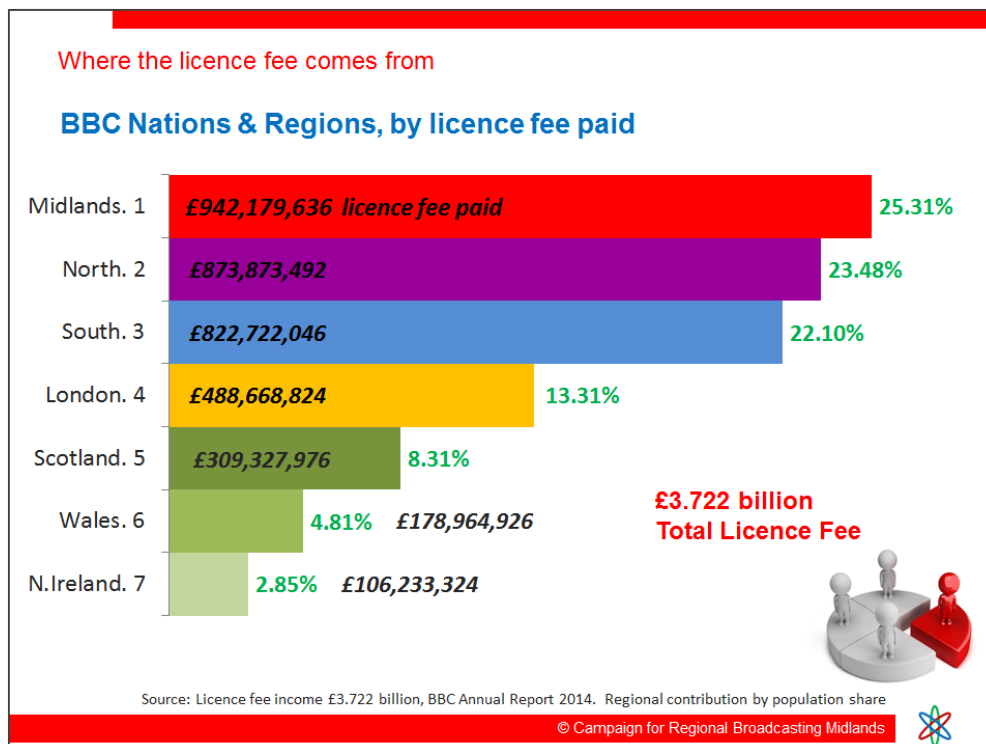




Graph 1: BBC Nations & Regions, by licence fee holders



Graph 2: BBC Nations & Regions, by licence fee paid



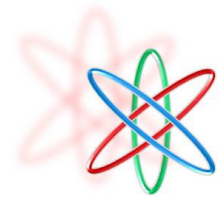


Table: Current BBC network production in the Midlands

A quick analysis of current annual network programme production in the Midlands.

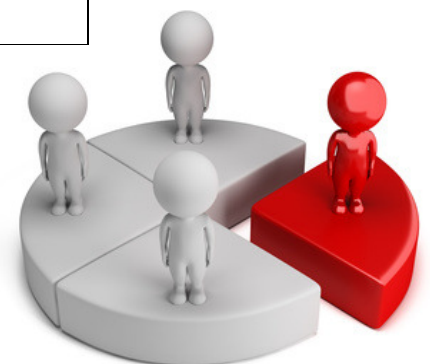
Radio:

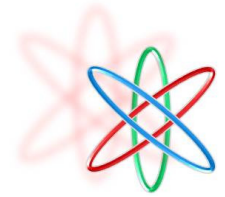
Radio 1 / Radio 1 Xtra	0%
Radio 2	0%
Radio 3	0%
Radio 4 / Radio 4 Extra	<i>The Archers</i> (drama) - 64 hours per annum <i>Home Front</i> (drama) - 26 hours per annum With repeats, approx. 2.7% of Radio 4 annual broadcast hours
Radio 5	0%
Radio 6 Music	0%
Asian Network	Estimated 30% or less (and decreasing)

Television:

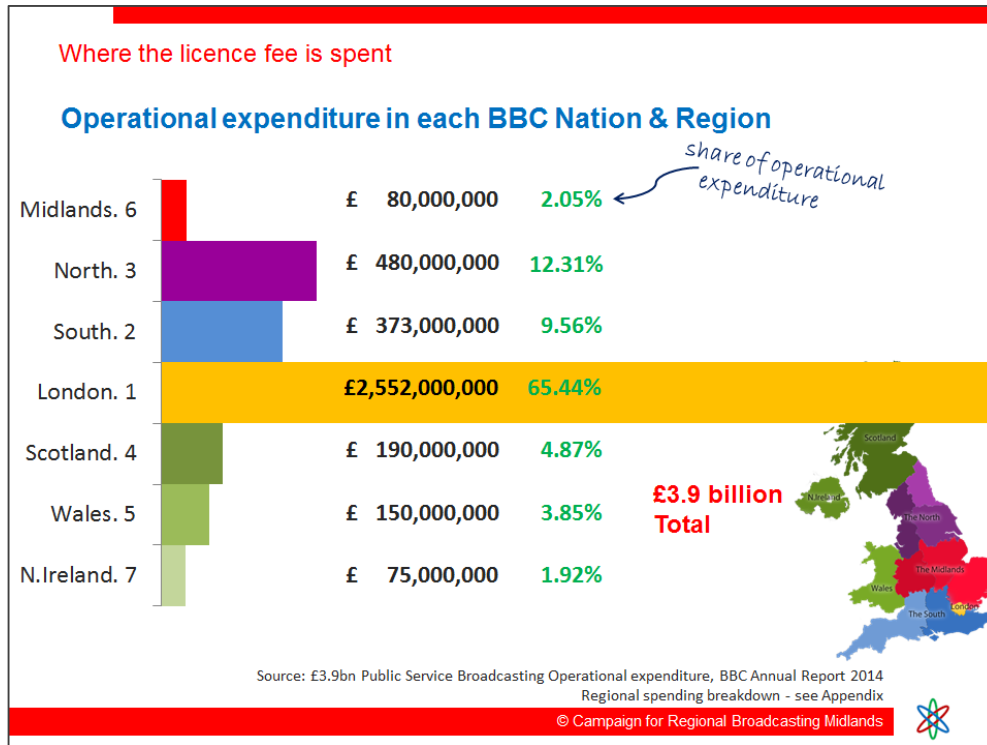
BBC1 daytime	Daytime drama - 130 hours approx. 5.5% of BBC1 daytime hours
BBC1 peak-time	0%
BBC2	0%
BBC3	0%
BBC4	0%
BBC News channel	0%
CBeebies and CBBC	0%

With 25% of licence fee payers, we believe that a similar proportion of non-news broadcast hours should be produced in the region.

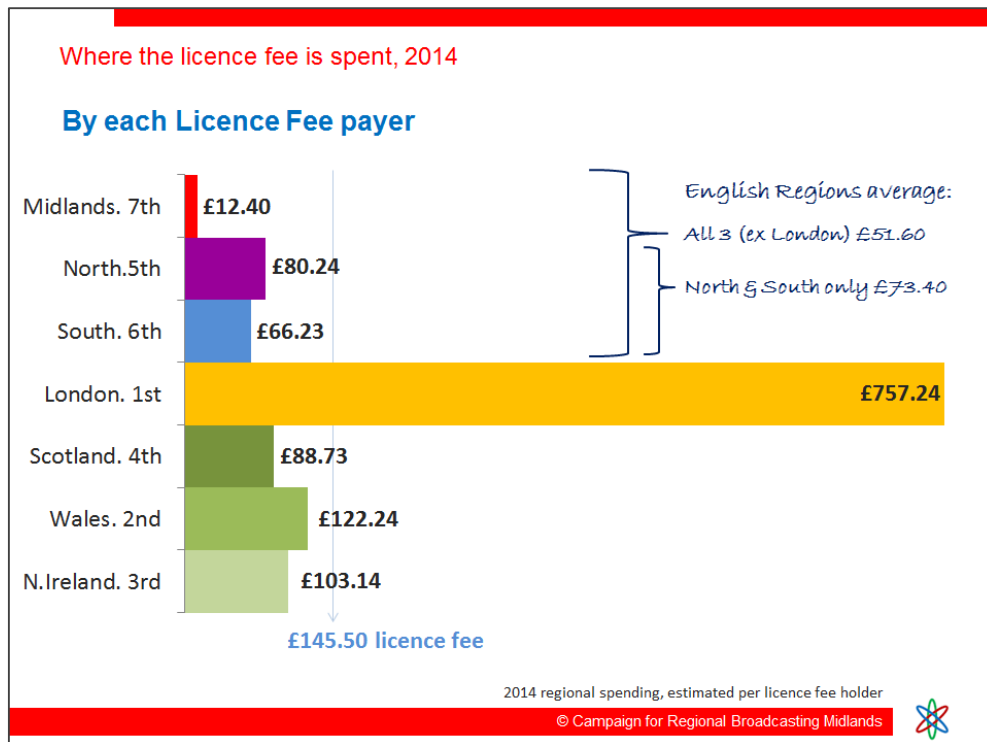


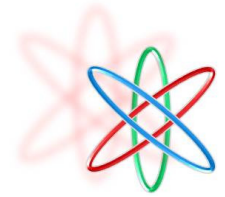


Graph 3: BBC Nations & Regions, by operational expenditure



Graph 4: BBC Nations & Regions, operational expenditure by licence fee payer





Ideas: Production

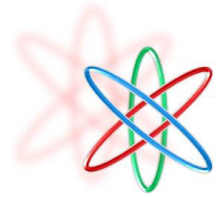
There are many ways that the BBC could better represent the Midlands and its largest group of licence fee payers. At the same time, it can capitalise on the region's location (at the centre of the UK's population and the country's transport infrastructure). We are brimming with ideas that present win / win situations for the region and the BBC itself.

Our ideas can be summed up with: **Production; Production; Production**

- If spending were to increase to **£473 million per annum** (from the current £80 million) – the Midlands would be brought into line with the other two BBC English regions.
- The BBC could employ **1,000+** staff in the Midlands.
- A **commissioning budget in the Midlands** (commensurate to the £942 million licence fee that is raised in it) could see high profile, peak-time drama produced from the Midlands for the national networks.
- The central location of The Mailbox, coupled with its excellent radio studio facilities would make Birmingham the ideal location for a **Radio Drama Centre of Excellence**.
- Why not base an existing **television network or radio network** in Birmingham?
- **The Asian Network** could be expanded so that it is able to pitch for programming on other BBC networks. Rather than being a niche service, a reinvigorated Asian Network could be far more integrated in the wider BBC. As the region with the highest proportion of people with an Asian background, Birmingham remains the ideal location.
- Birmingham is often cited as having the youngest population of any major city, the natural choice for **BBC3** or a **BBC Youth department**.
- The Midlands is also a natural home for informational and educational strands of programming that include **science, engineering and business**.
- **Arts:** The BBC could create an arts relay division in collaboration with organisations across the region. This could include the relay of festivals, theatre and other arts events.

The Midlands is a hot bed of creativity, full of great ideas. The region is well connected and the ideal meeting place. It is not the north and it is not the south. It is an important, substantial centre of population, commerce, industry and the arts in its own right.





Ideas: What the Midlands can offer the BBC

Just as the BBC can offer more to its licence fee payers in the Midlands, we also believe that the region can offer much in return.

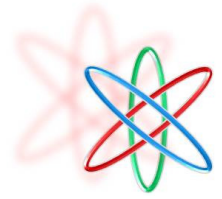
In particular, the Greater Birmingham area - with 3.6 million people living within 20 miles of the city centre - offers the BBC a solid set of credentials. With 114,000 undergraduates and post-graduates it provides one of the most skilled graduate pools in the UK. It has been described as the youngest city in Europe.

Birmingham offers the BBC (and any other business) many strategic advantages that can be summed up as: Location: Location; Location

- Transport into / out of and around the region is easy, thanks to the UK motorway network that converges into the hub at Birmingham. **Travel times are shorter.**
- Most major English and Welsh cities are within a **2 hour drive** from Birmingham. No other English region adjoins as many neighbouring regions as the Midlands.
- Talent, audiences and filming locations in the Region are diverse and **on the door step** or easily accessible.
- Birmingham itself offers a wide range of **filming locations**. Permission to film is easily arranged thanks to Film Birmingham and cheaper than any other city.
- **Local performing talent:** There are more than 3,000 Equity members resident in the West Midlands area, including actors, directors and dancers and a further 2,000 in the East Midlands. This includes a large contingent in the Stratford-on-Avon area, due to the close proximity of the RSC.
- The Drama Village at Selly Oak has proved itself to be very possibly **the most efficient producer of television drama** in the country. It should be given the opportunity (and the budget) to produce high quality Midlands based drama for peak-time schedules.
- Birmingham boasts the UK's most **prestigious playwriting** course at Birmingham University, (founded by internationally renowned playwright David Edgar) and one of the top drama schools.
- The Birmingham Ormiston Academy for performing arts nurtures the talent of 14 - 19 year olds and provides a rich seam of **young creative talent**.

All of this is in addition to the established arts and cultural organisations that flourish in the Midlands such as: City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; Birmingham Opera; Birmingham Royal Ballet; Birmingham Conservatoire to name just a few. We believe the BBC should be firmly established on this list, at the centre of everything.





Ideas: Our members' suggestions

We asked our members to speak directly to the BBC, to share their ideas that might help the Corporation to re-establish itself in its largest region. Here are some of their suggestions: some may be off the wall, some may be spot on, and all are worthy of consideration.

This is what our members said...

Facilities

We note that of the seven BBC Nations & Regions, that the Midlands is the only one in which there are no BBC network television studios for Drama, Features or Entertainment. We would urge an investment in facilities, as the region is at a distinct disadvantage in this respect. We appreciate under-used studios are expensive, useless, empty spaces. However, as the BBC has no such existing facility in the *centre* of the United Kingdom, we think an investment in a network standard studio would be highly efficient. It would bring a rich selection of career opportunities in craft and production, and would help to put the region back into the BBC programme schedules.

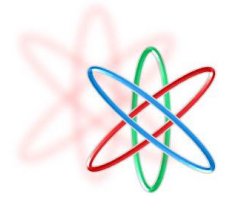
Regional Commissioning

Expenditure on facilities must be linked to a firm commitment to regional commissioning. This would benefit all nations & regions and not just the Midlands. We do not believe that the whole of the United Kingdom is best served if programme commissioning is from London only, or simply by moving programme production from one centre to another to fulfil a regional quota. We note that many of the BBC's current ratings winners are long standing programmes that were originally commissioned in the regions. This is also true for ITV. There is creativity and talent in the regions and the best way to discover it, is for the BBC to be out here, amongst it.

Devolution to the regions

A constant theme that arises is the perceived centralisation of the BBC – that decision making is London based. Virtually all national BBC television and radio networks, heads of departments, commissioners and the majority of senior managers are based there. Whilst there has been some expansion in the regions (except the Midlands), the core structure of the BBC has not changed, if anything, it seems to be more centralised than it was many years ago. What if the BBC was to be decentralised into regional units? What if the licence fee was distributed from the regions to the centre rather the other way around? What if the regions were to commission and produce their own local programmes? Likewise, what if the regions were to commission and produce programmes in their region and offer these to the centre?

A complete reversal in the traffic of ideas, commissioning and spending.



Radio Drama Centre of Excellence

With *The Archers* and *Home Front* being made in the city, Birmingham has an extraordinary history and future in producing radio drama. The Mailbox is also home to what is one of the very best radio drama studios in the world. However, the studio is still used well below capacity and the reputation and experience of the department is wasted. Birmingham could easily become a Centre of Excellence for Radio Drama. The studio is here, the talent is here - and with the RSC only down the road, a world-class pool of performers is also here too.

BBC3 / Digital

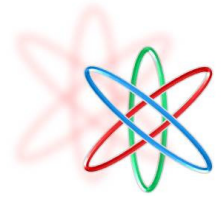
With 40% of its population under the age of 25 and 40% of non-white heritage, Birmingham is one of the youngest and most diverse cities in Europe. With the decision to make BBC3 online only and the creation of the BBC's new digital innovations unit (the 'Guerrilla Group') in Digbeth, Birmingham is well placed to be home to the new face of youth content. In addition the BBC's Drama Village has earned a reputation for producing extremely cost-effective, fleet-of-foot programming. Not only this, but Birmingham's colleges and universities are churning out talented graduates who are ready to offer the BBC their energy, enthusiasm and fresh ideas. These are exactly the young people that the BBC must remain relevant to, to justify the licence fee.

Classical Music

Birmingham's heritage in Classical music is second to none. From 1834 to 1912 the Town Hall hosted the Triennial Music Festival for which Sir Edward Elgar (Professor of Music at The University of Birmingham) composed 'The Dream of Gerontius' in 1900. Later in the twentieth century Sir Simon Rattle made the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra famous and its home, Symphony Hall, is widely regarded as one of the best concert venues in the world. Meanwhile Birmingham Conservatoire continues to train some of country's finest young musicians, as does the University of Birmingham, and the Birmingham Opera Company produces extraordinary promenade performances under the direction of internationally renowned Graham Vick CBE. With smaller ensembles like Ex Cathedra and BCMG going from strength-to-strength, Birmingham isn't about to lose its reputation for great Classical music anytime soon. The BBC could capitalise on this by producing some of its Classical content (particularly Radio 3) in the city.

BBC Youth Department: For the future Licence holder

A youth television department to be created in Birmingham - the youngest city in Europe. In addition, develop partnerships with educational institutions to produce a science strand for children and young people. This demographic is probably the most difficult to engage with, not least because of rapid adoption of other, on-line delivery options. However, they represent the future of the BBC in more ways than one.



Live Broadcast

The broadcast of live performance is becoming increasingly popular with shows frequently competing with Hollywood blockbusters in the weekly box office. We think the BBC (particularly now that Arts and Culture have been given a stronger remit) could capitalise on this trend, and that Birmingham, being at the centre of the country, could be home to a live broadcast unit so that these performances weren't so London-centric. Not only are there great theatre, dance and music happening outside the capital, much of is happening in the Midlands. With three stages the historic Birmingham REP produces some of the best theatre in the UK, while the Birmingham Hippodrome hosts the Birmingham International Dance Festival as well as being home to Birmingham Royal Ballet. There are also exciting festivals throughout the year: the Birmingham Comedy Festival, the Flatpack Film Festival, the Birmingham Literature Festival, the Supersonic music festival, the Handsworth Carnival, the Moseley Folk Festival, the Mostly Jazz, Funk and Soul Festival...

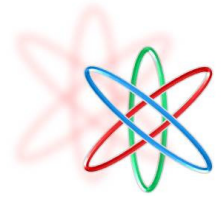
Science and Learning

Ever since industrialists, naturalists and philosophers started meeting at the Lunar Society in 1765, Birmingham has been at the forefront of science and technology. With five universities in the city (as well as Warwick and Coventry universities nearby) Birmingham is still a leader in research and innovation. Not only this but the Library of Birmingham, the Thinktank Science Museum and the beautiful University of Birmingham campus offer specular venues for learning. In fact the BBC's Drama Village is based at the university's Selly Oak campus and Thinktank is just next-door to Birmingham City University's brand new studio complex. Meanwhile 'Embarrassing Bodies' is already made at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (one the UK's largest teaching hospitals) and many of the country's most advanced technology and engineering companies are based in the city and region. The facilities, stories and expertise are therefore all present for the production of great science and educational content.

The BBC Archive

The problems of archiving programmes from across the BBC and the servicing of the new digital archive of programmes, is something that would be solved by one unit in the Midlands. Geographically it would be closer to the other broadcast centres. Closer to Bristol, Plymouth, Cardiff, Manchester and Glasgow than London. Land and storage space is cheaper so the delivery to and storage of Master Materials would be less expensive than London.

The British Film Institute (BFI) has moved its National Archive to the Midlands (at Gaydon). If the BBC were to do the same and enter into programme making, restoration and storage joint ventures there may be savings for both national bodies.



Lifestyle Programming

Birmingham is famous for inventing the Balti and the area of its conception, known as the 'Balti Triangle', is visited by thousands of diners a year. Birmingham is also famous for having more Michelin starred restaurants than any city outside London, the produce for which often coming from the historic Bullring Markets. Meanwhile Moseley Farmers' Market has twice been awarded UK Farmers' Market of the year (Moseley, an inner city suburb, has also won gold six years in a row for Best Urban Community by Heart of England in Bloom), the up-and-coming Brum Yum Yum Streetfood festival is gathering a following and artisan producers are popping up all over the city. Birmingham is truly a culinary capital, offering a diverse range of cuisines, expertise and personalities that BBC lifestyle programming could benefit from.

Away from the dining table, the Jewellery Quarter still produces one third of all the jewellery made in the UK and is home to many designers, both traditional and contemporary. Over in Digbeth there are a myriad of artists, clothes-makers and designers working in the Custard Factory and surrounding environs (spearheaded by the IKON gallery, the city's reputation in the visual arts is booming). Birmingham is still a 'city of a thousand trades' and the BBC could help discover more of them for the nation.

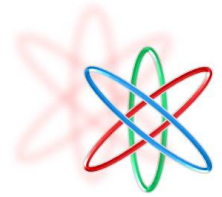
BBC Local Radio Xtra

A nationwide online extension of every BBC local radio station, using automated delivery to stream local music content sourced primarily from BBC Introducing. Scheduling software makes programme generation very cheap, but this output calls for excellent, locally focussed, editorial judgement. It would expand the 'offer' of each station. Output would be configured for Smartphone and tablet delivery, leveraging existing online delivery projects at the Mailbox and through the mooted Production Research Centre.

BBC Local Radio Documentary Units

BBCLR staff members are intimately involved in their communities, and this proposal exploits this. An emphasis on live production can mean brilliant ideas that arise during the everyday business of the station are not followed up. This idea corrects this, cost-effectively. Adding a documentary unit to each cluster lets stations second staff to work with the unit, broadening experience and enhancing career potential.

Initially based at larger BBCLR stations, these units would produce documentary content for their BBCLR clusters. The brief for units would be to produce a one hour documentary a week, reflecting local issues and cultures, drawing on existing output where appropriate. The pick of this output could be shared across the wider BBCLR network, feeding into the week-night evening show, or receive further exposure on 5Live or 4 Extra.



BBC Worldwide

The international distribution of television programmes does not have to be in West London and indeed less expensive office space is available in the Midlands. After the much celebrated closure of BBC Television Centre on Wood Lane we understand that BBC Worldwide will be moving back into BBC Television Centre in 2015/16 together with certain Entertainment production staff. If the BBC were to move its Worldwide programme sales activity to the Midlands it would be an impetus to local authorities to start a TV Market, perhaps at Birmingham's NEC or ICC to challenge MIP and MIPCOM and the associated markets currently taking place in the South of France.

Such an initiative, alongside a Digital Programme Distribution strategy would bring new jobs and opportunities to the wider Midlands community and save money.

Radio Drama Training and Development

Much has already been said of the potential of the Mailbox Drama studio facility. This is a unique facility and it should be fully exploited. It could be used as a training centre, working with external institutions and arts bodies. In collaboration with the Academy and the Writers' Room it could produce strands of experimental work featuring new writers for network output, and audio content for the Enhanced Audio project (see below).

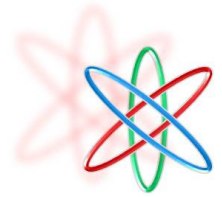
Central to the proposal is the establishment of a Birmingham Drama unit which will explore and commission new writing, link with theatre companies across the country to explore audio treatments of current live drama.

The BBC also has the rights and scripts for thousands of hours of classic radio drama. Today's technology allows us to revisit these drama ideas in new ways. So, for example, Radio 4 Extra could run a strand from a dedicated production unit based at the Mailbox.

Radio 4 Extra

The Mailbox, equipped as it is with the best Drama studio in Europe, could house a substantial part, if not all, of Radio 4 Extra's output and production and management teams. The BBC is committed to devolving production to the regions. 5 live is installed in Salford, along with a large part of 6 Music. The facilities and administrative accommodation available for a drama network makes the Mailbox particularly suitable, most especially as this option would embrace the proposal for the Radio Drama Centre of excellence and build on it.

The total cost of this network has been static for the past two financial years, staying at £8.2m. It is reasonable to assume that the overall running costs will stay approximately the same, with cost savings achieved by sharing Drama Centre of Excellence output, making further good use of the drama studio, thus amortising relocation costs.



Production Research centre

We are well into the 21st century. Technology gives us a unique chance to approach the concepts of radio drama in new ways. Nothing should be ruled out, nor should existing drama be built simply for televisual or video distribution. New styles of radio should not be built for conventional outlets.

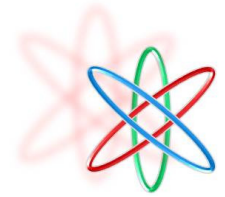
This centre would develop new production techniques, to deliver content for multi-platform distribution. The concept of enhanced audio is already in place at radio with iPlayer and commercial radio, consumed on smart phones and tablets. It is, however, very limited, and there are huge steps to be taken with the new technology. This department would have as its core brief, working with the existing BBC News delivery team, to develop and test new methodology.

The Asian Network

To be expanded and made more relevant to this niche group of licence fee payers. It should be based in the region with the highest proportion of people with an Asian background and from Birmingham - the youngest city in Europe. Expansion could include television production. The unit could become a production unit for a wide range of programming, aimed at the mainstream audience as well as its core audience.

Talent

There are 80 members of the Writers' Guild here, representing some of Britain's finest talent such as David Edgar, David Lodge and David Rudkin as well as new names like Claire Downes and Stuart Lane. Alongside writers, actors, comedians and dancers are BECTU members like directors, makeup artists, camera operators, carpenters and electricians. The Midlands is a hotbed of creative talent, and, with one of the youngest and most diverse populations in the UK, contributes hugely to the country's cultural and artistic agenda. This should be reflected in BBC output.



Appendix: The BBC and its proud history in the Midlands

Throughout most of its history, the BBC has had a much stronger presence in the Midlands than it does today. The first regional radio station, the first regional television transmitter and the first purpose built regional television studios were all opened here, by the BBC. There is a rich history of original, innovative and rating-pulling programme making in the Midlands.

The Archers commissioned way back in 1950 by the regional BBC Midlands radio service, pulls in 5 million listeners every week for Radio 4 (and occupies acres of newsprint).

Top Gear was originally commissioned as a local programme in the BBC Midlands region in the 1970's – it is now the highest earning programme brand for BBC Worldwide.

These are just two of a long list of quality programmes that were established by or for the BBC in the region, but ironically, they could not happen here currently: there are neither the commissioners nor the budgets to do so. Until the late 1990's the BBC Midlands region contributed just as many hours of television and radio to the national networks as the north of England and more than the south (except London). In recent years, this has collapsed, and without the foundation of the BBC so has the commercial and independent sector in the region.

Since 1999, there has been a gradual and continual reduction of expenditure and a major contraction of broadcast facilities and staff. Now, there are no BBC television studios and a suite of highly specified network radio studios that remain largely unused. The number of staff employed directly in Birmingham has reduced from a peak of well over 1,000 to less than 300.

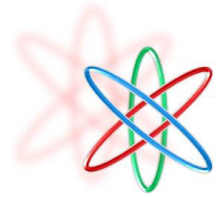
The entire Midlands region employs just 4% of all BBC employees, despite being home to just over 25% of licence fee payers.

The net result of expenditure cutbacks, year in year out, for the last 15 years is that the Midlands is not to be seen or heard on the BBC networks during peak-time.

Since the appointment of Lord Hall, as Director General, we perceive some change in direction. Previously, we felt that the BBC ignored the numerous complaints that were being made by licence fee payers about spending or production in the region. In 2014, Tommy Nagra returned to Birmingham to take up the newly created post of Head of Business Development (our members who have met him have been impressed by his personal commitment to the region), although he will leave this post shortly. It was also announced that a major part of the BBC Academy would move into the vacant space at the BBC Mailbox office, bringing with it, up to 200 jobs.

We are genuinely excited by recent developments and hope they signal many more investments in the region, not least in television & radio production and facilities. There is still much more that can be done.





Appendix: BBC Midlands Case Studies

These case studies demonstrate how the BBC has benefited from talent nurtured in the Midlands:

The Archers

The 'everyday story of country folk' was created in 1951 by BBC English Midlands producer Godfrey Baseley. Since then it has gone on to become a national institution and attracts 5 million listeners a week and is the BBC's most popular podcast with 2.2 million downloads a month. Having been the hub of a thriving radio drama department, by 2013 *The Archers* was the only programme being made in Birmingham. In 2014, and after heavy lobbying, the new WWI radio drama *Home Front* began production in the city. This will continue until 2018. Even so, the state of the art, multi-million pound studio is unused for two thirds of the year.

Top Gear

The hugely popular motoring programme began at the BBC's Pebble Mill studios in 1977. It ran until it was axed in 2001 only to be re-launched in its current format in 2002, but this time produced from London. In the interim some of the Birmingham team created *Fifth Gear* for Channel 5. The show was made by Chrysalis from their Birmingham office until the company was bought by All3Media and production was moved away. The show is now broadcast on Discovery. Meanwhile *Top Gear* has gone on to become one of the BBC's biggest international exports.

Country File

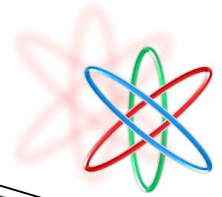
The rural magazine show is broadcast 52 weeks of the year on BBC1. It is regularly the most watched factual programme on any channel. From 1988 to 2012 it was made in Birmingham when all factual network programming was moved to Bristol. No plan was put in place to replace the jobs and although the BBC has since agreed to move some training, development and administrative jobs to Birmingham no promises have been made to reverse the decline in production. This is in stark contrast to the increases seen in Salford, Glasgow, Cardiff and Bristol.

Citizen Khan

The prime-time BBC1 sit-com is now in its third series. It is set in the Sparkhill area of Birmingham and is written by and stars Adil Ray who grew up nearby. However the show is actually recorded in Salford and pulls in 3 million viewers (despite being placed against ITV's *Coronation Street*). Adil Ray joined the BBC's Asian Network in 2002, which moved to its base at the Mailbox studios shortly afterwards. In 2011 the Asian Network budget was cut by 46%. Some production was moved to London and the team that remains in Birmingham is only a shadow of its former self.

Peaky Blinders

The big budget BBC2 crime drama was created by Oscar-nominated writer Steven Knight. It is inspired by the family stories he heard while growing up in the West Midlands. Steven began his career writing for fellow Brummie, Jasper Carrott on BBC shows such as *Canned Carrott* and *The Detectives*. Although the BBC has used *Peaky Blinders* to demonstrate it is not neglecting the Midlands, the show is mainly filmed in Liverpool, Leeds and Manchester.



Appendix: Sources of data

Sources of data for this research include:

- The Office of National Statistics, mid-year 2013 population estimates
- The BBC Annual Report 2014
- BBC Trust licence fee data

BBC spending figures by region are provided in:

'The Economic Impact of the BBC 2008/2009' published by Deloitte LLP, 2010

'The Economic Value of the BBC 2011/2012' published by BBC, 2012

'Driving efficiency at the BBC' published by BBC, November 2014

Midlands and South regional PSB spend for 2014 is estimated by using the figures declared in *'The Economic Value of the BBC 2011/2012'*. We have transferred £20 million from the Midlands to the South region to account for the move of Factual Unit & network radio – from Birmingham (2012). No other spending deductions have been made to our Midlands estimate, and no other additions to the South.

London operational expenditure of £2.552 billion is calculated as the net amount after deducting all other Nations and Regions from the total PSB spend provided in the BBC Annual Report 2014.

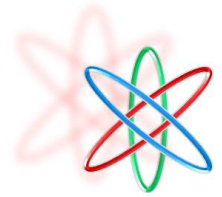
We have made no other adjustments to published BBC regional spending figures. Spending share by region or licence fee payer are straight-forward calculations using the listed data sources.

Further information and analysis of BBC regional spending is available in *'Your Licence Fee in Close Up'* published by this Campaign, February 2015, available at our website.



“The BBC experience of Birmingham has proved that it was artistically advantageous for one of the main stations in the broadcasting system to be situated in the heart of the industrial Midlands. From among the workers in gold and silver and precious stones and iron and steel and coal has been drawn material with which programmes of an exacting standard have been constructed – programmes sought and appreciated all over the country.”

BBC Handbook, 1928.



Rectangular Slap

50%



Let's go halves!

We are not looking for subsidies.

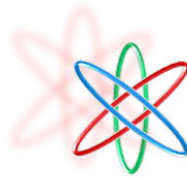
**A fair 50% MINIMUM share of our own licence fee,
to be spent on programme making in the Midlands,
is not a lot to ask.**

*Devolve
BBC spending!*

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