

BBC Northern Ireland
Management Review
2013/14



Sons and Daughters

BBC Northern Ireland will work to further develop the range and appeal of its local and network content – meeting the needs of our local and UK-wide audiences



If you wish to find out more about the BBC's year – including full financial statements and performance against other public commitments – then please visit www.bbc.co.uk/annual-report

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Front cover
Sons and Daughters Gala Concert

National Director introduction

“We want to continue to deliver more public value by creating great content, encouraging innovation and developing our partnerships and staff.”



As the BBC approaches its 90th anniversary, of local broadcasting in Northern Ireland, we can reflect on a busy and productive year during which our programmes and services enjoyed broad appeal, critical acclaim and some of the highest levels of audience approval.

In many ways, it was a remarkable year with lots of memorable events and programmes. A stand-out moment was the *Sons and Daughters* opening concert of Derry~Londonderry, UK City of Culture with magical performances from Derry's world-class talent led by Phil Coulter. It was an honour to be such a big and central part of it.

We and BBC Radio Foyle in particular were at the heart of the cultural programme, bringing spectacle and excitement to audiences throughout Northern Ireland and to the rest of the UK producing more than 50 projects on television, radio and online with some great partnership working along the way.

Among the highlights, the Radio One *Big Weekend*, *Music City Day*, the all-Ireland Fleadh and *Pure Culture* on BBC Radio Foyle dedicated to City of Culture content. A BBC Radio 4 *Reith Lecture* from artist Grayson Perry came from The Guildhall and our closing concert 'A Year in a Night' attended by BBC Director General, Tony Hall was broadcast live from St Columb's Hall.

This activity showcased the range and impact of what the BBC can achieve in serving audiences and our important role in supporting new talent and ideas.

In addition to UK City of Culture, other significant programming included *Proms in the Park*, the G8 Summit, President Obama's and other world leaders' visit to Fermanagh and the World Police and Fire Games. We launched the first returning network TV drama series set in Northern Ireland, *The Fall*; a new contemporary television strand, *True North*; and marked *Spotlight's* 40th anniversary with a special programme and Investigative Journalism conference.

This year, we also increased the volume and value of locally produced programmes for BBC network television. We want to achieve more in this area; bringing real benefits for BBC audiences and the wider economy in Northern Ireland.

All this activity is prioritised against a background of ongoing financial challenges and rapid development in new technology.

As the next BBC charter approaches, our strategy will involve continuing to focus on audience value and to do that, we want to secure the future of local content and services on digital platforms; making our programmes more widely available; extend the range and appeal of what we do and ultimately the approval of our licence-fee payers.

We want to ensure our staff and suppliers can give their creative best and to develop and extend our existing partnership arrangements to make the licence-fee investment in Northern Ireland work even harder for the benefit of the BBC, the wider creative sector and our local audiences.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Peter Johnston
Director, BBC Northern Ireland

Two minute summary

BBC Northern Ireland aims to provide something of value for everyone in the community through a broad range of programmes and services which inform and stimulate debate, celebrate and support cultural and sporting life, and reflect local interests and experiences for audiences within Northern Ireland and across the UK.

Hours of local television output by genre in 2013/2014

These totals describe local programming on BBC NI television during 2013/14; 86 hours of this output (with a value of £5.46m Gross and £5.35m Net) was commissioned from the local independent sector.

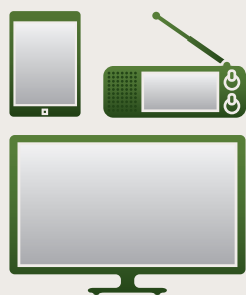
Genre	Hours of programming produced
Comedy, Entertainment and Music	34
News and Weather	391
Current Affairs	30
Sport	70
Factual and Factual Entertainment	72
Drama	4.6
Children's and Education	17

Hours of BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle output by genre in 2013/2014

These totals describe the volume and type of programming provided by BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle. Much of this output involves listener interaction. Continuous output in this categorisation includes specialist music and other strands.

Genre	Hours of programming produced
Continuous output	4826
News and Weather	3541
Sport	513.1

City of culture



50

Individual BBC projects across television, radio and online

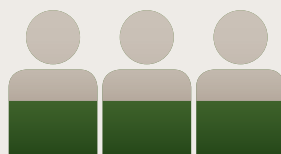
Spotlight



40

Years on air for BBC NI flagship current affairs programme

Audience – *The Fall*



4.308m

Average audience for the BBC Two network drama made by BBC Northern Ireland

Appreciation – *Groundbreakers*



91

Appreciation index for the series of four documentaries looking at the lives of four key historical Ulster figures

Two minute summary

Approval for the BBC in Northern Ireland (mean score out of 10)



Average weekly reach of BBC NI television (% of the population)

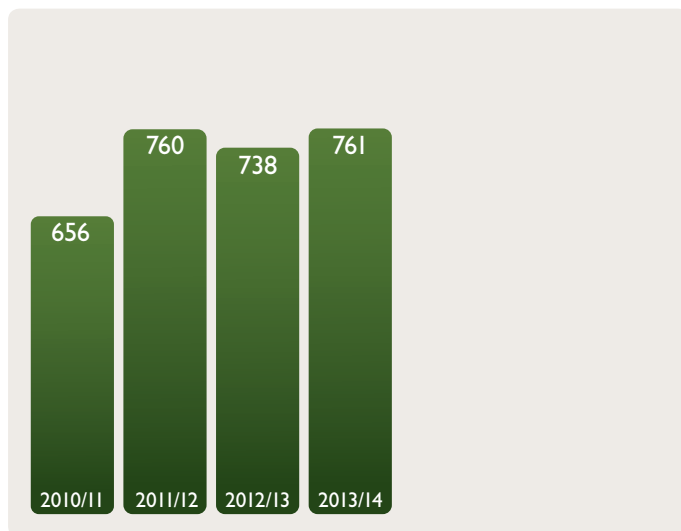


Average weekly adult reach of Radio Ulster/Foyle (000s)



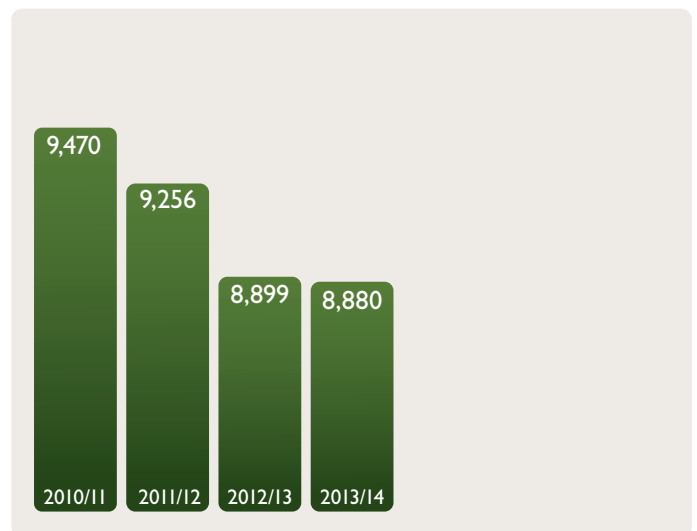
Local BBC television output totals (Hours)

These totals describe the hours of BBCNI television programming for local audiences. The volume and profile of our output is aligned against relevant Service Licence and SoPPs commitments and the BBC's Public Purposes. These totals can fluctuate over time as a result of the cost/type of programme being commissioned, the timetabling of programme deliveries, etc.



BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle output totals (Hours)

These totals describe the hours of programming on BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle. The volume, profile and content of our output are aligned against the station's Service Licence and the BBC's Public Purposes. These totals can fluctuate over time as a result of cost/type of programme being commissioned, the timetabling of programme deliveries etc. The reduction in hours was due to the station closing transmission at midnight during the previous review period.



Service performance

Television, radio and online – bringing the stories of local people to audiences at home and across the UK.

BBC Northern Ireland Television

A deep connection with the needs of local audiences is the basis on which BBC Northern Ireland has developed its television programme strategy. It is a rolling calendar of programme making, recording and reflecting key moments and events in a society that is always changing.

Audiences demand quality content from the BBC and have high expectations of our mix of programme styles and approaches. Impartiality, integrity and authenticity are defining features of our television output and are the basis on which its success has been built. Our output provides a trusted source of news and information and a showcase for local stories, talent and creativity.

Northern Ireland audiences have a strong appetite for news and current affairs. The news gathering capability of BBC *Newsline* and investigative strength of *Spotlight* provide debate, analysis and exploration of issues affecting the whole community and the important stories of the day.

Within a highly competitive news environment, BBC *Newsline's* combined bulletins reach on average 55% of the population. From across Northern Ireland, our correspondents and district reporters used their specialist skills and local knowledge to deliver stories on health, education, security, policing, justice, business and the economy interpreting a rapidly changing news agenda and following, all the major political, community and civic stories of the year.

Reports ranged from coverage of Derry~Londonderry, UK City of Culture's year long programme to the biggest security operation ever mounted locally for the G8 summit, President Obama's visit to Belfast, the Haas talks, the World Police and Fire Games and tributes to Seamus Heaney. And we also looked at the continuing effects of the Troubles on individuals and communities.

Special investigations looked into a rural child sex abuse case involving a family of brothers and dozens of children and an exclusive report on the barbaric 'sport' of cockfighting. Our weather presenters gave interpretation of some of the severest winter conditions to hit our shores with reporters and TV crews broadcasting dramatic images live from some of the worst affected areas.

Spotlight conducted a major investigation into claims of political interference in the running of the Housing Executive, which won the current affairs category at the Celtic Media Festival, and reached its 40th anniversary. The programme's track record in ground breaking journalism was reflected in a special edition, *Spotlight at 40*. Archive-based and presented by Declan Lawn, it looked back at some of its most significant investigations with contributions from Jeremy Paxman, Gavin Esler and Alex Thomson.

Donna Traynor presents BBC *Newsline*



Declan Lawn among the archives as *Spotlight* reaches 40



Service performance

The milestone was also marked by a special Investigative Journalism Conference on why investigative journalism matters. Media commentator Steve Hewlett and RTE's Miriam O'Callaghan hosted the one day event in BBC Blackstaff Studio A. Contributors included Sue-Lloyd Roberts, Heather Brooke, Michael Crick, John Sweeney, Stacey Dooley, Roger Bolton, John Ware, Darragh MacIntyre, Susan O'Keefe and Professor George Brock.

Other *Spotlight* investigations included the controversy surrounding 'On the Runs', revelations about a Belfast Accident and Emergency department and an exclusive interview with former property developer, Tom McFeely.

The Nolan Show returned to our screens to probe the issues that matter, the stories of the week and the people who make the headlines. The programme ranged widely reflecting on the concerns of the elderly, serious problems in the health service and abortion law in Northern Ireland.

Describing, explaining and analysing the work of the Assembly and Executive remains a central part of our work. *The View* completed its first year reviewing the week's political events from Stormont and Westminster and was complemented by *Stormont Today*, *Sunday Politics*, *Inside Politics* and our online service, *Democracy Live*.

Sporting fixtures and achievements remained popular across our output. BBC Sport Northern Ireland was the host broadcaster for the final of the RaboDirect Pro 12 rugby tournament. The game, between Leinster and Ulster, was played in Dublin and shown live by BBC Northern Ireland and five other broadcasters across Scotland, Wales and Italy. Monthly analysis of our top 20 programmes confirms rugby's popularity with our local audiences with *Ulster Rugby Live* as the most watched programme on BBC Two NI.



There was also comprehensive coverage of Gaelic Games across radio and television. All eight matches in the Ulster Championship were broadcast live on BBC Radio Ulster, with seven shown live on BBC Two NI, and one other fixture shown later, in full. All games involving Ulster Counties in the All-Ireland stages of the Championship were also broadcast live on BBC Two NI and BBC Radio Ulster, as Tyrone made it to the All-Ireland semi-final.

We delivered domestic soccer, popular highlights programming around international soccer and international motorcycle road racing events including the North West 200. Our sports news reporters continued to follow the success of our local golfers at home and abroad, broke exclusive news of the Irish Open coming to Royal County Down, and led the way with investigative features including the controversial sale of the Belfast Giant's Ice Hockey team.

The 40-year career of veteran broadcaster Jackie Fullerton was captured in a special programme, *Jackie's Golden Moments*.

The Stephen Nolan Show



Stephen Watson at Ravenhill Stadium, the home of Ulster Rugby



Service performance

Derry~Londonderry, UK City of Culture opened with style and celebration in a spectacular *Sons and Daughters* gala concert with some of the city's world class talent coming home to give magical performances led by Phil Coulter. The year-long programme of events attracted large and appreciative audiences.

BBC Radio Foyle played a lead role in assisting BBC Northern Ireland with its partners to produce over 50 supporting programmes and events. This investment showcased the history, heritage and energy of life in the North West to regional and UK-wide audiences and contributed to a significant cultural and creative legacy by providing a platform for new and emerging talent.

Locally and nationally, we were present on television, radio and online throughout to capture some truly amazing broadcasting moments in a rich portfolio of documentaries and series including, *Pure Culture*, a daily weekday show on BBC Radio Foyle dedicated to City of Culture content. Programmes, among a broad range of commissions, included a landmark history programme, Carlo Gebler's *The Siege*.

The Radio One *Big Weekend* attracted 35,000 young music fans with an estimated 6 million tuning in on Radio 1 and 1Xtra, 2.3 Million on BBC Three and 1 million live on the Red Button. We also had *Music City Day* from dawn to dusk and captured the music and craic from the all-Ireland Fleadh in news coverage and English and Irish language TV documentary programmes.

BBC Director General, Tony Hall attended the finale concert, *A Year In A Night* in a live broadcast from St Columb's Hall which reviewed City of Culture standout moments with performances from Soak; the Clameens and members of the Music Promise Programme and other special guests under the award-winning direction of Frank Gallagher.

Other large-scale television events throughout the year included *Proms in the Park* from the Titanic Slipways with special guest, soprano Katherine Jenkins and the *St Patrick's Day* concert from the Waterfront Hall produced by BBC NI and featuring the Ulster Orchestra.

Our relationship with a range of local organisations including the BBC's Writer in Residence at Queen's, CSV media training programme and the National Museums of NI who host the BBC archive at Cultra and the Ulster Orchestra, helps to extend the reach and impact of what we do.

We want to do more in this area and have a developing relationship with Libraries NI. It hosted BBC outreach events in Ballyclare, Omagh, Larne, Lisburn, and Ballymena during which members of the public could find out more about the work of the BBC.

Once again, audiences in Northern Ireland contributed generously to the BBC's *Children In Need* appeal, raising £818,070. 150 children from four local schools joined 2,000 others across the UK to perform Gary Barlow's 'Sing' live to the nation.

BBC Northern Ireland featured programmes around significant historic events including *Dive World War Two – Our Secret History*. This two-part series presented by Jules Hudson followed a dive team in search of the forgotten shipwrecks of the Battle of the Atlantic on the sea bed off the coast of Northern Ireland.

We are also supplying content to the epic four-year, BBC-wide *World War One* season and have commissioned a number of projects, including *Ireland's Great War* and *The Man Who Shot the Great War* which explore aspects of Ireland's involvement in WWI.

BBC Radio 1's *Big Weekend*, part of Derry~Londonderry UK City of Culture



Service performance

BBC Northern Ireland is also participating in one of the most ambitious, large scale BBC Nations and Regions initiatives, *World War One at Home*, which on television, radio and on-line is giving a permanent home to some 1,400 surprising local stories from familiar places across the whole UK and Ireland.

The legacy of our more recent past was explored in a number of important documentaries, which generated significant political, press and public interest and debate.

The Disappeared, directed by award-winning film maker Alison Millar and presented by Darragh MacIntyre told the story of those killed and secretly buried by the IRA and the effects of what happened on their relatives. In addition to BBC One NI, the programme was also broadcast on BBC Four and RTÉ attracting a combined UK and Irish audience of around 1 million. Critically acclaimed, it won Best Documentary at the 2014 Irish Film and Television Awards (IFTA's).

Paisley: Genesis to Revelation, two exclusive and historically important programmes from veteran journalist and broadcaster, Eamonn Mallie captured Ian Paisley's memoirs in a series of lengthy interviews. The two programmes had a combined audience reach of 330,000, almost one quarter of the Northern Ireland adult population. The second programme achieved an average audience of 280,000 and delivered one of the highest ever recorded shares for a BBC Northern Ireland programme at 51%.

Bright Brand New Day told the story of the Reverend David Latimer's historic address to the Sinn Féin Annual Conference in Belfast 2011 during which he called for a day of 'hope and transformation' and in *The Far Side of Revenge*, a group of local women with politically diverse views and backgrounds joined Teya Sepinuck's pioneering Theatre of Witness.

In Discrimination: They Think It's All Over, Michael McDowell and Tim McGarry took a serious but also entertaining look back at the introduction of equal opportunities legislation in Northern Ireland.

Recording and reflecting contemporary life as it evolves in Northern Ireland is also an important part of our remit. It adds to our programme mix and helps diversify the schedule.

Building upon the success of single documentaries in this area, BBC Northern Ireland commissioned a bespoke new television strand, *True North*. It launched with the *Miraculous Tales of Mickey McGuigan*, a mesmerising and beautifully filmed exploration of cures and miracles.

Other remarkable stories about individuals and community life in the series included, *The Life and Times of Master Hamilton*, *The Wall*, *Run*, *Grandad*, *Run* and *The Last Minyan*, about the disappearing world of Belfast's Jewish Community.

A special preview screening, part of a BBC NI programme of audience engagement initiatives, heralded the arrival of another innovative programme in the form of *Five Fables*, an ambitious re-telling of stories that were written half a millennium ago by the medieval Scots poet, Robert Henryson.

They explored themes familiar to many of us from the tales of Aesop. This series was developed for television by local animation company Flickerpix with the close involvement of Seamus Heaney, who was still working on the project at the time of his death in the summer of 2013. It featured an original music score by Barry Douglas and was narrated by Billy Connolly. All these talents combined with stunning images to create a very special viewing experience.

Darragh MacIntyre presents award-winning programme, *The Disappeared*



Ian Paisley's memoirs are recorded in *Paisley: Genesis to Revelation*



Service performance

Five Fables was supported by the Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund alongside other programmes, including *Stumpy's Brae*, a new drama for BBC NI television, which used Ulster Scots to re-create the soundscape of rural community life.

The Irish Language Broadcast Fund helped support television content ranging from music, drama to sport and history all of which forms an important part of our BBC Two weekday schedule. Content included the return of *Scúip*, Colin Bateman's series set in an Irish Language newspaper office which also aired on TG4. *It's A Blas* followed William Crawley's efforts to learn how to speak the Irish language, which won an Aisling Award and country singing star Daniel O'Donnell hosted a series of concerts from the Town Hall in Newry, Co. Down in *Opry an léir*.

Other high quality, distinctive factual and entertainment programmes were strategically placed into the schedule to cater specifically for the tastes and interests of local audiences. This content 'uniquely of this place' adds value to the performance of the BBC in Northern Ireland.

Watch Over Me, a hard hitting observational documentary series followed staff at the Forum Against Substance Abuse (FASA), Northern Ireland's only community based organisation tackling drugs, alcohol dependency, suicide and self-harm and a new five-part documentary series, *Barristers* gave viewers a unique and unprecedented insight into our legal system.

A six-part series, *Jigs and Wigs* reflected on the world-wide phenomenon of Irish Dancing twenty years after *Riverdance*; and a century after 'Danny Boy' was first published, *Danny Boy: The Ballad That Bewitched the World* uncovered its astonishing past.

The death of Seamus Heaney was marked in a range of different ways, including an evening of programmes co-scheduled with BBC Four. We also marked the death of actor, James 'Jimmy' Ellis made famous for his role in BBC programmes, *Z Cars* and the *Billy Plays* but also an accomplished writer of short stories – some of which had been broadcast on BBC Radio 4.

Celebrating pioneering people from our past, William Crawley examined the legacy of Ulster Scots scientist Lord Kelvin in *The Man Who Shrank the World* while Margaret Mountford retraced the steps of Isabella Tod, one of the most prominent Victorian campaigners of women's rights in *Ulster's Forgotten Radical*.

In comedy, drama, entertainment and the arts, returning series included *Monumental*; the ever popular panel show, the *Blame Game*, *The Arts Show* and local student drama *6 Degrees* and Patrick Kielty hosted a one hour comedy gala *Funny on the Foyle*, with Roy Walker, Tim McGarry, Jake O'Kane and Colin Murphy as part of Derry~Londonderry UK City of Culture.

These genres provide an important development platform for emerging acting and writing talent which is further enabled by our work to improve the portrayal of our region across the BBC's UK-wide networks through increasing the supply of locally-made network television programmes.

We are building a strong portfolio of commissions in drama, factual, entertainment, day-time and current affairs to achieve our 3% target of total network television expenditure by 2016.

The Miraculous Tales of Mickey McGuigan for True North



Barristers gave insight into our legal system



Service performance

Psychological thriller, *The Fall* and police drama, *Line of Duty* for BBC Two network television, both of which were filmed entirely on location in Northern Ireland were re-commissioned for second series and are building a portfolio and reputation for us in the genre of crime drama. *The Fall* was one of BBC Two's top performing dramas in recent years with a total audience reach of 8 million. It picked up three awards, including Best Drama, Best Actor and Best Original Score at the 2014 IFTA's.

The second series of *Line of Duty* achieved a very strong average weekly audience of over 3 million and 12% share, significantly out-performing the slot average. It has been commissioned for a further two series.

Belfast based production teams were also behind the making of 27.5 hours of new day-time television for BBC One. With 20 new episodes and 10 update programmes, *Wanted Down Under* was a major new production for BBC Northern Ireland.

Regularly attracting 2 million viewers, this series, in its eighth run, hooked viewers on watching families making life changing decisions about escaping the vagaries of the UK's weather. for a new life thousands of miles away in Australia or New Zealand.

The series was stripped across the week Monday to Friday and was followed in the morning schedule on BBC One by another locally produced network series *Real Lives Reunited*; a ten part human interest series that puts disaster survivors back in touch with the heroes who saved them.

BBC Northern Ireland's factual and features teams produced more inserts for *The One Show*, *Sunday Morning Live*, *Points of View* with Jeremy Vine, whilst current affairs are now making more than a quarter of the BBC's *Panorama* programmes and specials with reporters Darragh MacIntrye, Mandy McAuley and Declan Lawn making regular network appearances.

Panorama programmes for BBC One included investigations into Amazon, *The Truth Behind the Click*, tax avoidance, cancer; the work of the family courts and stories from Russia and Bangladesh.

Songs of Praise commissioned programmes around calendar events including Derry~Londonderry, UK City of Culture and St Patrick's Day. Both came from The Guildhall, with additional programmes from Belfast and County Fermanagh.

For BBC Two, we produced *Dan Snow's History of the Congo* and *History of Syria for This World*, *The Hidden World of Britain's Immigrants* by Feargal Keane and *The Greatest Knight*, the first biography of medieval knight, William Marshall.

Four one hour programmes, *India: A Dangerous Place to Be A Woman*, *Generation Ceasefire*, *Prostitution* and *Christmas on Benefits* made by BBC Northern Ireland were broadcast on BBC Three.

Local programmes, *Love and Death in City Hall* and Dan Cruickshank's beautifully crafted, *Written in Stone* series about Ulster architecture migrated to BBC Four with *Danny Boy: The Ballad that Bewitched the World* also being screened. The BBC One NI commission, *The Music Promise*, co-commissioned by CBBC and renamed *Hit the Stage* matched children with music mentors, including pop star Katy B.

All this activity is bringing additional inward investment into the local creative sector where we are taking a more strategic and tailored approach to working with independent companies and Northern Ireland Screen to create a vibrant and sustainable film and television industry. We want to build the volume, impact and sustainability of network television made here and to increase its many benefits.

The Fall with Jamie Dornan and Gillian Anderson



Adrian Dunbar as Superintendent Ted Hastings in the second series of *Line of Duty*



Service performance

BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle

BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle embraces every aspect of community and cultural life in Northern Ireland. Its reach and popularity remain unparalleled in wider BBC terms, with community connection at the core of its appeal.

Pre-dominantly speech-based, BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle programmes provide a showcase for local talent, diversity and creativity. Specialist and mainstream music, news and information, entertainment and hard hitting investigations are all part of the service it provides. Listeners' voices permeate its output and our relationship with them has been enhanced through a programme of outside broadcasts and events.

Good Morning Ulster is established as BBC Radio Ulster's news agenda setting programme of the day. It hands over to *Stephen Nolan's* weekday show which provides, a forum for debate, investigates community issues and holds policy and decision makers to account.

Important stories covered issues affecting health and social care provision in Northern Ireland. They included powerful personal stories about the needs of older people, abortion law and emergency care in local hospitals. They generated significant levels of audience interaction and intense political debate and made use of our specialist journalists and links between BBC radio, television and online.

Routinely, we cover political developments in *Today at the Assembly* and *Inside Politics* and report on the full range of issues affecting social, economic and community life in our news and current affairs programmes, *Good Morning Ulster*, *Talkback* and *Evening Extra*.



Community news also featured in *Your Place and Mine* and the work of its network of local correspondents. This long running Saturday morning programme moved from Belfast and is now produced and broadcast live from BBC Radio Foyle with *Pure Culture* moving to a weekly half hour on Friday nights also from the North West. Relocation of content reaffirmed our commitment to BBC Radio Foyle as a regional production base.

Outreach events are an important part of BBC Radio Ulster's work. It helps provide a point of connection with people and events across the region. Presenters and production teams from *Talkback*, *Good Morning Ulster*, the *Saturday Magazine* and *Gardener's Corner* regularly take to the road to engage with audiences, with Hugo Duncan ever popular for his own brand of entertainment.

The *Good Morning Ulster* team, Conor Bradford, Karen Patterson and Noel Thompson



Pure Culture with Sarah Brett and Michael Bradley



Service performance

Social media and technological innovations including BBC Radio iPlayer enable us to get close to our listeners. It makes our content accessible in new and different ways while planned scheduled changes allow us to respond to an always changing media environment and to fulfil our ambition to develop new talent and ideas. During this period, *Kerry McLean* took over the BBC Radio Ulster 3pm-5pm afternoon slot, Monday to Thursday with Gerry Kelly bringing in the weekend on Friday afternoons.

Named Radio Station of the Year at the Celtic Media Festival, BBC Radio Foyle played a key role in covering Derry~Londonderry UK City of Culture celebrations with specially commissioned programmes and events. A new show, *Pure Culture* was launched and a purpose built studio set up in Ebrington as part of BBC Radio Foyle's role in showcasing local talent and helping to bring what was happening in the North West to a region-wide audience. The average weekly reach of BBC Radio Foyle programming in 2013 is the highest on record.

For one day in June, BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle combined its schedules for *Music City Day* broadcasting over 19 hours of music from dawn to dusk and there was additional engagement throughout the year from programmes including *Sounds Classical*, *Across the Line*, *Arts Extra*, *Your Place and Mine*, *Gardener's Corner* and *Sunday Sequence*.

We also provided extensive coverage of the World Police and Fire Games, the many developments and discussion points around the G8 Summit in County Fermanagh and once again broadcast *Proms in the Park* live from the Titanic Slipways with the Ulster Orchestra and guests.

To engage diverse audiences and to make classical music accessible to a wider community, other innovative projects with the Ulster Orchestra included a New Year's *Viennese Concert* live from the Millennium Forum in *Sounds Classical* and *Love is in the Air* Valentine's Day concert from the Ulster Hall.

Specialist music across the BBC Radio Ulster schedule is celebrated in many forms, live recordings, documentaries, performances and concerts and through established programmes including, *ATL*, *Strike Up the Band* and *Sing Carols*. John Anderson explored Northern Ireland's world renowned choral tradition in *Sing Out* and in *Shifting Sands* Colum Sands undertook a four-part seasonal musical journey.

BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle's documentary portfolio reflected the region's diverse cultures and traditions and encompassed new and developing expressions of community life. Content ranged widely, capturing unusual stories about extraordinary events and people and celebrating music, sport, language, landscape and the past.

Our Rivers journeyed along six of Northern Ireland's most important waterways, *Rail Baggage* boarded the Belfast to Dublin train to explore the experiences of cross-border travellers and, *Letting the Walls Speak*, followed the journey of composer Mark Anthony Turnage and Paul Muldoon commissioned to write a cantata to mark 400 years of the building of Derry's City Walls. Bronagh Gallagher returned to the City of Culture to explore its astonishing musical heritage and history in *The Town I Loved So Well*.

The Radio Ulster *Documentary* strand included investigations, historical features and original thinking on topical issues. *Soundtracks* with Adrian Dunbar looked at Northern Ireland's love affair with cinema and *Revolutions Per Minute* brought back to life some of the best records of the last fifty years.

History is a major theme for the BBC with BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle participating in *World War One at Home* to mark the centenary of the 1914-1918 war through stories and events linked to places across the UK and Ireland. A more contemporary documentary, *Building on the Past* looked at controversial plans to build a peace centre at the Maze prison site.

Afternoons with *Kerry McLean* on BBC Radio Ulster



BBC Northern Ireland in partnership with the Ulster Orchestra delivered unique broadcasting moments including *Proms in the Park* and a New Year's *Viennese Concert*



Service performance

Archive recordings on BBC Radio Ulster were a highlight of *BBC MacNeice Week*, marking the anniversary of the poet's death and accompanied a week long programme of special events celebrating his life and work.

Tribute programmes also reflected the enormous contribution made by Seamus Heaney to literature, broadcasting and the arts. *Radio Heaney*, featured highlights of his many years as a presenter while in *Heaney SJ*. Marie Louise Muir visited St Columb's College in Derry to find out how its most celebrated past-pupil would be remembered.

Innovation and renewal is the lifeblood of broadcasting, with radio playing an integral role in the development of new formats, shows, talent and ideas.

The Hole in the Wall Gang, creators of topical sketch show, *A Perforated Ulster* produced *Number 2's*, a brand new sitcom set in the corridors and meeting rooms of Stormont. Panel show, *Bad Language* made a first appearance as did *Guards*, a two-part comedy about the surreal life and times of a policeman posted to the fictional Irish border village of Ballycranna.

Our sports radio teams broadcast more than 400 hours of live output across the year. Coverage included the Ulster and All-Ireland Championships in Gaelic Games, Ulster's Heineken Cup matches and Ireland's internationals in rugby, every NI international football match and marathon live broadcasts from the NW 200 and the Ulster Grand Prix. The team also produced a documentary about the British Lions and legendary Ireland rugby international Brian O'Driscoll ahead of his final tour.

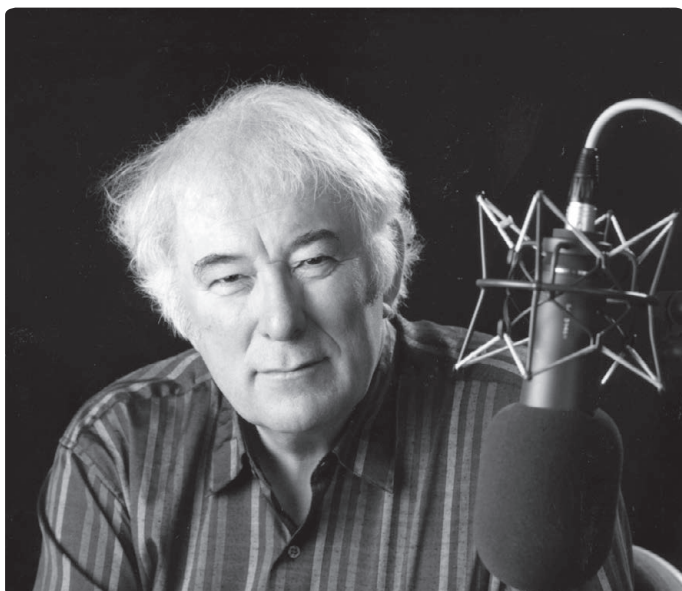
A portfolio of Irish Language and Ulster-Scots output helped diversify and enrich the schedule and included the docu-drama *Feall Fuilteach – Scéal Mhaolra Seoighe* which won best Radio Documentary at the Celtic Media Festival.

Arts Extra rounded up cultural and entertainment events in Northern Ireland with William Crawley presenting *The Book Programme*. *Morning Service*, *Sunday Sequence* and *Sounds Sacred* reflected the place and importance of religion in local society and we launched a new series on contemporary Christian music.

BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle's historic role as a meeting place and debating chamber of the airwaves is something which we want to develop over the next period. We will continue to celebrate and explore community, cultural and ethnic diversity, showcase talent and ideas, make use of our rich archive and play an enabling role in the arts and creative industries.

Our priority will be to maintain BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle's reach, relevance and enduring relationship with local audiences, in the midst of rapid changes in technology, listening habits and local society.

BBC Radio Ulster celebrated the life of Seamus Heaney



Marie-Louise Muir presents BBC MacNeice Week



Service performance

Digital, community and events

Digital developments continue to transform our work, creating new ways of making, connecting and thinking about broadcasting.

Following our Creative Collisions event last year run by BBC NI's Technology Operations Department, we continued to build a collaborative technology outreach programme with the Northern Ireland Science Park, Department of Education and Learning with the involvement of local companies, universities and colleges.

This helps to share media technology knowledge and builds local skills. Currently we are working to develop a visual component on mobile devices for BBC radio content which could ultimately provide a building block for new types of content.

Our cutting edge technologies enabled increased provision in local and network TV and Radio and improved our capability in coverage of large scale events such as sport and the elections. Our work is also having impact further afield with technology solutions provided to the World Service, Persian TV, BBC Children's and BBC Sport during the Sochi Winter Olympics.

Going forward we want to continue to work to secure the widest availability of local BBC services in a fast moving digital environment across PC, TV tablet and mobile devices and to understand, through continued research how audience tastes and interests are adapting to technological change.

Online and related developments including the availability of most local programmes on the BBC's iPlayer and BBC Radio iPlayer is extending choice and enhancing the services we provide to local audiences. There have been some remarkable results in this area. During the review period, there were 2 million downloads of BBC Northern Ireland television programmes, figures which have more than doubled over the last three years.

Large numbers of users also avail of our website bbc.co.uk/ni which updates audiences with important information, coverage of sporting and major news events. Around 2 million unique browsers came to BBC Northern Ireland online content each week, an increase of 25% on the previous year.

Social media is also transforming our work and the pace and frequency of our interaction with audiences. Immediacy and speed bring with it risk and opportunity and requires the constant revision and application of BBC editorial standards and guidelines. Audiences expect the BBC to be a consistent and trustworthy source of impartial, reliable news and information across all programmes and platforms.



Our work in promoting learning and media literacy continued with content produced for all BBC platforms. This, included projects such as *Stargazing – This Year*, with a major public event at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, live streamed schools programme, *Mission Control* presented by Barra Best and *Starry Night* on BBC Radio Ulster.

The Summer of Wildlife campaign encouraged audiences to get closer to our extraordinary wildlife and included a programme for BBC One NI, *Wild on Water*, presented by Karen Patterson with accompanying online activities and a family focused event at Castleward.

Projects supporting the local school curriculum included *Bitesize History*, English Literature and Irish for GCSE students. Politics and citizenship were also on the agenda in a live webcast from the Assembly featuring five MLA's and one hundred pupils on the anniversary of the Belfast Agreement. The Radio One Academy brought creativity and employability workshops and sessions to *One Big Weekend* in Derry~Londonderry UK City of Culture and BBC News *School Report* continued to provide hands on experience and unique opportunities for students to produce and present stories on issues of importance to them.

During this period, the BBC Local Apprenticeship Scheme (LAS) opened for applications. It followed Director General Tony Hall's pledge to open up the BBC to people from the broadest possible range of backgrounds. The scheme, for non-graduates, 18 and over leads to a Level 3 apprenticeship in Broadcast Journalism. It means two 15 month placements for BBC Radio Ulster/Foyle. This is in addition, to the BBC NI and industry led Aim High trainee scheme, which in its third year has been successful in creating many employment opportunities.

We continue to support initiatives such as the Belfast Festival at Queen's and the Belfast Media Festival which made its maiden voyage to the North West as part of Culture Tech and the Derry~Londonderry, UK City of Culture programme. The BBC technology operations stand proved to be one of the most popular among aspiring future media professionals.

Formal and informal collaboration with a range of partners continues to produce some remarkable broadcasting moments, events, conversations, exhibitions and training opportunities. It extends the reach, value and impact of what we do. It is our ambition going forward to seek out new co-operative ways of working.

Key priorities for next year

This is a period of real transformation for BBC Northern Ireland. There are challenges ahead, but also exciting opportunities.

Network

We will increase the volume, value and range of network television programmes produced in Northern Ireland, working in partnership with the independent sector, and will seek to explore development opportunities in network radio.

Partnerships

We will seek to develop new partnership opportunities as a means of extending the creative and other benefits of BBC investment in Northern Ireland.

Local

We will seek to maintain the reach, relevance and editorial ambition of BBC NI's local programmes and services, making use of new formats and talent and taking account of audience feedback and research.

Value

We will continue to pursue a managed programme of savings and efficiencies across all aspects of our work, aligning effort and resources against core BBC purposes and priorities, and seeking always to provide value for money and for local licence fee payers.

Future

We will continue a review of our property and technical infrastructure to meet the needs of modern broadcasting, secure our presence on digital platforms and enhance consumer choice by extending the range and availability of local content on new platforms including BBC iPlayer and BBC Radio iPlayer.

Northern Ireland management



Peter Johnston
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Fergus Keeling
Head of Radio



Susan Lovell
Head of Television Commissioning



Mark Taylor
Chief Operating Officer



Kathy Martin
Head of Marketing,
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Contacts

If you wish to find out more about the BBC's year – including full financial statements and performance against other public commitment – then please visit www.bbc.co.uk/annualreport. If you want to know more about how the BBC is run, then please visit www.bbc.co.uk/abouttheBBC. BBC Audiences Services is our audience's virtual front door to the BBC.

If you have a question, comment, complaint or suggestion about BBC programmes and services, then please write to us here.

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To find out more about BBC Northern Ireland and our services, programmes, activities and events visit us at

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