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ENGLAND

MANAGEMENT REVIEW

2011/12

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Cover image

The BBC West production for BBC Four, *The Lark Ascending* was presented by Dame Diana Rigg and featured Bristol's violin prodigy Julia Hwang. Ralph Vaughan Williams' famous piece was performed for the programme at Shirehampton Hall where it saw its first public performance in 1920.

INTRODUCTION



“The BBC’s responsibility to reflect local life becomes ever more important as other broadcasters and media companies reduce investment or become less local.”

Controller overview

The way people consume news and information may be changing, but their requirements do not. They expect local journalism they can trust, they want us to bring clarity and context to local issues, and, when appropriate, they want us to hold decision makers to account. Satisfying these demands has been a strong theme for our teams over the last year.

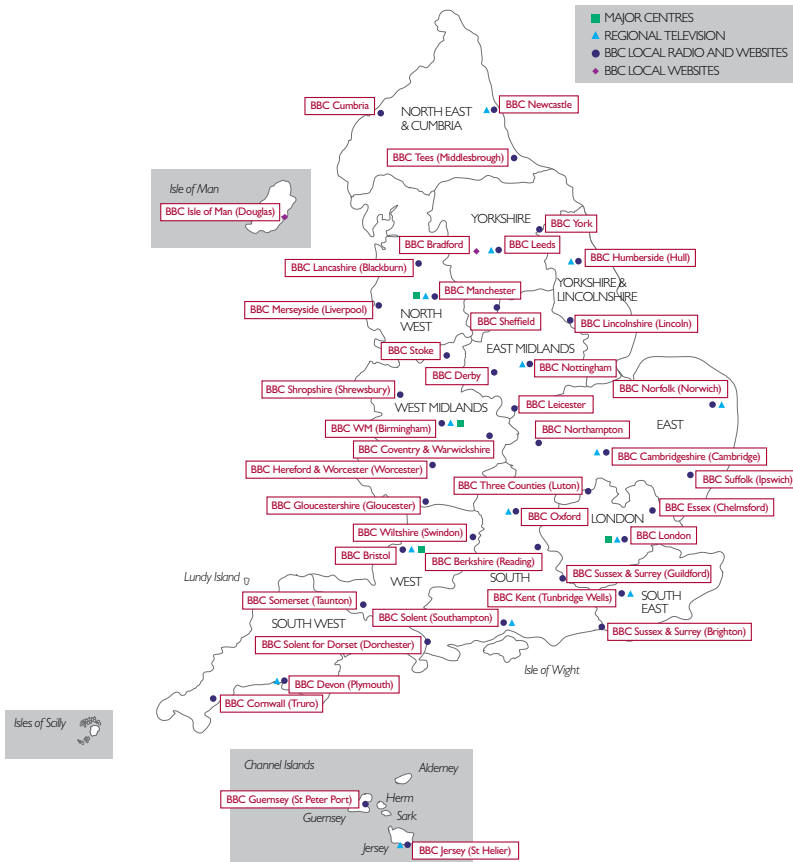
All of our Local Radio stations now run 'Hot Seat' programmes where chief constables, mayors, council leaders and even judges are put on the spot by listeners. Our online teams have concentrated on adding depth and context to our web pages, while *Inside Out* on BBC One delivered a number of high-profile exclusives. In regional television we have invested extra resources in the bulletins after the *Ten O'Clock News*, with more live newsgathering and correspondent analysis. The BBC's responsibility to reflect local life becomes ever more important as other broadcasters and media companies reduce investment or become less local. This point was reinforced many times in the public response to the consultation about the BBC management's Delivering Quality First proposals to reduce the amount of Local Radio and regional current affairs. Those proposals are now being revised and I am confident they will allow us to continue offering a strong and trusted local editorial voice throughout the current licence fee period.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'D Holdsworth'.

David Holdsworth
Controller, English Regions

TWO MINUTE SUMMARY

BBC English Regions is a major provider of news and original journalism across radio, television and online. Our teams, based in 50 locations across England, are at the heart of the BBC's domestic newsgathering operation and enjoy the privilege of the closest possible relationship with our audience, working with them every day to tell their stories, debate their views and share their experiences. Our programming gives a local focus to the key stories which affect our lives and calls those in authority to account for their decisions.



Local Radio hours of output

Station	2010/11	2011/12
Berkshire	5,011	4,977
Bristol	7,262	7,019
Cambridgeshire	5,762	6,428
Cornwall	5,750	5,702
Coventry & Warwickshire	5,409	5,006
Cumbria	7,183	6,994
Derby	5,698	5,506
Devon	7,229	6,818
Essex	5,082	5,062
Gloucestershire	5,021	4,811
Guernsey	4,429	4,551
Hereford & Worcester	5,820	5,833
Humberside	6,155	6,085
Jersey	4,387	4,537
Kent	6,280	6,143
Lancashire	7,403	7,453
Leeds	6,756	6,404
Leicester	5,319	5,198
Lincolnshire	4,245	4,333
London 94.9	8,760	8,784
Manchester	8,214	7,725
Merseyside	7,330	7,116
Newcastle	8,990	8,899
Norfolk	5,599	5,594
Northampton	5,108	5,090
Nottingham	6,588	7,025
Oxford	5,365	5,323
Sheffield	6,923	6,742
Shropshire	5,823	5,843
Solent (incl. Dorset)	7,093	7,005
Somerset	2,650	2,645
Sussex & Surrey	5,770	5,634
Stoke	5,107	5,144
Suffolk	5,553	5,543
Tees	6,012	5,958
Three Counties Radio	7,118	7,138
Wiltshire	5,505	5,030
WM	6,840	6,827
York	5,523	5,380
Total hours	236,072	233,305

Television

Regional television continues to draw a large and appreciative audience. Daily news teams have produced a range of strong journalism centred on the key stories for each region and our weekly programmes have built on this with depth and analysis. Original journalism has been the cornerstone of our *Inside Out* strand and reshaped *Politics Shows* are generating high-quality political debate.

Local Radio

Showing a positive audience trend after a period of decline, Local Radio has consolidated its position as the home of local speech radio, offering strong original content based around key stories and a forum for debate and accountability. Work is under way to deliver a reduced range of cuts under the Delivering Quality First project after a BBC Trust review of initial proposals.

Online

Online in the English Regions continues to grow unique users and build appreciation. A fully converged team is now wholly focused on news and sport and adding richness and depth to our offering. Social media continues to grow in importance as we find new ways to interact with our audience. A focus on mobile and live and dynamic coverage will characterise 2012/13.

Multimedia

English Regions teams work effectively together to share content and gather material on a multimedia basis with new technology playing a key role. More work is still needed to ensure we cross-promote opportunities to explore content which adds value to the audience's experience right across our output.

Partnerships

BBC News School Report has had another successful year for us. Thousands of children in secondary schools have taken part with the support of mentors and with content broadcast on all our stations. Work has started on creating a framework for formal partnerships to serve the new local TV operations in a number of areas.

Outreach

English Regions continues to work with a range of groups and organisations both on and off air to deliver on our public purposes. Work with cultural organisations to create local music and drama has generated much valued output. Charitable appeals with partners have raised well over a million pounds for local projects.

Technology

Prioritisation has been the watchword as financial constraints slow down much of our technology-related ambitions. A plan to create more centralised Local Radio technology, which would deliver substantial benefits continues to be worked on. Smaller, lighter and quicker, to use newsgathering technology is being trialled.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Daily television remains the backbone of our news provision, reaching 20 million adults each week with key, breaking and original news stories. When riots affected several English cities during the year our regional news programmes provided extensive coverage and analysis, with reporting teams working in the most difficult circumstances to bring our audiences a detailed and accurate account of events. A cameraman was attacked while filming in Manchester and a broadcast vehicle was burnt out.

BBC Points West and *BBC Spotlight* worked closely with radio and online colleagues to produce detailed coverage of the catastrophic M5 accident and followed this up with accounts from those who use the motorway regularly and those living and working in the immediate area. Investigative teams from the two regions joined forces to look into the potential causes of the accident and asked why motorways like the M5 haven't adopted safety systems to deal with fog as recommended and used extensively abroad.

BBC South East Today revealed details of child abuse by priests in Sussex. The region also sourced significant new lines on the Milly Dowler investigation and an exclusive

story about Lord Lucan allegedly having been flown to Africa to escape justice. *BBC Look North* (Yorkshire) told the story of a Falklands veteran who journeyed back to the islands to meet an Argentine airman he thought he had shot down and killed.

It was a regional news programme, *BBC North West Tonight*, that got the BBC's first interview for many years with Sir Alex Ferguson, an interview which was picked up nationally and internationally and whose online version attracted 500,000 hits on the BBC Sport website.

English Regions teams have continued to work on a variety of network partnerships, particularly with BBC Learning, on projects such as *Stargazing Live* and *Springwatch*.

1. Norwich City striker Grant Holt returns to his local roots, joining BBC Radio Cumbria's Chris Lumsdon for a Carlisle United commentary.
2. BBC Radio Derby's presenter Aleena Naylor chairs a debate on the local economy at Derby's Silk Mill, the site of the world's first factory.





Local Radio

The past year has been a positive one for BBC Local Radio following a period of gradual growth since 2009. High-quality journalism has been a priority, with a more consistent approach taken to our programming strand 'Hot Seat', which calls those in authority to account. Our new political reporters have been active across Local Radio and beyond and are demonstrating their value on a daily basis, bringing real depth to our coverage of a range of key stories from upheavals in the steel industry in Scunthorpe and the heritage train-making industry in Derby to the closure of care homes in Oxfordshire.

BBC Radio Merseyside was amongst stations which stayed on air live overnight to cover the riots that broke out in Liverpool and other English towns and cities over the summer. The station gave listeners the chance to debate what had happened and what should be done about it. They rang in and wrote to the station in substantial numbers to express their appreciation of our coverage.

BBC Radio York ran an investigation into the number of children being diagnosed with depression and conducted an extensive piece of work on the impact of post-traumatic stress disorder on soldiers and their families. The station also revealed that the number of staff at NHS North Yorkshire and York signed off with stress had doubled in the past two years.



SERVICE PERFORMANCE CONTINUED

Hampshire's Cold Cases was a one-off investigation into the work of Hampshire Constabulary's Operation Galaxy team, which reopens files on sexual offences. BBC Radio Solent highlighted the consequences for the Operation Galaxy team, and for victims and perpetrators, of changes to the forensic science service. BBC Radio Berkshire, meanwhile, reported on a list of more than 400 homes in the county where ambulance crews won't go without police back-up.

BBC Tees produced a hard-hitting story about a woman from County Durham whose daughter was groomed by a paedophile online and who, as a result, is campaigning for the victims of grooming to be better looked after following their ordeal. The station also ran a series on the acute shortage of foster parents on Teesside. Stockton Council said they experienced a significant upturn in interest in fostering following the series.

BBC WM commissioned a poll about the mayoral elections. This ran locally and on *The Daily Politics*. The poll found that six out of ten residents in Birmingham didn't know the referendum about elected mayors was taking place in May. The Stafford Hospital investigation into patient care was covered extensively by BBC Radio Stoke, with coverage generated by the station team featuring on Local Radio, network radio and TV.

Across BBC Local Radio our network of faith programmes reported on a specially commissioned BBC poll which asked whether children were attending a daily act of Christian worship in school – a statutory requirement in state schools in England and Wales. More than a quarter said their children weren't. The story received high-profile follow-up on BBC Radio 4's *Today* and BBC Radio 5 Live, amongst other outlets. Meanwhile, BBC Tees researched the remuneration and benefits of vicars, priests and imams in a special series called 'Funding Faith.'



1. Pete Morgan, BBC WM's new breakfast presenter.



2. BBC Radio Derby's presenter Phil Trow talks to Derby's Mayor at a Royal Wedding street party.



Local Radio stations regularly join together as a network to add impact to big projects. 2011/12 has been a year of effective partnerships, with BBC Radio 4 in particular. In January we took part in the *Desert Island Discs* 70th anniversary, with every station running *Your Desert Island Discs* strands with local people and local stories. BBC Local Radio was also a key player in BBC Radio 4's *The Listening Project* which began in March, with five stations and reporters taking part and making output for local programmes and BBC Radio 4.

The breakfast development programme set up two years ago continues to work with editors and teams on driving quality and consistency on our breakfast output. The mid-morning development programme, now in its second year, has worked with a dozen stations over the last 12 months. Run by the BBC's College of Journalism, it aims to improve ambition and quality at

mid-morning on BBC Local Radio. Reach has risen steadily since the development programme began.

It's been a year in which Local Radio has been under the spotlight due to the BBC's Delivering Quality First programme. Early proposals to save a significant amount of money, largely by sharing more output, were challenged by the BBC Trust and the scale of the cuts will now be reduced, although they will remain tough to deliver. The proposals and their outcome created a period of uncertainty for staff and listeners alike but amidst all the upheaval BBC Local Radio continues to be a trusted friend, a provider of information and a catalyst for debate, occupying its place at the heart of the community and giving local people a voice.



3. BBC Radio York's Adam Tomlinson presents his breakfast show live from the Great Yorkshire Show, July 2011.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE CONTINUED

Weekly programmes

Inside Out has continued to deliver strong audience figures in a highly competitive slot on BBC One. An average of 3.1 million people watched the series across England during 2011/12 and a high Appreciation Index score of 83 across England. There were many cases of outstanding journalism attracting local and national audiences across TV, radio, and increasingly, online.

In the South, an investigation brought to light the activities of a yacht delivery company that had contributed to the deaths of five sailors in three separate incidents at sea. In the North East & Cumbria region, *Inside Out* reported on a log kept by accident and emergency staff at the Cumberland Infirmary, where staff believed conditions to be unsafe. A leading consultant told the programme he thought the hospital was 'close to breakdown'. An *Inside Out East Midlands* story on fake vodka secured coverage on *Today*, BBC Radio 5 Live and *You and Yours* and following the shooting of three women in County Durham at New Year, *Inside Out North East* revealed that it had been recommended the gunman had his licence refused on the grounds

of police knowledge of previous domestic disputes. The recommendation had been overturned and the case is subject to an IPCC investigation. In the South, a film highlighted racial tensions between Gurkha and white English youths in Aldershot.

Inside Out has been uniting its regional teams across England to look at specific subjects such as alcohol abuse and university fees. The South West and West regional teams also worked together to investigate the serious accident on the M5 which closed the motorway and led to many deaths. Recent online statistics have been high – an item from the South East on Lord Lucan attracted a million page views within 24 hours.

Television special programmes continue to be commissioned. Highlights have included debates marking the election of a new mayor for Leicester, the General Election on the Isle of Man, and progress on the Olympics preparations for London. More of these regional specials are now getting a network repeat, showcasing the programme across the nation. Examples include *The Truth About Wildlife* (southern regions and BBC Two), *Hidden Paintings*

Tanya Arnold is the new presenter of the *Super League Show*, the weekly rugby league highlights programme produced for BBC One from Leeds.



(all regions and BBC Four) and *Vox Pop: How Dartford Powered the British Beat Boom* (BBC SE/BBC Four). We have also re-versioned regional films for network, for example *Saxon Hoard* (WMI/BBC Two) and *TV Greats: Our Favourites from the North* (NW/BBC Two).

Our political programming was successfully revamped and relaunched as part of the network BBC One show, *Sunday Politics*. There is a new format, featuring prominent political guests of the day, and a 60 second review of the political week together with a renewed emphasis on harder political interviewing to hold local opinion-formers to account. An increase in the volume and quality of input from our new chain of Local Radio political reporters is proving a real journalistic asset. Audiences remain just below the one million mark for the programme and its regional opt-outs.

Special debates on the economy, based on research showing relative growth around England, performed well with a reach of 716,000 across the country and many of the stories which emerged running on other BBC output across radio, TV and online.

Minority ethnic community specialist teams across the country have supported English Regions outlets with newsgathering expertise that added depth of perspective to our coverage of some of the biggest news stories of the year. From the riots in the summer to the Stephen Lawrence verdicts, our community specialists have not only served local news but sourced and produced material for network news programmes.

Children in Need 'Big Night Out' at the Spa Pavilion Felixstowe, November 2011, a sell-out performance showcasing the talent pool at BBC Radio Suffolk. The evening raised £10,000 for *Children in Need*.



SERVICE PERFORMANCE CONTINUED

In order to raise awareness in the independent television sector, Heads of Regions supported by our HQ team held a series of advice and feedback sessions. Around 60 companies were represented at the sessions, which were positively received. Representatives were keen to discuss a range of topics from how to pitch for network commissions to the amount and nature of business generated by English Regions.

This year's *Children in Need* saw BBC English Regions at the heart of the appeal night on BBC One with a spectacular children's choir broadcast from locations across the country. The event was one of the most popular parts of the show and led to a peak in donations. For this year's *Red Nose Day*, 40 BBC Local Radio presenters braved stages across England to make audiences laugh in *Stand Up For Comic Relief*.

Online

Our online offering has once more experienced strong growth. In 2011 the BBC News England website was read by an average of 5.9 million UK unique browsers each week, up 49% on 2010. Audiences were significantly boosted by the retention of new users around big news events such as the August riots – which saw our highest traffic ever (12.5 million unique browsers in one week) – and the M5 crash in early November.

Our proposition is based around key and breaking news with strong original journalism and an emphasis on creating depth and context around our most important stories. Now fully integrated as part of the BBC News website with a team that has benefited from significant training investment, it has built depth and richness and seen a range of developments such as the new correspondent pages which allow us to showcase output from our Political Editors.



1. BBC Radio Leeds presenters Adam Pope and Katherine Hannah take on a challenge for Sport Relief – pedalling 127.5 miles down the Leeds to Liverpool canal in a swan-shaped pedalo.

The site has undertaken major projects – both online-led and as part of wider BBC editorial – on everything from the state of England's roads to the economy, to a major piece of work on the role of cathedrals in modern society.

The English Regions sport online service was relaunched in early 2012, putting the focus more firmly on our strong multimedia offering and creating a dedicated England index.

Social media has continued to develop with a new policy being launched specifically for English Regions output and a new curated Twitter feed for England online news which shares the best of our content in a more engaging way.

Sport

English Regions sports coverage continues to reflect sporting activity, from Premier League to grassroots. The build-up to London 2012 has given us the chance to follow local athletes as they strive for a place in Team GB. Each English Region produced a *British Olympic Dreams* special for BBC One in January. Our Local Radio coverage takes in not only football but county cricket and both codes of rugby plus many minor sports. *Late Kick Off* returned to BBC One to turn the spotlight onto our Football League clubs on and off the pitch, while the *Super League Show* began its 14th year with a new presenter, Tanya Arnold. A dedicated online team produces more than 50% of the content for www.bbc.co.uk/sport.



2. BBC Bristol *Kick Off* sport reporter Thomas Herbert collects his certificate for completing the work experience scheme from Gabby Logan at BBC Television Centre in London.
3. The South, South West and West *Late Kick Off* team of presenter James Richardson with regular guests Graeme Murty and Leroy Rosenior and the Football League Championship trophy on the set in Southampton.

FUTURE LOOKING STRATEGY

Richer journalism with the emphasis on key stories, local expertise and analysis and accountability. A keener focus on interactivity through social media and the use of new technology to make our newsgathering quicker and more effective from a wider range of locations.

The best journalism in the world

BBC English Regions will play its part in ensuring the BBC remains the UK's most trusted news broadcaster, attracting large and loyal audiences. We will aim to maintain our reach in an increasingly busy, competitive and disaggregated marketplace and develop our reputation for quality and distinctiveness.

Daily TV news will continue to focus on making key stories accessible and offering depth and analysis through our range of specialist correspondents and local reporters.

Local Radio will secure its position as the home of local debate on key issues through developing the profile of its accountability programming. We will continue to work

closely with the BBC's College of Journalism, drawing on its expertise and experience to help shape our offering and make it more focused and consistent. We will also start a parallel piece of work to improve our programme on weekend mornings.

In online we will enrich and develop our journalism, adding depth and value to stories through improved analysis, and infographics. We will further improve our mobile offering to ensure that our content is presented as accessibly as possible across all devices.

In weekly programming we will commission more films from our daily TV newsrooms for *Inside Out*, maximising the skills of our journalists who have developed expertise in investigative, short and long form work.



1. Following disturbances in Bristol's Stokes Croft area during Easter weekend 2011, which centred on a Tesco Express store, BBC West looked into the unique character of the neighbourhood, famous in the region for its fiercely independent and alternative style.
2. BBC Radio Manchester's Becky Want presents her show from the station's new studios at MediaCity Salford.

Our editorial focus will be on delivering depth and insight across the biggest stories which most affect and interest our audiences. Particular attention will be given to finding clear and interesting ways to continue telling the story of the economy – an issue we know is of very significant interest to our audience. Other stories we will develop include looking at the impact and legacy of the Olympics, the General Synod vote on the creation of women bishops and its effect on the Church, the potential effect of Scottish independence on England, substantial coverage and analysis of the local elections in May and an investigation into water shortages after the year started with many regions experiencing drought conditions.

Building audiences

TV audiences will aim to maintain their 2011 reach performance through creating a balance of key and original stories, strong investigative work and special programmes which play to the uniqueness of each of our local areas, their culture, heritage and challenges.

In Local Radio we will grow our audiences towards a long-term weekly reach target of eight million. We will expect each station to achieve annual growth, building on the investment we have made in breakfast and mid-morning editorial and training and the benefits this has already delivered.

We will aim to grow online reach, with a particular focus on adding value through IPTV, mobile and social media. We will also redouble our efforts to ensure that audiences use the BBC website as a way to access other local journalism from the local press and other providers.

Connected journalism

We will begin to deliver a more connected strategy for our news offering, working on plans for connected TVs and better cross-promotion of our content across all local media and beyond.

Our investment in technology has had to be scaled down because of financial pressures but we will continue to work on plans to centralise and streamline Local Radio technology through a project which has already been piloted in Northampton. This will enable centralised production systems to be shared across a number of stations, increasing resilience while reducing the long-term cost of renewing stations' technical infrastructure. We will also invest in new newsgathering technology which will allow our teams to gather and publish material quickly and effectively from location.



3. Alistair Durden and modern pentathlete Heather Fell in their Team GB tracksuits filming for BBC West's *Olympic Dreams*.



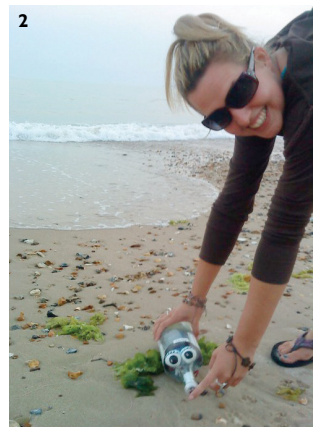
FUTURE LOOKING STRATEGY CONTINUED

Inspiration and commitment in the fields of knowledge, music and culture

Coverage of the Cultural Olympiad around London 2012 and the Diamond Jubilee celebrations will provide a wealth of cultural, artistic and musical content right across our output as the world turns its attention to the UK for a summer of big events. Our new music strand *BBC Introducing* will continue to act as a platform for new talent – with particular focus on the summer festivals. Closer working between our news online teams and those in BBC Factual & Learning will help to ensure our audiences make deeper and more valuable journeys into our online content.

Creating events and opportunities to bring communities and the nation together

Substantial work has already been done on planning our coverage of London 2012 and the events which surround it. Investment in the Torch Relay will see dedicated teams supported by the English Regions bus provide high-quality coverage and focus on local events wherever the torch goes. We will focus on delivering speech-led programmes for minority communities at 14 of our stations, which we anticipate will feed into and enrich both our day-to-day news coverage and our work on local, national and global events. Local Radio stations will be set the objective of delivering two high-profile editorial projects in the course of the year with the aim of highlighting key issues, through strong journalism and creating opportunities for engagement and active citizenship.



Value for money

Generating the savings to which we have committed under Delivering Quality First will be a major challenge. We will work hard to safeguard quality and protect our highest priority content and output. English Regions will work closely with other parts of the BBC on technology, property and other efficiency projects. Staff savings will be delivered with attention focused on redeployment opportunities and providing the best possible value from all our teams.

Objectives

Maintain 2011 reach levels for daily TV news and weekly programming. Move Local Radio towards a weekly reach of eight million and continue to grow online reach and appreciation.

Focus our investment on key and original journalism, generating unique content which supports understanding and engagement. Develop our Local Radio accountability strand and maximise our investigative journalism resource across daily and weekly output.

Build a connected journalism strategy for English Regions content, creating an IPTV proposition, improving our mobile offering, developing social media and enhancing opportunities to drive content between English Regions and other parts of the BBC.

Deliver the financial targets laid out in Delivering Quality First whilst maintaining a focus on distinctiveness and quality. Ensure that any reinvestment is targeted towards enhancing our journalism and our ability to connect to audiences across all platforms.

3



1. BBC Lincolnshire's Louise Wheeler and Rod Whiting completing the Big Bike Ride in October 2011. They cycled 600 miles from Neustadt in Germany and raised more than £25,000 for *Children in Need*.
2. Boscombe resident Liz Thomsitt discovers Dolly Dorset – one of our three bottles fitted with GPS by BBC Radio Solent for its 'Summer Splash' celebrating life on the water.
3. BBC Radio Cumbria reporting on the public sector strike in June 2011 in Carlisle city centre.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR NEXT YEAR

- Ensure that we continue to provide distinctive, high-quality and original radio, TV and online journalism within the parameters of a BBC reshaped under the Delivering Quality First initiative.
- Push forward further developments supporting the strengthening of journalism and production around our Local Radio breakfast and mid-morning programming. Continue to develop richer local politics reporting and accountability.
- Develop our online proposition to include more original journalism and an improved mobile service in view of the fact that research predicts that more than a quarter of total online time will be via mobile by 2015.
- Continue to provide services throughout English Regions which target parts of the audience less well served elsewhere in the BBC. In doing so, foster the unique bond that we, as a local speech and public service broadcaster, share with our audience and find new ways to enhance and develop this relationship.

CONTACTS

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/annualreport**

If you want to know more about how the BBC is run, then please visit **www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc**

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