

# LEVELLING UP AND THE BBC

HOW THE BBC CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO LEVELLING UP

APRIL 2022



# FOREWORD

Rt Hon Justine Greening, Founder of the Levelling Up Goals and former Secretary of State for Education

---

For millions of us, the British Broadcasting Corporation is part of the fabric of day-to-day life. It has provided and reported on the moments we have come together as a country, and been there for us during those moments our country has moved on. So often it has provided a window to connect us to a world outside that we perhaps knew too little about. Beyond the impact on the lives of people in Britain, the BBC has a reach around the world that is unparalleled by any other broadcaster. As Development Secretary, regularly travelling to some of the world's most challenging places, irrespective of where I was, the BBC News channel connected me back to home. There can be few organisations, if any, that have both the opportunity and the ability to positively shape the wider world's view of our country and its values than that of the BBC.

This year marks 100 years of the BBC. Throughout its life since its inception in 1922 the BBC has been an organisation with a remarkably clear mission enshrined in the BBC's Royal Charter and at the heart of everything it does: to inform, educate and entertain. Whilst the world has changed dramatically during that time, the BBC's mission remains the same. It has a clear and steady purpose in what can feel like an ever more fractious and fragile world.

Yet, if it is to be as successful in the next 100 years as the last, the BBC must keep adapting. It must look even beyond its own organisational boundaries, to see the wider value that a modern BBC can add to our society and communities more broadly.



Its transformative power for good is as equally powerful at home as it is overseas.

Levelling up is a national priority, alongside achieving net zero. As an ambition, creating a country with equality of opportunity transcends party politics and crucially its delivery is something every organisation can play a role in making a reality. It is like producing a million piece jigsaw puzzle with each actor deciding to make their piece of the puzzle the very best it can be.

This report sets out how the BBC plans to play its role in levelling up Britain. It revisits its compelling original mission of 'inform, educate and entertain' to challenge itself on what a levelled up BBC version of that mission might mean.

Like every organisation it is, of course, on a journey. Under the leadership of Tim Davie, the BBC has already set in motion reforms to ensure that exceptional value to all audiences is the driving force for its future strategy, seeking to create a modern, highly efficient BBC that truly reflects Britain.

The BBC has used the Levelling Up Goals architecture - the 14 distinct goals we must achieve to drive equality of opportunity - to craft its approach. The Levelling Up Goals create a common architecture and language through which very different organisations can nevertheless have common focus and measures of progress in 14 areas, enabling them to benchmark against others, target their social impact more effectively, share best practice and partner with others to collectively get further faster.

Now, the BBC sets out more specific steps on its wider approach to levelling up, involving not just the Corporation, not just its programme content, but also the communities it is part of. It recognises the BBC's leadership in a wider media sector and also its ability to drive change and levelling up through its supply chain of production companies.

I am not only excited that the BBC has joined us on this journey. I believe it is an essential step and essential leadership for wider success.

**Justine Greening**



# FOREWORD

Tim Davie, Director-General of the BBC

---

I am passionate about delivering great value to all our audiences. For the BBC this always starts with our role as great storytellers, whether that's bringing trusted, impartial news all the way through to the gripping stories like *Vigil*, *Normal People* or the *Strictly Come Dancing* journey.

We have the privilege of a public funding model which means we must deliver great value for all. My ambition is for the BBC to deliver much more to everyone who pays for us. We must reflect the views and perspectives of everyone, whoever and wherever they are. We must do more to ensure that the social, cultural, and economic benefits of the BBC are felt in every community, in every corner of our nations and regions.

Today, the BBC's mission to inform, educate and entertain reaches over 90% of adults and 80% of young people every week, and 100% of the population monthly. We continue to be the UK's most trusted provider of news, and the local TV news at 6.30pm is one of the most watched news programmes in the UK. We recognise that we need to do even more to keep ensuring that we deliver value to all in the digital marketplace.

And, we have embarked on an ambitious programme of reform to modernise and transform the BBC, but also to radically transform how we spread the benefits of the BBC across every part of the UK.



I believe the BBC can play such an important part in helping to achieve the United Nations based Levelling Up Goals. In this plan we have focused on our universal and targeted education offer, transforming the BBC to be more diverse and representative and our investment across the UK to support and stimulate opportunity and economic growth in the creative industries.

Through our education offer we can connect with people, inspire, and enable them to fulfil their dreams. We do this through our content such as the incredible *Planet* series, with the new *Green Planet* this year. We offer great education services – particularly *Bitesize* for primary and secondary children as well as *Tiny Happy People* supporting early years literacy and numeracy which we are very proud of.

We must change within the BBC too. We are acutely aware that the media sector can be difficult to get into. Sometimes there can be an impression that it is too tight a circle. The BBC is determined to tackle this systemically with a wide-ranging approach to outreach, apprenticeships, and career progression.

We would welcome applicants to our apprentice programmes and other entry level options who could be the first generation to enter the media sector. And we are committed to making the BBC a more diverse organisation with our targets – 50% (gender), 20% (BAME), 12% (disability) – and with a new target on lower socio-economic diversity of 25%. I will be holding the BBC's top 1000 leaders to account for these targets which will help drive change at all levels of our organisation.

And finally, the BBC is a foundation stone for the creative industries across the UK. We invest 90% of our resources in the UK with 14,000 organisations, over 8,000 of which are SMEs. For every BBC job, we create more and support 53,000 jobs in the UK in total. We are working in partnership across the UK building new creative hubs in the West Midlands and North East. We want to do more in Liverpool. We want to do even more across our local and regional network across 45 sites to connect with communities.

Through this agenda and working in partnership with the Purpose Coalition, particularly in measuring our impacts we want to demonstrate real progress in our annual report. This is an exciting agenda, one that is key to the BBC and most importantly keeps challenging us to deliver great value to our audiences and connecting communities everywhere.

**Tim Davie**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Davie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

# THE LEVELLING UP GOALS

## A shared framework we can all use

In 2015, as Secretary of State for International Development, Justine Greening MP led the UK delegation to the United Nations (UN) and was at the heart of the efforts to successfully design the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These 17 interlinked, global goals were created to be 'a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all'.

However, Justine has recognised how a common set of ambitious but accessible objectives could also galvanise action to effect real change on levelling up and equality of opportunity. Working through the Purpose Coalition of businesses, universities, public sector employers like NHS Trusts and local authorities, the Levelling Up Goals, based on the original UN SDGs, were developed and then launched in February 2021.

Through the Levelling Up Goals architecture, working with businesses, universities, regulators and policy makers, the levelling up challenge has been broken down to 14 constituent parts that must be addressed if we are to succeed. They cover progress in education, connecting talent up to opportunity and how open and progressive opportunities are. They also look at the wider factors that make or break getting on in life, whether health or housing, or being on the wrong side of the digital divide.

A set of overarching, national metrics, that are refreshed annually, have now been developed, to understand whether we are achieving our collective ambition of a levelled up Britain. The next step will be to use these metrics to apply them at an organisational level to be used by all employers to track the impact they are having with their work to help level up our country.



# LEVELLING UP GOALS FOR THE BBC

## Seeing the BBC through a Levelling Up lens



The BBC is led by its mission: *to inform, educate and entertain.*

It acts as a vital cultural institution, shaping the lives of millions of people at home and abroad

- **Used by 90% of UK adults every week**
- **The biggest media provider for C2DE groups and those living outside of London**

It is a foundational investor in the UK's creative economy, sitting alongside a thriving private sector, supporting growth and pushing the boundaries of British creativity. It acts to shape the future of the UK media sector, nurturing talent, pioneering technological innovations and championing diversity.



# DELIVERING ON THE LEVELLING UP GOALS

## EDUCATION: How the BBC is currently contributing



### A UNIVERSAL BBC

#### BBC Bitesize and BBC Teach

- **Bitesize is home to over 20,000 online resources** for learners between 4 and 16 for the curriculum of all four nations, reaching over 2m learners every week, almost 80% of school age children.
- **Bitesize Careers judged UK's best Employability Website, hosts over 300 in-depth peer-led job profiles** in collaboration with the Careers & Enterprise Company and UCAS.
- **BBC Teach is the home of classroom resources for teachers**, drawing in the 'best of the BBC' and hosting big partnerships with Penguin Books, the Roald Dahl Foundation and the Natural History Museum.

**Tiny Happy People – early years service for 0-4 year olds, focused on 'closing the word gap'**. Award winning website and social platform launched in 2020 arms parents with knowledge to support their child's communication skills through simple activities, interaction and play.



### A LOCAL BBC

**Tiny Happy People has five local 'hubs' in Wales, Northern Ireland, Greater Manchester, Cornwall and Scotland** working with local government, NHS and charities to embed the service in the community. This includes training local early years practitioners to use the materials, making 'hard copies' available locally and activation on local radio and TV.

**The Bitesize Schools Tour visits 50+ schools annually**, focusing on those in the most deprived areas, delivering sessions on careers and featuring local employers and BBC staff. In 2021 they visited Sunderland, Blackpool, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Scunthorpe.

**Archives for Education and Make Film History** provides access to the BBC Archive for all schools with an ERA licence, plus programmes for creative re-use by 74 colleges, universities and film schools to support young filmmakers.





# DELIVERING ON THE LEVELLING UP GOALS

## TRANSFORMING THE BBC: How the BBC is currently contributing



### A UNIVERSAL BBC

The BBC Academy acts as a training ground for UK creative talent, investing over £100m in the last four years. From 2017-2020 it provided skills training to almost 23,000 people, including 1,000 apprentices (of which 28% were from lower socio-economic backgrounds).

The BBC has adopted a 50/20/12 target on gender, ethnicity and disability to ensure its staff reflect the diversity of the UK population. 32% of graduate hires at the BBC are from lower socio-economic backgrounds and it is the only media organisation that ranks in the top 75 of the Social Mobility Foundation's social mobility index (at 31<sup>st</sup>).

BBC Writer's Room seeks out and develops new writing talent, with a strong emphasis on diversity and regionality as well as working with more experienced writers. Working with BBC and BBC Studios teams and independent producers it has six UK hubs and a Writer's Access Group to support talented disabled writers.



### A LOCAL BBC

Digital Cities has supported thousands of people to improve their digital skills. Over the past 5 years, through a combination of workshops, conferences and masterclasses, Digital Cities has delivered skills events in Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Glasgow, Cardiff, Belfast, Newcastle, Middlesbrough and Sunderland.

Digital Cities 2018 was a hugely successful week, with over 1500 attendances at sessions which engaged with a diverse and broad range of attendees: from young people looking at future skills within the creative industries to individuals and SMEs who were keen to improve and build their Digital skills, Arts organisations looking to broaden and deepen their understanding of the uses of digital technologies and regional broadcasters wanting to hear more from award winning Digital Channel BBC Three.

The BBC Writers Room has launched Write Across Liverpool offering those starting out in the industry insight and support to create an original series idea.

# DELIVERING ON THE LEVELLING UP GOALS

## ACROSS THE UK: How the BBC is currently contributing



### A UNIVERSAL BBC

In 2019/20 the BBC contributed almost £5bn to the UK's creative economy, supporting over 50,000 jobs. Each year it works with over 14,000 suppliers, of which 75% are SMEs. Half of the BBC's economic contribution is outside of London compared to the sector average of 20%.

In 2020 the BBC worked with 343 independent producers (including 66 new producers) more than double that of other broadcasters – 57% of which were outside of London.

As the largest single commissioner of British content the impact of BBC productions on local cultural and business economies is significant – for the 6<sup>th</sup> series of Line of Duty more than 70% of the production budget was spent in Northern Ireland and BBC invested in the skills and training of local production crew, spending around £50,000 per annum on trainees ranging from Costume and Make Up to Camera and Graphics trainees.



### A LOCAL BBC

The BBC acts as an anchor institution for media clusters across the UK with major production centres already in Salford, Cardiff, Bristol, Belfast, Birmingham, London and Glasgow, crowding in investment from businesses across the sector. The BBC has 39 local radio stations and 15 regional TV services in England as well as dedicated cross-genre output for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

In Salford's MediaCity the number of digital or creative businesses has grown by 70%, since 2010, when the BBC moved much of its operations there. In Cardiff there has been a 54% growth in the creative sector since 2012, when the BBC opened Roath Lock, a new studio centre in Cardiff Bay.

BBC Studios is expanding its bases in Bristol, Cardiff and Glasgow, and creating a new Children's commercial production base in Salford. BBC will explore strategic partnerships in other UK cities, including Belfast and partner with local communities, councils and education providers to develop technical skills locally to operate the studios.

Visitor numbers in Birmingham increased by 26% between 2013 and 2018 after series one of Peaky Blinders and visitor numbers to West Yorkshire's Shibden Hall rose 200% after Gentleman Jack aired.



# CASE STUDY: BBC THREE

## Showcasing the whole of the UK through our offer



Since early 2020, we've been running a range of development schemes across the whole of the UK in partnership with the Nations and relevant screen agencies.

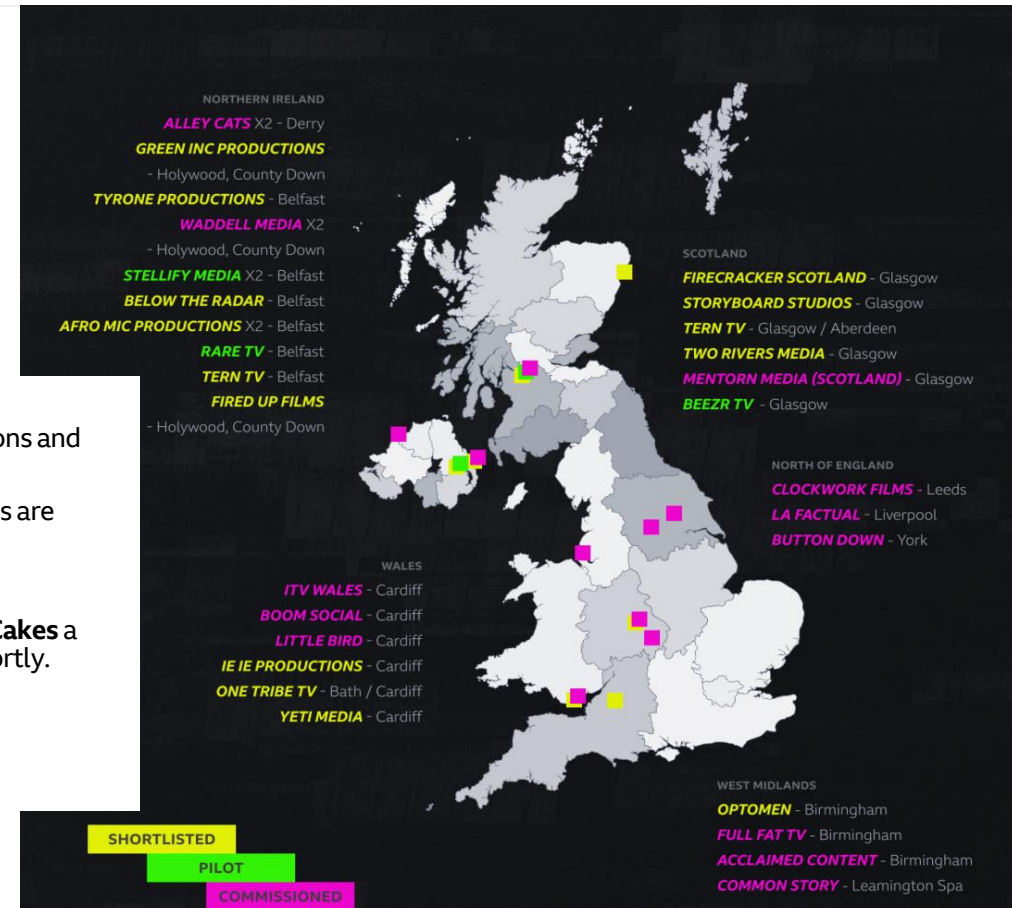
The aim of the schemes is to create opportunities for local independent production companies, 'indies', to develop – applications are open to all companies no matter their experience.

So far, we've worked with 29 indies from across the UK and commissioned 13 projects as a result of the schemes.

Commissioned content to launch early 2022 include **Bricking It** a series about young brickies in the North of England and **Hot Cakes** a story about Welsh entrepreneurs making their mark in the baking industry. We are due to announce a Scotland commission shortly. We will be showcasing all the content through the BBC Three linear channel and on BBC iPlayer.



Levelling Up and the BBC



# CASE STUDY: CREATIVE CLUSTERS

## Investing in successful creative clusters



### SALFORD MEDIACITY UK

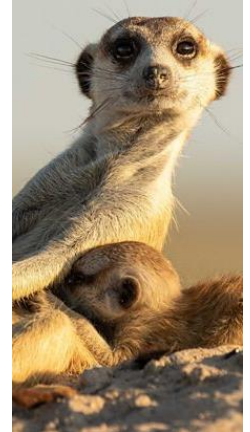


10 years ago the BBC moved into MediaCityUK resulting in significant benefits for the area:

- 3,048 people are now directly employed by the BBC in Salford.
- Research shows that each job created by the BBC added just over 1 additional job in the creative sector in Salford.
- BBC Salford and the growth of MediaCityUK has attracted large and smaller suppliers and start-ups to the region – employment in the creative and digital sector has seen 142% growth since 2010.

Bristol is the largest BBC Studios production base outside of London and home to the BBC's Natural History Unit and as well as producing iconic BBC shows it also produces for clients such as Apple, Discovery, Nat Geo and NBC Universal.

- 35% of all global natural history television is produced in Bristol & Bath.
- Research by the University of the West of England found the Bristol film and TV cluster, driven by BBC Bristol, is composed of 131 private companies and a pool of freelancers who often work for several companies as well as the BBC. Their survey suggests that the majority (58.2%) of private companies are micro-enterprises and small SMEs.



### BRISTOL NATURAL HISTORY UNIT

***“Securing a place on the BBC Production Apprentice scheme was the opportunity I’d dreamed of. The course was incredible and has taught me so much!”***

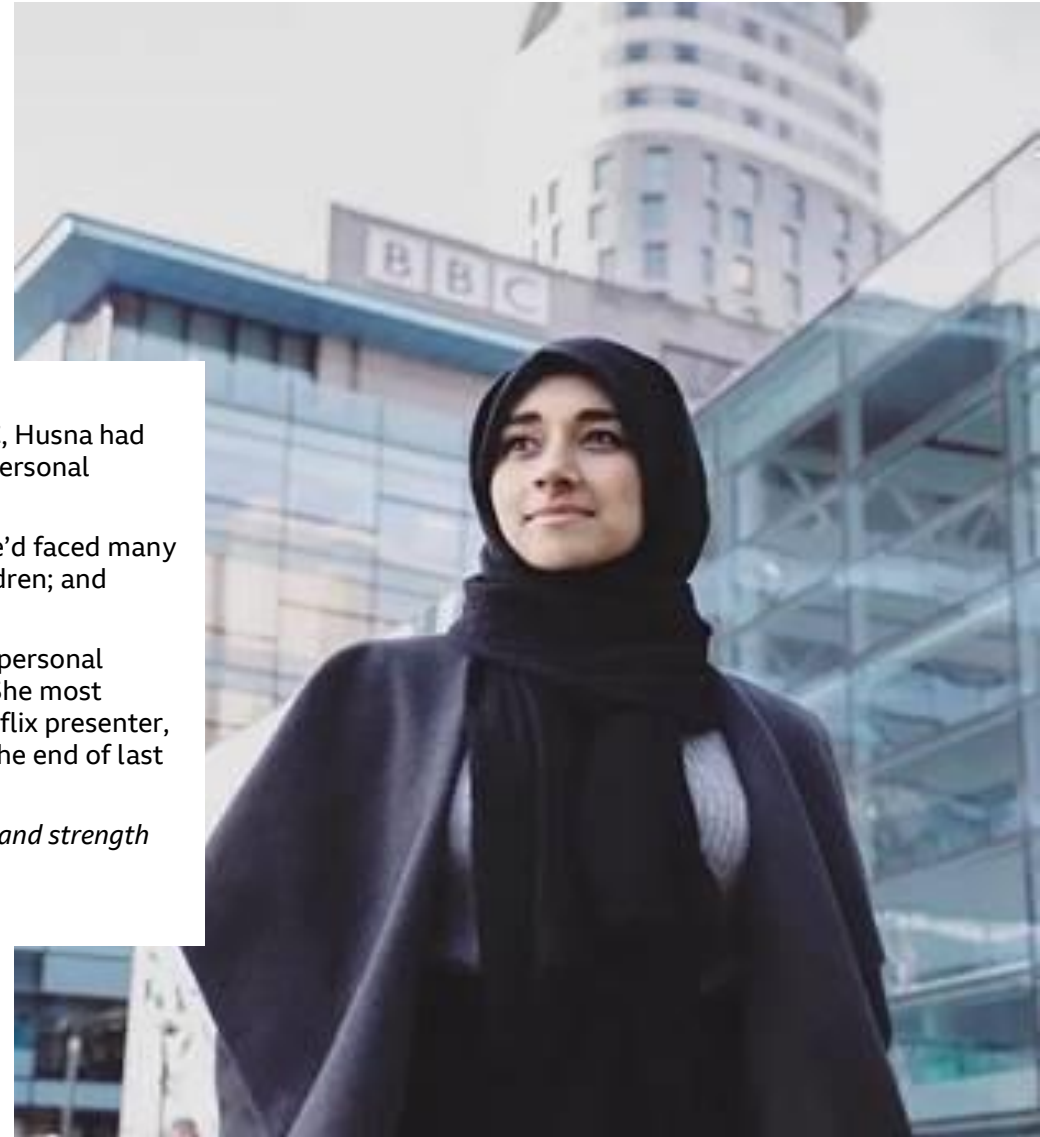
*Husna Wahid, BBC Apprentice*

Husna Wahid joined the BBC in 2017, a single Muslim mum with three young children. Before arriving at the BBC, Husna had volunteered at a community radio station where she reported on inspiring stories of people who had overcome personal challenges.

Husna had dreamed of becoming a journalist but didn’t think it possible for someone like her. At 28 years old she’d faced many challenges; caring responsibilities, an abusive marriage that ended when she was 24; custody battles for the children; and people encouraging her to work in a supermarket rather than pursue her dream.

After successfully applying for the BBC Production Apprenticeship Scheme, Husna persevered with challenging personal circumstances in order to complete the scheme. Since completing, she has worked at the BBC, ITV and Google. She most recently worked as an Assistant Producer with Cardiff Productions on a BBC Two show about colourism with Netflix presenter, Tan France. Husna’s professional life continues to go from strength to strength as does her personal life and at the end of last year she remarried.

As Husna says *“Everyone faces challenges; it’s about making it work and getting through them. You build resilience and strength from overcoming those challenges.”*



***“My advice to people coming up behind me is be yourself. Whilst it might feel like there is a stereotypical type of person at the BBC - well-off, university educated – the people on my apprenticeship scheme were really diverse. I still sometimes get imposter syndrome but I reckon that as long as I believe in myself I’ll be alright”***

*Harry O’Connor, BBC Apprentice*

Harry O’Connor joined the BBC in 2018 on the Digital Journalism Apprentice scheme. Raised in Irlam, Harry went to high school in Salford and then on to college where he studies for a BTJ in journalism just around the corner from MediaCity UK where he now works.

Harry is proud of his Salford roots. He grew up on a council estate in a working class family, the second oldest of 4 boys, sharing care responsibilities for their youngest brother who has autism. Harry was fascinated by the news growing up – when they got home from school his brothers would put on children’s shows and he’d put on the news. A keen boxer from the age of 12, Harry is also an ardent Manchester United supporter and now features on Radio Manchester’s evening show at least once a week to talk about Manchester United and Manchester City.

On finishing college Harry didn’t know what he wanted to do, although he’d done well at school he didn’t feel he’d really pushed himself. He began working at Aldi but in early 2018, before taking the plunge into working there full-time, Harry’s college hosted a presentation where someone from the BBC came to talk about apprenticeships. When the applications opened he applied. Although he’d felt out of place at the time he was confident he could showcase his skills. Finally, during England’s first World Cup game, while he was at the pub with his friends, he got the call to tell him he’d been accepted.

Harry recently started work on the Breakfast Show at 5 Live. In the future Harry would love to go into Sport including doing some reporting or commentating.



# A BBC ACTION PLAN FOR LEVELLING UP

## Learning, education and skills for all



### A UNIVERSAL BBC



**Tiny Happy People** will now provide a full-time early years education service for 0-4 year olds, strengthening the BBC's contribution to the life chances of young learners.

In 2022, THP will start commissions for 2-4 year olds helping children prepare for school, with CBeebies' leading literacy brand Bedtime Stories.



#### 'Doubling down on BBC Bitesize'

Across 2021 and 2022 we will have increased content on Bitesize by 40%, focusing on improving our offer for Primary and Key Stage 3 learners – including a brand new Bitesize Reception offer for 4 year olds. Focus on Careers in 2022 – more films commissioned, plus awareness push and partnership with big BBC productions to discuss relevant careers – e.g. emergency services, creative industries, agriculture. New Homework Hacks for parents to support their kids learning.



### A LOCAL BBC



**Tiny Happy People** is developing new business partnerships with high-street brands, travel companies and publishers (assisted by KPMG and the National Literacy Trust) to increase reach and awareness of the service amongst parents in key demographics. Companies are being targeted for their location and reach with C2DE families.



**Share Your Story** – BBC Centenary initiative, reaching at least 250,000 children to offer a storytelling masterclass from top BBC names, backed by online materials from the National Literacy Trust, the BFI and Voice 21.

**BBC**  
**Bitesize**



### TRACKING PROGRESS

- Perceptions of the BBC among under 16s.
- Research into impact of BBC Bitesize on exam grades.
- Impact and reach of BBC Education products in schools with high proportion of Free School Meals.
- Universities of Sheffield and Liverpool study on impact of Tiny Happy People on language development.

**BBC TINY**  
**Happy**  
**PEOPLE**

# A BBC ACTION PLAN FOR LEVELLING UP

## Transforming the BBC



### A UNIVERSAL BBC

3 Positive destinations Post 16+



Double the number of BBC apprentices to 1,000 by 2025/26.

Leveraging the BBC's commissioning power – working with TV productions with the intention of at least one apprentice on every commission.

For every new apprentice hire we seek to guarantee a permanent role going forward or a qualification for a freelance career in the media sector.

5 Open recruitment



We will be the first media organisation to set a target of 25% on lower socio-economic diversity alongside delivering existing 50/20/12 targets.

Embed inclusive hiring practices with diverse recruitment panels including widening talent searches to make senior level changes more quickly.

6 Fair career progression



Accelerator programme to support progression of diverse colleagues at mid-career, providing them with coaching, senior leader sponsorship, training and hands on experience.

Double our mentor network to 800 over the next five years.



### TRACKING PROGRESS

- Improved diversity and inclusion monitoring, adding socio-economic diversity to existing metrics on gender, ethnicity and disability, split by job grade. *Socioeconomic diversity uses three metrics: parental occupation, type of school attended and eligibility for free school meals when at school, in line with the advice of the Social Mobility Commission.*
- The number of BBC apprentices and their socio-economic background.
- The number of children reached by BBC outreach programmes.
- The number of BBC staff in all UK regions and nations.



### A LOCAL BBC

3 Positive destinations Post 16+



A new apprenticeship training hub to be piloted in in the West Midlands as part of the Digbeth regeneration plan, for at least 40 apprentices across the creative industries. A centre of excellence in production in the city to be consolidated in a creative quarter including BBC Asian Network.

5 Open recruitment



Double the number of organisations to 10,000 on outreach including schools, youth organisations, FE colleges, screen and cultural organisations. Outreach programme reaching up to 1 million children (in person and virtual) by 27/28.

6 Fair career progression



70 new digital roles are being created in Newcastle with staff recruited locally and we will co-locate a new news story team in Leeds.



# A BBC ACTION PLAN FOR LEVELLING UP

## Getting closer to audiences across the UK



### A UNIVERSAL BBC

9 Extending enterprise



Under *Across the UK* plans published in 2021 an additional £700m over the next 6 years to be invested across the UK generating £850m of economic benefit.

Increase investment in the production of TV content from 50% to 60% outside of London. Increase investment in the production of radio and music from 40% to 50% outside of London.

14 Achieve equality through diversity & inclusion



Refocus creative decision making on portrayal and representation of all audiences across the UK through our content:

- **Flagship programmes** including the *Today* programme, Radio 4's *PM* and *Newsnight* will be presented from locations across the UK.
- **Move half of news gathering teams outside London** by the end of 2023 (including Cardiff, Glasgow and Leeds).
- **A new BBC Three channel** reflecting the authentic voices of younger people across the whole UK with 75% of commissions outside London.



### TRACKING PROGRESS

- Perception of UK adults of whether the BBC reflects people like them and the part of the UK they live in.
- Perceptions of whether the BBC has content that raises awareness of different ways of life and perspectives in UK society.
- Reach of BBC content and services with C2DE audiences.
- The impact of the BBC on the creation of creative clusters including Wales, the West Midlands and the North East.
- Network television expenditure outside of London and the number of hours of BBC Local Radio and BBC Nations Radio.



### A LOCAL BBC

9 Extending enterprise



**Biggest BBC investment in the North East** for decades with at least £25m – working with 12 local and 2 Mayoral authorities to build the local production economy and wider skills required for the region to thrive and to support creative cluster development.

**Expanded 3-year partnerships with the National Film and Television School** in Glasgow, Leeds, Cardiff and London to strengthen diversity across the UK - 20 funded bursaries and 60 free training opportunities for small indie fund companies, two-thirds of which are based outside London.

14 Achieve equality through diversity & inclusion



**Two new long-running drama series** over the next 3 years from the North of England and the Nations with a focus on local procurement and talent.