

## **BBC Scotland submission to the Scottish Parliament Culture Committee's Inquiry on Broadcasting in Scotland**

### **Universal<sup>1</sup>**

- The BBC is the UK's number one media brand used by 83% of adults in Scotland on average per week and by 93% of adults in Scotland on average per month maintaining near universal reach in a world of infinite choice.
- Usage of BBC iPlayer, BBC Sounds and BBC Online all increased in Scotland 2024/25
- BBC iPlayer was the UK's fastest-growing Video-on-Demand (VOD) platform 2024/25
- BBC was the only UK brand in the top 5 most used for media by UK young people (under 16).

### **Spend<sup>2</sup>**

- The BBC is the largest single investor in UK content overall (£3.1bn including news, sport, acquisitions, radio, audio, online, orchestras) and the largest single investor in UK TV content (£1.8bn).
- 95% of public service spend is directed to content and its delivery
- BBC is the key PSB supporting the creative economy of Scotland; the vast majority of PSB spend on first-run programming for viewers in Scotland in 2024 was by the BBC<sup>3</sup> with the BBC responsible for 75% of all PSB content spend on TV production in Scotland.<sup>4</sup>

### **Savings**

- The BBC has had a 30% real-terms fall in income over ten years from 2010 to 2020<sup>5</sup>
- Substantial progress made towards our £700 million annual recurring savings target by March 2028, achieving total savings of £564 million since 2022/23.<sup>6</sup>
- The BBC has halved the number of senior leaders.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> BBC Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ofcom Media Nations: Scotland 2025

<sup>4</sup> Economic Value of the Screen Sector in Scotland 2023

<sup>5</sup> BBC ARA 23/24

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> BBC ARA 2012/13 - BBC ARA 24/25

## BBC in Scotland

- Providing video and audio content online, across linear and digital TV and radio, from BBC bases across Scotland delivering: news and current affairs; drama; factual and entertainment; sport; education; religion; music and culture, with services in English and Gaelic.
- Steady growth in BBC iPlayer for BBC Scotland content to over one million weekly active accounts accessing BBC Scotland content in 2024/25
- BBC Radio nan Gàidheal has a weekly reach of 50.3% amongst the community<sup>8</sup> with over 9 million streams of BBC ALBA iPlayer content in 2025.
- The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025 with a busy schedule for BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio Scotland, TV and online and delivers a series of outreach, school and community projects.
- BBC Bitesize: resources provided in English and Gaelic to support the Scottish curriculum and qualifications; across the UK BBC Bitesize was used by over 70% of secondary school pupils 2024/25; Bitesize content outperforms in Scotland, making up c14% of average unique users accessing Bitesize curriculum content in the UK.

## BBC Charter

- This marks a critical moment for the BBC and for the whole of the UK's creative sector.
- The UK Government's consultation on the BBC Charter is an opportunity for the public, politicians, and industry to have their say on the future of the BBC and shape the UK's media landscape for the next decade and beyond.
- We welcome the debate and encourage everyone – individuals and organisations – to contribute to the [UK Government consultation on the BBC](#).
- We would like a Charter agreement which secures a universal public service BBC for a generation, delivering for all of us, reaching the broadest possible audiences through services and content which represent and resonate with the lives of all the nations and communities of the UK.

To achieve this, we believe the Charter must deliver on three key goals:

1. Independent: Safeguard the BBC's independence in the interests of the public
2. Sustainable: Ensure the BBC is sustainable as a universal public service for the long term
3. Responsive: Enable the BBC to meet changing audience needs with speed and agility

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<sup>8</sup> As of December 2025

## Value for Money

The estimated cost of a subscription bundle including everything the BBC offers (advertising-free video, audio, and news media) would come to £624 a year; the current licence fee costs £174.50 (Feb 2025)

## Funding

We know the Licence Fee needs modernisation and reform and we believe that reform must:

1. Provide significant and sustainable public funding
2. Deliver fair value for audiences
3. Secure all the benefits of a universal public service BBC of scale for the long term

## Our BBC, Our Future – Engagement Results for Scotland

- The BBC published the results of its biggest ever listening exercise (Oct 2025) – which shows resounding support for its continuing mission to inform, educate and entertain.
- The “Our BBC, Our Future” questionnaire received 872,701 responses, with 64,246 people in Scotland sharing their views on the organisation and its future.
- The Scottish results show people demonstrated support for a BBC that plays a critical role for the UK, with 83% of respondents in Scotland saying it is important that the BBC’s core mission to inform, educate and entertain continues.

Alongside that, in Scotland:

- 93% said it’s important the BBC seeks to pursue truth with no agenda
- 85% said it’s important that the BBC backs the best homegrown storytelling
- 72% said it’s important that the BBC brings people together.

The results send a clear message about the kind of organisation the people in Scotland who responded want the BBC to be:

- 91% said it’s important to be independent from the government of the day
- 80% said it’s important to reflect people across the UK and different parts of the UK
- 74% said it’s important to be an asset for the UK around the world
- 81% said it’s important to provide a valuable public service
- 80% said it’s important to offer high-quality digital services
- 78% said it’s important to offer something for everyone

## Three essential roles the BBC will prioritise to ensure it offers value for audiences:

### Pursue truth with no agenda

- The BBC News app is the number one news app in the UK for monthly reach<sup>9</sup>
- The BBC is Scotland's most-used news provider; 64% use BBC for news across TV, radio and online and BBC delivers six out of the 20 most popular news sources in Scotland<sup>10</sup>
- 39% of 12–15-year-olds in the UK follow the news with the BBC, which is higher than any other organisation<sup>11</sup>

### Back the best homegrown storytelling

- As the single largest investor in original Scottish and UK content, we contributed almost £5 billion to the UK economy last year; for every £1 of BBC's direct economic activity, £2.63 is generated in the economy.<sup>12</sup>
- Our strong focus on homegrown storytelling – *Shetland*, *Only Child*, *Dinosaur*, *Granite Harbour*, *Rebus*, *An t-Eilean* and upcoming shows *Counsels*, *Grams*, *The Young Team* and *Balamory*.
- Requests to play BBC Scotland content on the BBC iPlayer have grown 250% since the launch of the BBC Scotland channel.

### Bring people together

- BBC bringing free-to-air access to Scotland's men's international matches in the run-up to 2026 World Cup - Scotland vs Denmark 2025 match drew in an audience of 1.1 million in Scotland and an average audience of 2.7 million across the UK
- *Hogmanay 2025* - BBC One Scotland comfortably won the battle of the bells<sup>13</sup>
- Content made in Scotland consistently out-performs in Scotland, as a percentage of the UK audience (where Scotland would represent 8% of the population, but viewership here makes up a larger share of that total audience): *Shetland* at 12%; *Rebus* at 15%; *Murder Trial* at 18%; *Landward* at 37%; *The Ridge* at 12% and *Highland Cops* at 25%<sup>14</sup>
- The UK public overall continues to consume more hours of BBC TV than any other provider, more than Netflix, Disney+ and Amazon Prime combined.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> BBC ARA 24/25

<sup>10</sup> Ofcom's News Consumption Survey 2025 in Ofcom Media Nations: Scotland 2025

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/research-and-data/online-research/adult-and-teen-news-consumption-survey/news-consumption-in-the-uk-2025-research-findings.pdf?v=400636> (Ofcom News Consumption in the UK 2025)

<sup>12</sup> BBC ARA 24/25 and Economic Value of the Screen Sector in Scotland 2023

<sup>13</sup> BARB 4 Screens 4+ UK-wide: 31/12/25 Audience peaked at over 1m between midnight and 00:05

<sup>14</sup> BARB 4 Screens (as of Dec 2025)

<sup>15</sup> BBC ARA 2024/25