

BBC Charter Renewal consultation

Consultation page: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/britains-story-the-next-chapter-the-bbc-royal-charter-review-green-paper-and-public-consultation>

Consultation document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/britains-story-the-next-chapter-the-bbc-royal-charter-review-green-paper-and-public-consultation/britains-story-the-next-chapter-bbc-royal-charter-review-green-paper-and-public-consultation>

Introduction: The BBC's Mission and Public Purposes

Question 1. Do you agree or disagree that the BBC's current Mission and Public Purposes should remain the same?

- *Agree - The BBC's Mission and Public Purposes should remain the same*
- *Disagree - The BBC's Mission and Public Purposes should change*
- *Unsure or no opinion*

Agree - The BBC's Mission and Public Purposes should remain the same

Question 2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the BBC should have a specific Public Purpose to support economic growth?

- *Strongly agree - A Public Purpose aiming to support the growth of the creative economy should definitely be added.*
- *Agree - A Public Purpose aiming to support the growth of the creative economy should probably be added.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - A Public Purpose aiming to support the growth of the creative economy should probably not be added.*
- *Strongly disagree - A Public Purpose aiming to support the growth of the creative economy should definitely not be added.*
- *Unsure*

Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.

Question 3. Which option, if any, most closely represents your feelings on whether the BBC should continue to provide a wide range of content and services that represent all audiences in a way that brings communities together, supports social cohesion, and helps build a unifying national story throughout the next Charter period?

- *The BBC should do more to represent all audiences. The BBC should provide more content and services aiming to represent all audiences.*
- *The BBC is doing the right amount to represent all audiences. Currently, enough is being done to ensure all audiences are represented. The BBC should continue to provide content and services aiming to represent all audiences.*
- *The BBC is not doing enough to represent all audiences, but no further action should be taken. Currently, not enough is being done to ensure all audiences are represented. However, there are other areas the BBC should focus on instead of providing more content and services aiming to represent all audiences.*
- *The BBC does too much to represent all audiences. The BBC should provide less content and fewer services aiming to represent all audiences.*
- *No opinion either way*
- *Unsure*

The BBC should do more to represent all audiences. The BBC should provide more content and services aiming to represent all audiences.

Question 4. If you agree that the BBC should continue or do more to play this role, what options aiming to improve how the BBC reflects and represents all audiences do you support, if any? (Please select all that apply)

- *Producing more content that is distinctive to the UK*
- *Covering genres which are less covered by other broadcasters e.g. arts, minority language broadcasting*
- *Producing more content that brings people together around shared moments*
- *Sharing diverse voices and perspectives from all parts of the UK*
- *Improving on and off screen diversity*
- *Other, please specify [Free text box; 50 words]*
- *No changes are necessary*
- *Unsure or no opinion*

Sharing diverse voices and perspectives from all parts of the UK

Other: Better reflecting the experiences and perspectives of people living in rural areas, as opposed to presenting issues primarily affecting rural populations through an urban lens.

Chapter 1: A trusted institution

Question 5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that new requirements on the BBC should be introduced so that the BBC does more to improve workplace standards?

- *Strongly agree - New requirements on the BBC to improve workplace standards should definitely be introduced.*
- *Agree - New requirements on the BBC to improve workplace standards should probably be introduced.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - New requirements on the BBC to improve workplace standards should probably not be introduced.*
- *Strongly disagree - New requirements on the BBC to improve workplace standards should definitely not be introduced.*
- *Unsure*

Agree - New requirements on the BBC to improve workplace standards should probably be introduced.

Question 6. How, if at all, does the amount those working for the BBC are paid impact your view of the BBC? When responding, you may wish to consider how much it impacts your trust in the BBC's outputs and whether it affects how much you engage with BBC services. [200 word open box]

Our concern over BBC staff pay centres less on the pay itself than that of the perception it creates that its highest-paid 'celebrity' presenters are essentially immune to BBC policies on impartiality. The outgoing Director General once said "If you want to be an opinionated columnist or a partisan campaigner on social media then that is a valid choice, but you should not be working at the BBC," yet as soon as his resolve was tested by Gary Lineker – one of the BBC's highest-paid presenters and a persistent political activist – he conceded almost immediately, rather than losing someone the BBC's culture had apparently designated as untouchable. In the case of Chris Packham, the BBC has used torturous arguments including a pinhead-dancing distinction drawn between 'regular' and 'recurrent' presenters to excuse inactivity over his blatant political partisanship and advocacy for particular causes and agendas. This total failure by the BBC to enforce its own policies on its 'celebrity' presenters has done far more to damage trust in the BBC's output than have their levels of pay by themselves.

Question 7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the BBC is currently accountable to the public?

- *Strongly agree - The BBC is almost always accountable to the public.*

- Agree - *The BBC is mostly accountable to the public.*
- Neither agree nor disagree - *No opinion either way.*
- Disagree - *The BBC is rarely accountable to the public.*
- Strongly disagree - *The BBC is almost never accountable to the public.*
- Unsure

Disagree - The BBC is rarely accountable to the public.

Question 8. Which of the following options aiming to enhance the BBC's accountability, if any, do you support? (Please select all that apply)

- *Requiring the BBC to use consultative forums, such as citizens' assemblies, so that decision-making represents the publics' views and voices*
- *Requiring the BBC to hear regional perspectives through new consultative frameworks or other structures, representing each of the UK's nations and/or regions*
- *Enhancing how the BBC conducts audience research to help inform decision making*
- *Strengthening requirements of the Board to ensure the BBC engages with the public in a meaningful way*
- *Changing the structure of the Board to enhance its effectiveness and accountability*
- *Changing the Board's appointment process, this could include reducing the government's role in board appointments to appointing the Chair only*
- *Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of board members, this could include setting out duties for the Chair*
- *Enhancing the role of the independent board members and their ability to hold the BBC to account*
- *Strengthening the external scrutiny of the BBC, this could include, for example, greater oversight by Ofcom or Parliament*
- *Other (please specify) [free text]*
- *No changes are necessary*
- *Unsure or no opinion*

Strengthening requirements of the Board to ensure the BBC engages with the public in a meaningful way

Enhancing the role of the independent board members and their ability to hold the BBC to account

Strengthening the external scrutiny of the BBC, this could include, for example, greater oversight by Ofcom or Parliament

Other (please specify) Making Ofcom the principal complaint-handling body for the BBC, rather than requiring complaints to be made to the BBC in the first instance.

Question 9. The government is considering targeted changes to increase transparency in the BBC to enhance BBC accountability over the next Charter period. Which options, if any, do you support? (Please select all that apply)

- *Improving the way the BBC communicates important information so it is clear, concise and able to be understood by everyone*
- *Requiring the BBC to communicate important information better to industry stakeholders, particularly to other UK broadcasters*
- *Requiring the BBC to communicate more information about its complaints process, particularly to those who submit complaints*
- *Requiring the BBC to communicate more information about the process for selecting which programmes should be made and broadcast*
- *Requiring the BBC to communicate more information about its editorial decisions*
- *Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]*
- *No changes are necessary*
- *Unsure or no opinion*

Improving the way the BBC communicates important information so it is clear, concise and able to be understood by everyone

Requiring the BBC to communicate more information about its complaints process, particularly to those who submit complaints

Requiring the BBC to communicate more information about the process for selecting which programmes should be made and broadcast

Requiring the BBC to communicate more information about its editorial decisions

Question 10. Why, if at all, does the BBC's independence matter to you? (Please select all that apply)

- *It allows the BBC to be free from government or political influence in the content it releases*
- *It allows the BBC to be impartial when reporting on elections, government policies, and political parties*
- *It allows the BBC to hold government to account and/or be critical of government*
- *It allows the BBC to be editorially independent and make the final call on what stories to cover and how to cover them*

- *It allows the BBC to pursue its own agenda, without interference, so it can provide content that serves audiences across the UK*
- *Other, please specify [Free text]*
- *The BBC's independence does not matter to me*
- *Unsure or no opinion*

Other, please specify Independence should in theory assist the BBC in covering matters of public controversy in an impartial manner, which is vital to ensure public confidence especially as the BBC is funded by the licence fee paid by people of widely differing opinions.

Question 11. What measures to increase the BBC's independence from government, if any, should be prioritised to support greater trust in, and engagement with, the BBC? In your response you may wish to explain your reasoning and provide relevant evidence.

[free text limited to 200 words]

- *Unsure or no opinion*

Unsure or no opinion

Chapter 2: Delivering services for the public good

Question 12. What, if anything, should the BBC focus on to ensure AI is used for the public good, and for the benefit of the wider creative industries? Please select all that apply.

- *Transparently explaining its own use of AI, for example, in the creation of content and services*
- *Having new requirements (for example, transparency obligations), to set the ethical standards for AI's use in public service media organisations*
- *Teaching audiences how to recognise where AI has been used, and to critically assess the reliability of information and content*
- *Helping audiences to use AI themselves, for example, teaching them basic prompting skills*
- *Find innovative uses of AI to drive efficiencies within the BBC and in the wider media sector*
- *Act as a bridge between AI companies and smaller public service media who have less time and money to negotiate, helping to support wider collaboration*
- *Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]*

- *The new Charter should not introduce obligations around AI for the BBC*
- *Unsure or no opinion*

Unsure or no opinion

Question 13. What kind of programming, if any, do you think the BBC should make more visible on its platforms? (Please select all that apply)

- *News and current affairs programming*
- *Arts, religious and international affairs programming (sometimes referred to as 'underserved' genres)*
- *Children's and educational programming*
- *Programming showing different voices and perspectives from across the UK*
- *Locally relevant programming*
- *Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]*
- *The new Charter should not require the BBC to make specific types of programmes more visible*
- *Unsure or no opinion*

Programming showing different voices and perspectives from across the UK

Question 14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the BBC should make greater use of third party platforms to share its content?

- *Strongly agree - The BBC should definitely make greater use of third party platforms to share its content*
- *Agree - The BBC should probably make greater use of third party platforms to share its content*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way*
- *Disagree - The BBC should not make greater use of third party platforms to share its content*
- *Strongly disagree - The BBC should definitely not make greater use of third party platforms to share its content*
- *Unsure*

Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way

Question 15. Reflecting on your response above, please explain why you agree or disagree that the BBC should make greater use of third party platforms to share its content. Please provide relevant evidence, where possible.

[free text limited to 200 words]

[No response]

Question 16. What, if anything, do you believe would improve the value and relevance of BBC news and current affairs to you? This includes all BBC news and current affairs content, including its TV, radio and online news services, and local, national and international news outputs.

- *A renewed focus on accuracy and impartiality*
- *More clearly marking when content is news versus where it is opinion*
- *Robust and transparent editorial guidelines applied consistently*
- *Greater explanation of the editorial and journalistic decisions taken when reporting the news*
- *Greater transparency when mistakes and errors are made*
- *More effort to be made in taking into account the public's views in its news coverage*
- *Reporting more news stories which are local to you*
- *Reporting more international news stories*
- *Highlighting stories which are not reported by other outlets*
- *Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]*
- *No changes are necessary*
- *Unsure or no opinion*

A renewed focus on accuracy and impartiality

More clearly marking when content is news versus where it is opinion

Robust and transparent editorial guidelines applied consistently

Greater transparency when mistakes and errors are made

More effort to be made in taking into account the public's views in its news coverage

Other, please specify A renewed commitment, when reporting news, to centring the voices of the people directly affected by the issue at hand. Specifically in terms of coverage of rural affairs and issues that affect them, such as regulations relating to animal welfare that impose new prohibitions or regulations on the rural sector, centring the voices of those living and working in rural areas when reporting them rather than allowing them to be drowned out by predominantly urban activists. The scarcity of such rural voices was highlighted in the 2014 BBC Trust Impartiality Review on BBC coverage of Rural Areas in the UK. While the BBC Trust welcomed the review, committing to “tackle the deficit in its network coverage of rural England, and broaden the range of voices it features on rural issues on network news,” we are unconvinced that sufficient

change has resulted. Also, seeking and reporting more positive stories of the successes of rural businesses and communities.

Question 17. Thinking about the next Charter period, what role, if any, do you think the BBC should have in ensuring UK citizens can recognise and access trusted and accurate information? Please provide any relevant evidence to support your response.

[200 word text box]

There is a role in this for the BBC but it needs to start by getting its own house in order. The BBC must re-commit to impartiality in its output, both in terms of individual segments and programmes and across the totality of its output. It must insist on impartiality with respect to matters of public controversy from those it employs as presenters, regardless of their contractual status, instead of continuing to allow them to leverage the platform granted to them by their work for the BBC for their private purposes as activists. Beyond that, the BBC should expand its coverage of rural affairs so that more trusted information is made available to the public on this vital but under-represented element of national life.

Question 18. The BBC's international output showcases the UK, its culture and its values to a global audience. This includes the BBC World Service, which seeks to provide access to trusted news around the world in an increasingly challenging international environment. To what extent do you agree it is important that the BBC continues to perform these roles internationally?

- *Strongly agree - The BBC must continue to provide this role internationally.*
- *Agree - The BBC should continue to provide this role internationally.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - The BBC should not continue to provide this role internationally.*
- *Strongly Disagree - The BBC must not continue to provide this role internationally.*
- *Unsure*

Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.

Chapter 3: Driving growth across the UK

Question 19. What, if anything, do you value about the BBC being UK-wide? (Please select all that apply)

- *Bringing people together from different communities across the UK, including its nations and regions*
- *Representing people from across the UK*
- *Telling local stories to a national audience*
- *Providing local news and information*
- *Money spent in local areas*
- *Stimulating local creative clusters (e.g. MediaCity in Greater Manchester, BBC's new headquarters in the West Midlands), including through supporting the independent production sector.*
- *Jobs and skills development for local people*
- *Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]*
- *None of the above*
- *Unsure*

Bringing people together from different communities across the UK, including its nations and regions

Representing people from across the UK

Telling local stories to a national audience

Question 20. (1) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the BBC should be required to spread more of its spending, activities, and decision-making across nations and regions of the UK?

- *Strongly agree - The BBC should definitely do more to spread its spending, activities and decision making across nations and regions of the UK.*
- *Agree - The BBC should probably do more to spread its spending, activities and decision making across nations and regions of the UK.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - The BBC should probably not do more to spread its spending, activities and decision making across nations and regions of the UK.*
- *Strongly disagree - The BBC should definitely not do more to spread its spending, activities and decision making across nations and regions of the UK.*
- *Unsure*

Agree - The BBC should probably do more to spread its spending, activities and decision making across nations and regions of the UK.

Question 20. (2) Which option(s), if any, would you support for spreading the BBC's economic impact and role supporting the production sector across the UK nations and regions? (Please select all that apply).

- *Requiring the BBC to develop long-term strategies for regional creative sector development*
- *Further quotas or obligations for producing content outside London and the M25*
- *New quota targets for basing staff involved in commissioning content across the UK nations and regions*
- *Governance changes to give regional or local leads for commissioning content more control over their budget and decision-making*
- *Changing the rules so location is factored into decision-making around commissioning content from independent production companies*
- *Other: please specify*
- *None of the above*
- *Unsure or no opinion*

Other: please specify An increased focus on programme-making in rural areas and a commitment to sourcing from businesses local to rural production locations where possible.

N.B. This section of the response form was found to be faulty and did not accept the above input. In the alternative, ‘Unsure or no opinion’ was selected and, asked after question 24 ‘Do you have any further views on the topics or options discussed in this section you wish to expand on?’, the fault was reported and the intended answer entered there.

Question 21. What, if anything, do you think the BBC could do to fill skills gaps in the creative sector? Please provide any relevant evidence, where possible.

[Free-text box; 200 words]

- *Unsure or no opinion*

Unsure or no opinion

Question 22. If you represent an organisation that has worked with the BBC in the past, please share your reflections and provide evidence on your experience of how your partnership has worked and how it could be improved. You may wish to consider how you aligned vision and goals for the partnership, trust, communication, transparency, decision-making, or other aspects of partnership working.

What went well? [Free-text box; 350 words]

What could be improved? [Free-text box; 350 words]

[No response]

Question 23. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation with an interest in R&D (e.g. a production company, university, a technology hardware company), how would you like to see the BBC supporting innovation? Please provide relevant evidence, where possible. In your answer, you may wish to consider any specific areas where you think it should focus its leadership; what point of the R&D lifecycle is the BBC's support most valuable; and how would you like the BBC to partner with organisations like yours in R&D.

[Free-text box; 350 words]

- *Unsure or no opinion*

Unsure or no opinion

Question 24. If you represent an organisation in the creative industries, please share your reflections on your experience of the current market impact regulation process and how it could be improved. Please provide relevant evidence, where possible.

What went well? [Free-text box; 350 words]

What could be improved? [Free-text box; 350 words]

[No response]

Chapter 4: Sustainable and fair funding

Question 25. To what extent do you agree that the licence fee should continue to fund a wide range of services and output that aim to inform, educate and entertain audiences?

- *Strongly agree - The licence fee should definitely fund a wide range of services and output that aim to inform, educate, and entertain.*
- *Agree - The licence fee should fund a wide range of services and output that aim to inform, educate, and entertain.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - The licence fee should not fund a wide range of services and output that aims to inform, educate, and entertain.*

- *Strongly disagree - The licence fee should definitely not fund a wide range of services and output that aims to inform, educate, and entertain.*
- *Unsure*

Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.

Question 26. To what extent do you agree that the BBC should use the funding it receives through the licence fee to deliver a broad range of benefits to the UK? This could include objectives such as investing in the nations and regions to drive growth across the UK, and developing skills that support the creative economy.

- *Strongly agree - The BBC should definitely use the licence fee to fund a broad range of benefits to the UK and the creative economy.*
- *Agree - The BBC should use the licence fee to fund a broad range of benefits to the UK and the creative economy.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - The BBC should not use the licence fee to fund a broad range of benefits to the UK and the creative economy.*
- *Strongly disagree - The BBC should definitely not use the licence fee to fund a broad range of benefits to the UK and the creative economy.*
- *Unsure*

Agree - The BBC should use the licence fee to fund a broad range of benefits to the UK and the creative economy.

Question 27. To what extent do you agree that the scope of the licence fee should be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability, which could involve requiring more households to pay but with each paying less?

- *Strongly agree - The licence fee should definitely be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability.*
- *Agree - The licence fee should be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - The licence fee should not be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability.*
- *Strongly disagree - The licence fee should definitely not be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability.*
- *Unsure*

Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.

Question 28. To what extent do you agree or disagree that BBC content or services should carry advertising, bearing in mind how this could provide a new income stream for the BBC, how it might impact the audience experience and the impact on other broadcasters?

- *Extensive advertising - The BBC should carry advertising on all of its content and services, including live TV and radio.*
- *Limited advertising - The BBC should carry limited advertising on some of its online content and services, but not on live TV or radio.*
- *No advertising - The BBC should not carry any advertising on its content and services.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Unsure*

Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.

Question 29. Would you be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content, in addition to your licence fee, assuming it was a similar price to other popular video-on-demand subscription services?

- *Strongly agree - I would definitely be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content.*
- *Agree - I would be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - I would not be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content.*
- *Strongly disagree - I would definitely not be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content.*
- *Unsure*

Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.

Question 30. To what extent do you agree or disagree that new concessions for households facing significant financial pressures should be introduced?

- *Strongly agree - The government should definitely introduce new TV licence concessions for households facing significant financial pressures, even if other households have to pay more or the quality of BBC services is reduced.*
- *Agree - The government should introduce new TV licence concessions for households facing significant financial pressures only if there are no negative impacts on the BBC or higher costs for other households.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - The government should not introduce new TV licence concessions for households facing significant financial pressures.*
- *Strongly disagree - The government should definitely not introduce new TV licence concessions for households facing significant financial pressures.*
- *Unsure*

Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.

Question 31. To what extent do you agree or disagree that technology should be used to support compliance, for example by requiring households using BBC iPlayer to enter details from their TV licence?

- *Strongly agree - Technology should definitely be used to support compliance, for example the BBC iPlayer login system should definitely require households using the service to enter details from their TV licence.*
- *Agree - Technology should be used to support compliance, for example the BBC iPlayer login system should require households using the service to enter details from their TV licence.*
- *Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.*
- *Disagree - Technology should definitely not be used to support compliance, for example the BBC iPlayer login system should not require households using the service to enter details from their TV licence.*
- *Strongly disagree - Technology should definitely not be used to support compliance, for example the BBC iPlayer login system should definitely not require households using the service to enter details from their TV licence.*
- *Unsure*

Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.

Question 32. Do you have any other views on the BBC's funding model that you wish to share? In your response, you may wish to explain why you agree or disagree with the potential changes above or suggest a different funding model.

[Free-text box]

The Countryside Alliance takes no position on the TV licence or the BBC's funding model. We would note, however, that where those living and working in rural areas feel that the BBC is failing adequately to represent their experience and is actively promoting presenters who spend much of their spare time agitating against their interests, and as a result choose to disengage from BBC content, the requirement to pay a fee to the BBC purely to make lawful their consumption of broadcast content from the BBC's competitors is apt to be a significant source of resentment.