

Closing remarks

So what is next on 4? In this document, we have set out plans to transform Channel 4 into a public service network delivering public value on-air, online and off-air, developing a new generation of talent and supporting a new wave of creative businesses.

What can we expect from Channel 4 in 2013, five years from now, with the long process of digital switchover finally complete?

- Channel 4 will still be nurturing new talent, developing new ideas and pioneering new services – entertaining our audiences and infusing public service values across its content and services. It will be recognised in the industry as a champion of quality, creativity and innovation in a range of key public service genres, including news and current affairs, documentaries and educational programming, arts, drama and feature film, and children’s TV
- We will be working with more content suppliers than any other media organisation, providing a fresh spur to creativity in television and other forms of digital media. And we will be working with a more diverse range of suppliers – in particular, more companies whose key executives are from diverse ethnic backgrounds, and more companies from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Every household will have the ability to access our portfolio of channels – Channel 4, E4, More4, Film4, Channel 4+1 and Channel 4 HD – on Freeview, cable and satellite. Much of our programming will also be widely available on-demand across multiple platforms and mobile devices. And a suite of 4-branded online, mobile and radio services will enable viewers to consume and engage with Channel 4 content wherever, whenever and however they want. Across all these services, we will connect advertisers to audiences in innovative new ways
- While the core channel audience may have declined, the growth of digital TV channels will mean that the digital channel portfolio will be attracting more than 10% of the total TV audience, just as Channel 4 always has done
- Channel 4’s brand values will have extended into entirely new services in digital media, through the new 4IP fund. Public value will be delivered across all platforms, with young people in particular engaging with public service content in new ways
- Channel 4 will remain an organisation with scale and impact, offering things that would not be delivered by the BBC or any organisation in the commercial sector. We will still be the alternative voice in British media, entertaining, questioning, challenging and sometimes infuriating, but always with the potential to have a positive impact on the lives of our viewers and on society as a whole.

We have set out a clear vision of Channel 4’s public role, including our ambition to take the organisation into exciting new areas of public service, with content for young people and, perhaps more fundamentally, new forms of online content and services. We are confident that we, and our partners, will have the creative skills and experience to succeed. But there are some ingredients for success that lie outside our control.

First and foremost, there is a growing urgency to agree a new model of support that will replace the declining value of Channel 4’s gifted analogue spectrum. The full breadth of our activities – and our contribution to plurality – cannot be sustained without this.

Second, we need a model for programme rights that reflects Channel 4’s unique status and meets the needs of independent producers. Channel 4’s publisher-broadcaster model has served Channel 4, the independent production sector and the wider creative economy well over the last 25 years. We want to sustain it, but this means it needs to evolve.

Finally, the public value that we will deliver across the whole of our network – on-screen, across the digital channel portfolio and in digital media; and off-screen, supporting talent in television and other creative sectors – must be recognised in the regulatory and legislative framework within which we work.

Channel 4 will work closely with its partners and stakeholders – in particular, the Government, Ofcom and PACT – to resolve these issues over the coming months, and so ensure that Channel 4 remains a vital and distinctive force in a fully digital world, through its positive contribution to the creative economy, through the plurality it provides as part of our unique public service broadcasting system, and above all through the value it delivers to the British public.