

# Renewing our purpose

2011 is set to be a landmark year for Channel 4, with the first schedule in over a decade without *Big Brother* and a new, integrated creative team combining television and online commissioning for the first time. This provides us with an extraordinary opportunity to redefine Channel 4's values and creative ambitions.



Channel 4 is renowned for commissioning provocative content – it is a key point of distinctiveness relative to other broadcasters. Having made significant impact with much of our 2010 output, we will seek to evolve this vital cultural role, with content that has an even stronger contemporary resonance and which can provoke debate about modern Britain. Across current affairs, factual, drama and comedy we will seek to strengthen our reputation for content that challenges orthodoxies, inspires change and reflects diverse cultures and communities.



2010 saw small declines in performance against reputational statements covering various aspects of our remit. We will seek to reverse these declines through our creative renewal. With a greater focus on innovation and experimentation, 2011 will see the schedule revitalised as we seek to find the next generation of ideas that can define Channel 4 going forward. Promoting a culture of risk-taking will be paramount to these ambitions – crucially, we must not be afraid to fail.



As a public service broadcaster we are committed to catering to the tastes and interests of a wide range of people. Post-*Big Brother*, we will aim to strengthen our relationship with the 16-34 year old audience and ensure they remain connected with public service content that is both entertaining and educational. This in turn will enable us to continue investing in programmes designed to appeal to wider audiences.



Behind the scenes, we want producers to feel like Channel 4 is the most creative place to work in British broadcasting. We want to support the widest range of talent possible, take more risks than anyone else and give our suppliers the freedom and opportunity to create content that is different to anything else on air.



The viewing experience will begin to see considerable change in 2011, with split screen viewing, non-linear content, apps and social conversation around our programming becoming increasingly popular. Channel 4 will seek to respond to and help shape these changes – finding new ways to interact with audiences and strengthen our relationship with them. We will continue to innovate on all digital platforms, and will refocus our online strategy to ensure it is more tightly linked to Channel 4's overall editorial ambitions. We will also seek to be more rigorous in defining and assessing impact.



### Total content budget

We have set a prudent content budget that balances our public service remit with our need to generate revenue from the advertising market. The total content budget is forecast to stay broadly flat in 2011, based on forecasts for the advertising market, which continue to be uncertain. Content investment commitments are phased across the year, and we will continue to review market forecasts and adapt our investment plans accordingly.

2011's budget will reallocate the money that has previously been spent on *Big Brother* – creating a significant increase in the resources available to spend on new titles. This investment will be targeted across our key genre areas, with significant increases for comedy, entertainment, current affairs, drama and documentaries. The production and development budget for Film4 will also be increased to £15 million a year.

This increased investment will enable us to strengthen our reputation in areas where audience perception weakened in 2010 and maintain it in genres where we already perform strongly. While the reality of life in a post-*Big Brother* world will mean 2011 will be a challenging year for Channel 4, we also hope this period of creative renewal will enable us to maintain the main channel's overall viewing share and further improve the performance of the digital channels.

### Creative Renewal Commissioning Priorities

Where the money is saved	Where the money is spent
Big Brother	Comedy & Entertainment
	Factual
Acquisitions	Other
	Drama
	News & Current Affairs
	Online

# Investing in creativity

2011 will bring Channel 4's most diverse schedule for years, as approximately £100 million is released from retired titles to invest in dozens of new projects across our portfolio.

### Breakdown by platform

We will continue to deliver a mixed schedule on the main Channel 4 service, with compelling and original content across genres. There will be a significant increase in the numbers of new commissions, but with a greater focus on series rather than 'one-off' titles (which often have difficulty in achieving cut-through to audiences) as part of a strategy to develop more popular programming brands that can achieve long-term brand resonance.

E4 will have a slightly reduced overall programming spend following the end of *Big Brother* in 2010 and *Friends* later in the year. However it will have a larger budget to spend on new titles, and we hope this will ensure it remains the channel of choice for the 16-34 year old demographic. We will seek to maintain E4's reputation for creative and commercial success, with a range of new entertainment, comedy and drama commissions sitting alongside high quality US acquisitions.

More4's budget will be held constant in 2011. While its strategy will remain broadly similar – offering viewers opportunities to catch up with some of the most popular Channel 4 shows alongside some brand-defining commissions – we will also seek ways to increase the overall impact of the channel.

The budget for the Film4 channel will decrease slightly. The channel will aim to maintain its share after a successful 2010 and will offer a broadly similar mix of mainstream and alternative films.

Our online spend, including multi-platform commissioning, education and our specialist sites will stay flat. However, the newly integrated Online department will have a clearer editorial focus to ensure it complements Channel 4's creative ambitions more effectively. The new strategy involves ensuring all commissions contribute to the following set of objectives: increasing overall consumption of television programming; generating financial or public value for Channel 4; deepening relationships with audiences; and developing future 'convergent' formats. To accelerate this last objective we will launch a new Convergent Formats Fund worth £2 million to invest in ideas, apps and creative concepts for converged platforms such as the IPTV service YouView.



# Creative ambitions

## Commissioning values

Experimentation will be at the heart of the 2011 schedule. In an age of ever-increasing choice, we want to be the home for creative risk-taking – uncovering new and distinctive voices, questioning the consensus, exploring new ideas and expanding the diversity of our supply base. This means investing significantly in new companies, pilot projects and creative development, launching new formats and titles in all genres and developing new ways of engaging audiences. Not all of these experiments will work, and only a few can be expected to become successful long-running brands. But greater flexibility in the schedule provides us with a hugely important opportunity to test out new ideas, and we intend to make the most of it.

Across the schedule we will aim to be the home for people and ideas that are not normally found in mainstream media. Major series such as *Big Fat Gypsy Weddings* will uncover the values of little-known communities, reflecting the diversity of life across the UK. 2010 saw a slight drop in audience perception of our coverage of ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians and disabled people, and so we will seek to strengthen our reputation in these areas. This will include shows such as *Katie's Beautiful Friends* and *Beauty and the Beast*, which challenge perceptions of those with facial disfigurements, and a season of documentaries about the Paralympic athletes which will increase awareness and understanding of disability sport as we lead up to 2012. Series such as *Top Boy* will continue our commitment to telling stories from the diverse cultures of contemporary Britain, and *The Joy of Teen Sex* will be a bold look at sexuality in all its different forms. We have also made a commitment to improve our engagement with the transgender community, with activity on and off screen.

We will be more open than ever to new and diverse voices. Therefore 2011 will see the launch of the Alpha Fund, a £2 million annual development fund devoted to supporting grassroots creativity across television, film and digital media. We will increase new and regional companies' access to commissioners, helping us achieve our aim of working with a more diverse supply base. We will run targeted schemes aimed at giving new entrants their first break in the industry, as well as funding industry training organisations and running on-screen strands and series that provide a platform to new writers and directors (such as the forthcoming drama *Fresh Meat*, in which *Peep Show*'s Jesse Armstrong and Sam Bain will lead a team of young writers). Black playwright Debbie Tucker Green will make her TV directorial debut with a hard-hitting drama based on her stage play *Random* – continuing Channel 4's relationship with both Tucker Green and producers HillBilly Films, who first worked together as writers and producers on the 2007 *Coming Up* strand.

## Film & Drama

With its ability to deliver brand-defining returnable series that can deliver significant impact, drama will be a major recipient of the reallocated content budget.

A focus will be on developing potentially long-running comedy dramas that bring a more youthful and entertaining tone to the schedule; *Fresh Meat* will follow the lives of six university freshers sharing a house in Manchester, *Naked Apes* will take a comic look at modern relationships from the jaded perspective of paramedics in Leeds and *Beaver Falls*, a new series for E4, will follow three British students working at a US summer camp.

We will continue to show challenging drama that explores contemporary social issues. In addition to Debbie Tucker Green's hard-hitting *Random*, this includes a new thriller series, *Top Boy*, about gang members in East London and Peter Kosminsky's serial *The Promise*, exploring the modern day Israel-Palestine conflict through the prism of history. We have also commissioned Shane Meadows to build on the huge success of *This Is England '86* with a further instalment set two years on.

Alongside these new titles, we will review and refresh our longer-running series to ensure they remain relevant to audiences, as well as acquiring more high-quality dramas from the US and developing innovative ways of enhancing stories with interactive media. This will include exclusive online content for fans in between series as well as encouraging online discussion around popular shows.

## Comedy & Entertainment

Our aim in 2011 is to strengthen our reputation for distinctive comedy. Our investment in this genre has doubled since 2009, enabling us to significantly increase the volume and range of comedy output. In 2010 this will include sitcoms, satire, sketch, stand-up, panel and prank shows.

Our ambitions are symbolised by our acquisition of the British Comedy Awards, which we will re-launch in January as an exciting Channel 4 brand. We will offer new sitcoms for both Channel 4 and E4 alongside returning series such as *The IT Crowd*, *PhoneShop*, *Facejacker* and *Pete Versus Life*. New commissions will include *Friday Night Dinner*, *Campus* from *Green Wing* creator Victoria Pile and Noel Fielding's debut solo show *Luxury Comedy*.

We will continue to identify new comic voices, from the biannual *Comedy Showcase* season to *Show and Tell* featuring three up-and-coming comedians every week, as well as experimenting with ways of using online media as a forum to test out new voices. We will also encourage existing talents to take risks and try out new opportunities – with David Mitchell, Charlie Brooker, Jimmy Carr and Lauren Laverne moving into political satire in *10 O'Clock Live* and new sitcom *Chickens* starring Simon Bird and Joe Thomas from *The Inbetweeners*.

We are significantly increasing our investment in film production to £15 million a year, enabling Film4 to strengthen its role at the heart of the UK's independent film industry. 2011 sees a strong season of cinematic releases that showcase the best of British film-making talent – with Danny Boyle's visually arresting *127 Hours*, the historical epic *Eagle* from Kevin MacDonald, and a chilling adaptation of *Never Let Me Go*, in which Mark Romanek directs a cast of brilliant young British talent. Peter Mullan returns to Channel 4 with his Glasgow-based *NEDS* and Ben Wheatley will premiere his second feature at South by South West. The year will also see the release of several films from female directors, including Andrea Arnold's *Wuthering Heights*, Lone Scherfig's *One Day* and Phyllida Lloyd's *Iron Lady*.

We will continue to work closely with commissioners across Channel 4 to find and nurture new film-makers – with several debut films from people who have built their careers with Channel 4. These include comedians Joe Cornish, Richard Ayoade, *The Inbetweeners* writers Damon Beesley and Iain Morris, actor Paddy Considine and producer Bart Layton. We will also be developing and producing new films from original Channel 4 talent such as Chris Morris and Steve McQueen.

We will experiment with new ways of reaching audiences using new technologies and distribution models, and will continue to show a diverse range of British and international films on the Film4 channel.





## Factual

We will try to increase the popularity and relevance of factual content with an increased focus on contemporary themes. We will aim to maintain our already strong reputation for being provocative and distinctive, and develop new series that can resonate with and inspire audiences. Building on the success of projects such as *Embarrassing Bodies* we will develop new online formats, but with a tighter focus on areas where multiplatform support can clearly add value.

In documentary we will continue to use fixed-rig cameras to reveal intimate insights into modern life; against a backdrop of major Government cuts, *24 Hours in A&E* and *Nurses* will reveal stories from the front-line of the NHS. *Murder Trial* will provide unprecedented access to the Scottish courts. We will also commission projects that appeal to a younger demographic, with *Glassmates* following the lives of a group of 16 year olds.

We will bring a dynamic and distinctive approach to traditional subjects such as history, religion and science, highlighting themes with contemporary resonance. There will be a greater emphasis on science and technology, as well as historical series that inform our understanding of the modern day – such as Niall Ferguson's *Civilization: Is The West History?* The unique legacy of our projects will be an important theme – with a new series of *Inside Nature's Giants* and *Rome Wasn't Built In A Day* reconstructing an authentic Roman villa using ancient tools and techniques. Made in partnership with English Heritage, the series will create an exciting educational resource that visitors will be able to explore for generations.

A new dedicated arts commissioner will work across television and interactive media for the first time. 2011 will see an updated and refreshed arts slate focused on reflecting Britain's dynamic contemporary arts scene, including a unique season on Street Art. This will celebrate the arts of contemporary urban Britain, with programmes on hip-hop, street dance, graffiti and spoken word poetry. Stripped across 10 days, there will also be a strong multiplatform element to the season, using social media to invite viewer contributions as well as exclusive online content on channel4.com.

We will aim to stay ahead of the curve in terms of reflecting social trends and consumer interests – interrogating bold new themes as well as bringing new twists to food, property and beauty. We will also look to further strengthen our reputation for content that inspires audiences with programmes that have a campaigning focus. Jamie Oliver will tackle schools policy in *Jamie's Dream School*, in which some of Britain's best known experts will be brought in to teach under-achieving young people and encourage them to give education another chance. *The Big Fish Fight* season will bring Channel 4's top chefs together to champion sustainable seafood and Mary Portas will challenge high street stores to prioritise customer services in *Secret Shopper*. Expert presenters that audiences trust and are inspired by will remain at the heart of our factual entertainment programming, with new faces such as Katie Piper joining the team.



## News & Current Affairs

We will continue to pursue high-quality, fearless journalism in news and current affairs – holding power to account, provoking debate and covering subjects other broadcasters would not. Our aim in 2011 will be to increase the appeal and relevance of our content, while maintaining our high standards and values.

2011 will see a reshaping of the *Channel 4 News* format, with the introduction of a third presenter, new science, environment and social affairs reporters and improvements to the navigation and structure of the programme.

While the online budget will fall slightly following 2010's upgrade to the *Channel 4 News* website, using digital media to connect with audiences in new ways will remain a priority. This will include harnessing social media to enable viewers to shape and participate in the news agenda more directly and developing applications for converged devices such as the iPad.

We will aim to increase the impact of our key current affairs strands. *Dispatches* will continue to tackle daring and provocative stories about Britain and the wider world, with a greater focus on investigative journalism. We will also seek to increase the profile of international strand *Unreported World*, and experiment with ways of using social media to connect the strand with younger audiences.

We will experiment with new types of current affairs programming. *10 O'Clock Live*, a co-commission with comedy and entertainment, will see comedians interrogating the main political issues of the day.



## Education & Older Children

Channel 4 commissions educational content across numerous genres and slots, whether it is taking a new approach to science, informing viewers about life in Roman Britain or inspiring them to try new recipes.

Across the schedule, we will promote 'life-long learning' for all age-groups with content that is both engaging and distinctive, by balancing a portfolio of educational commissions that includes television, the web and games.

For 14-19 year olds, a major focus in 2011 will be ethics, social responsibility and life-skills – with key themes including financial literacy, sexual and mental health, the environment and ethical fashion. We will continue to provide the tools and support for young people to learn skills that are not necessarily part of their curricular studies, with *Battlefront* continuing to provide young people with the support to lead their own campaigns, around subjects as diverse as autism, knife crime and cyber bullying. We will also explore ways of using our key brands in the linear schedule to drive engagement online.

The Education team will respond to our new remit to develop bespoke projects for older children. We will invest an additional £1 million in new projects tailored specifically to the interests and behaviours of this audience, including several projects aimed at 10-14 year old girls.



## Audience Engagement

Social media and converged technology have created a transformational opportunity for broadcasting, enabling us to have a more in-depth insight into the behaviour and tastes of our viewers.

In 2011, we will explore new ways to engage with and use this data – helping us to both enhance viewer experiences and develop new business models. A new Director of Audience Technologies and Insight will be responsible for transforming the way Channel 4 collates information on viewer behaviour and opinion, and identifying how this insight can inform new commercial and creative opportunities.

This role will lead the creation of a new integrated database, which will help collate all the insight and analysis needed to drive Channel 4 into the next decade. Our ambition is to be the best informed broadcaster in the business – as the better we know our viewers, the better we can serve them. We will use the knowledge we collect to make it easier, cheaper and more convenient for viewers to watch the programmes they love.