

Channel 4 Statement of Programme Policy 2007

1. Overall strategy

Channel 4 faces greater competitive pressures than ever before. Viewers have an ever increasing number of TV channels and can access more and more audiovisual content via the internet and mobile. In this context it is hard for any broadcaster's programmes to stand out. But Channel 4 faces particular pressures because of its commitment to new programmes and to offering viewers challenging and difficult subject matter.

Whatever the pressures, Channel 4 in 2007 intends to buck these competitive trends and to avoid taking the easy option. Channel 4 will offer programmes of contemporary relevance, with a wide range of new titles and series that aim to change people's lives. It will take risks in subject matter, give a platform to new talent, and be the catalyst for unusual events such as *Human Footprint* and *Exodus from Margate* that are more than simply television programmes and are intended to have a lasting impact.

The core channel's budget in 2007 will be £504 million. In line with its remit, Channel 4's unique public service contribution will span education, diversity and innovation across a range of platforms. In particular, it will strengthen its news and current affairs output and offer strong UK originated drama.

Continuing the corporate strategy initially set out in 2004, Channel 4 will extend the values of its remit across the digital channels More4, E4 and Film4 and in its new media services, without diminishing its core channel offer. For the first time, Channel 4's entire digital TV channel portfolio will be available free-to-air on all digital platforms for the whole year in 2007. New media activities will increase considerably, with a 2007 budget of £22 million – key developments will include the re-launch of E4.com, improvements in the 4oD video on demand service, new automated online programme support and the redesign of channel4.com with new web 2.0 tools for use across Channel 4 sites.

Channel 4 will aim for an 11% share across our portfolio of channels, but the focus will be on our key demographics, 16-34 year olds and ABC1s.

Across the Channel 4 schedule, four key themes in 2007 will be:

- **Challenging political, social and ethical subject matter**
- **Strong and distinctive authorship**
- **Support for new talent**
- **New formats and cross-genre initiatives**

(i) Challenging political, social and ethical subject matter

Channel 4 will focus on major domestic and international political, social and ethical issues, often taking a provocative stance that no other broadcaster would adopt. Key programmes include:

- The drama *The Mark of Cain* on the experiences of British soldiers in Iraq
- *The Great Global Warming Swindle* on the facts and myths of global warming
- Peter Kosminsky's *Britz* exploring a Muslim family's response to events in Iraq
- A major series on child literacy, *Throw The Book at Them*
- *Animal Farm* investigating the ethics of genetic modification in farming
- A teen gay sexuality season for the morning Education schedule and a peaktime season to mark the 40th anniversary of the legalisation of homosexuality
- An *Offensive Comedy* season at 11 pm
- *Embarrassing Illnesses* for the 8 – 9 pm Features slot
- The *Dumped* series investigating our throwaway society.

(ii) Strong and distinctive authorship

Channel 4 will showcase powerful voices and authors on and off screen:

- Nick Broomfield on the tragedy of the cocklepickers at Morecambe Bay
- Kevin Sim on attitudes to martyrdom in *Iran*
- Jamie Oliver back with his students from Fifteen in *Jamie's Chefs*
- Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall taking on UK supermarkets
- Richard Dawkins's *The Enemies of Reason* on science versus belief
- Irvine Welsh's return to the Channel with *Wedding Belles*
- Alison Jackson's take on *The Blair Years*
- Molly Dineen's *Lie of the Land*
- Matt Collings' *Civilisation*

(iii) Support for new talent

There will be a strong focus on new talent, with a range of new talent strands across the schedule as well as off-screen initiatives:

- Channel 4 will invest in new comedy talent, often in key Friday night slots as well as in our *Comedy Lab*, and will develop the broadband initiative *4Laughs*. New writers will feature in six *Comedy Playhouse* slots
- Documentaries will launch a new peaktime half hour strand for new talent
- We will support the Documentary Film Foundation and the BritDoc festival to encourage documentary filmmakers beyond the confines of television
- We will fund onscreen film and drama new talent initiatives such as *Coming Up* and *Cinema Extreme* as well as supporting new writers and directors through the Paines Plough and Traverse Theatre initiatives

- *4Talent Networks* will help new talent to get in and get on in the creative industries, with regional hubs across the UK
- In total, Channel 4's internal and external training will be around £4 million, including over £500,000 for ethnic minority schemes and £300,000 for the Freelance Training Fund
- We will mark the Channel's 25th birthday with events to recognise and encourage new talent

(iv) New formats and cross genre initiatives

It becomes ever harder to find entirely new ways of doing things, but Channel 4 will continue to create new formats and break genre boundaries:

- *Human Footprint* will create a new science-meets-art installation
- *The Mission* will offer a new approach to third world poverty
- *The Family* will bring observational documentary up to date
- *The Search* will cross genres with a mix of history, travelogue and adventure
- *The Seven Sins of England* will merge observation and drama
- *Meet The Savages* will offer a reverse anthropology series
- *The Mummy Diaries* will explore death with a new intimacy

Extending public service values to digital services

Our digital channels will reflect the values of our remit in different ways:

- More4 will offer a strong news hour as well as major events including Harold Pinter's *Celebration*, *The Trial of Tony Blair* and *War Oratorio*

- E4 will transmit originated UK drama, comedy and arts, with *Skins* (from the makers of *Shameless*), *Fonejacker* and an E4 *School for the Performing Arts*
- Film4 will continue to showcase a range of UK, other European and world cinema titles, which make up 40% of its output. British films will feature prominently in every part of the schedule, including the weekly British Connection strand. Other highlights will include Andrezej Wajda's World War Two trilogy and recent European films such as *The Edukators*, *Kontroll* and *5 x 2*. There will be premieres of Paul Verhoeven's *Black Book*, the Cannes prize winner *The Death of Mr Lazarescu*, the award-winning Japanese drama *Tony Takitani* and the exhilarating *Kung Fu Hustle*.

In New Media, as noted above, our total investment will increase to £22 million. While we expect our portfolio of new media services to generate commercial returns to be returned to the core channel, we will also use new media platforms to launch entirely new services with PSB values and to offer viewers new ways to access Channel 4's output.

The most important new PSB initiatives in 2007 will be the relaunch of our *Channel 4 News* and *Dispatches* websites, with an investment of £1.1 million. We will develop further public service initiatives such as 4Laughs and FourDocs, and will also work to improve our online automated programme support. In Education, we will develop more multimedia content and launch the *Race Debate* website.

We will also develop the cutting-edge 4oD video-on-demand service that was launched at the end of 2006, the first service to include all commissioned output by any broadcaster anywhere in the world. As new platforms (such as BT Vision) are launched in 2007, we will aim to make 4oD available on as many platforms as possible, as well as extending the range of archive content on offer. We will also develop further the user interface of the stand-alone PC application.

Channel 4's new radio service 4Radio will lead a consortium of partners to seek to win the licence for the second national commercial radio multiplex. We plan to bring the Channel's values of innovation, risk-taking and diversity to the medium, and pioneer new levels of interactivity.

2. Significant changes

There will be no significant changes on Channel 4 in 2007.

3. Innovation, experiment and creativity

Channel 4 will continue to be the most innovative broadcaster in the UK. We will:

- Continue to work with around 300 external production companies, more than the number that the BBC works with across its entire output, giving us access to the most diverse range of ideas from the greatest plurality of producers
- Make big investments in untried and risky projects, such as *Human Footprint*, *Meet The Savages*, *Seven Sins of England* and *The Family*
- Commit to long terms projects such as *Big Art* (transmitting in 2008), *My New Home*, *Born To Be Different* and *Child Genius*
- Offer a greater range of programmes than any other commercial broadcaster
- Invest a total development spend for Channel 4 of more than £11 million
- Spend around £2.5 million on ring-fenced slots for new talent onscreen, including *Comedy Lab*, a new Documentaries strand for new talent and *Three Minute Wonders*
- Fund a new twelve part documentary strand *4Real* for disabled directors

In order to support creative renewal and innovation in the independent sector, Channel 4 provides support to independent companies to develop new talent and nurture small and medium-sized companies, with a particular focus on strengthening out-of-London production, with the Nations and Regions office in Glasgow playing a vital role in supporting out-of-London production companies. We help individuals set up new companies and win commissions, via a range of company development deals, regional funds, and non-monetary support such as the provision of expertise (e.g. market intelligence and strategic advice), talent matching (e.g. matching directors and executive producers) and networking events. We also support a range

of initiatives that provide skills, contacts and finance to small companies to help them to grow and become sustainable businesses.

4. Tier 2 arrangements

Channel 4 expects to meet all its quantitative requirements in 2006. As a publisher-broadcaster we will far exceed the 25% independent production quota, and will meet the 50% target for European origin. We expect to meet the origination target of 60% in all hours and 70% in peak. We will meet the target of 4 hours of news in peak, and 4 hours a week of current affairs (all hours) with 80 hours of current affairs in peak during the year. We will meet our regional targets of 30% of hours and spend.

5. Programme offer

Channel 4 fulfils many of the purposes and characteristics of public service broadcasting that were developed by Ofcom as part of the PSB Review. For this Statement of Programme Policy, we have set out our programme offer on a genre-by-genre basis.

News

Channel 4 News will continue to provide the highest-quality news coverage at 7 pm every weekday. *More4 News* at 8 pm, immediately following the main bulletin on Channel 4, will offer additional coverage and extended interviews. The Channel 4 newsroom will be completely re-equipped, as part of our continuing efforts to improve quality in all aspects of our service, and a news bureau will open in China.

Channel 4 News will continue to have a highly international agenda and will broadcast a *Week from China* during the year. There will be a significant increase in its online activity, with online spend increasing to £1.1 million (see Overall Strategy).

Current affairs

In current affairs, we will continue to address the most important domestic and international issues, and will increase further the volume of our peaktime output, as well as launching major new online services.

Channel 4 will build on the strength of *Dispatches*, and will increase the number of programmes to 40. The key themes in 2007 will be the War on Terror, multicultural Britain, UK politics and the health service. There will also be a major season on Blair and Brown.

There will be 20 episodes of our international strand *Unreported World*, enabling Channel 4 to offer unparalleled international coverage. There will also be 20 episodes of domestic current affairs in *The Insider*, exploring original and diverse points of view.

In *Throw The Book At Them* we will support a major literacy project in a Dagenham primary school. The aim is to teach 100% of the children there to read without increasing spending, demonstrating there should be far more ambitious targets for reading success.

Education

Channel 4's commitment to education spans its television programmes in peaktime and in the mornings as well as new media content and numerous new talent and training initiatives. The core channel will commit £75 million to education programmes in 2007, with a big proportion of these in peaktime.

The sections below on Schools, Science and History, Religion, Social Issues, Arts and Leisure Interests describe the range of our education offer.

Schools programmes

Our strategy in schools programmes is to focus on 14-19 year olds. We will continue to work with the DfES, education experts and teachers to define our key areas, to ensure they have the greatest relevance to the curriculum.

Programmes in 2007 will focus on media literacy, careers advice and gay teen sexuality, with additional series on globalisation, science, philosophy – and also on parents.

We will also extend our distribution on different platforms; in particular, Channel 4's Education programmes will increasingly be available through our new video-on-demand service, to make them as accessible as possible. We will also continue to provide CD Roms, Broadband and online services for schools and colleges, and

digitised clips for teachers will be available through ClipBank, the service for secondary and FE teachers. Channel 4's Education schedule in the morning will continue to be supported by programme notes, available free online at www.channel4.com/learning.

We will conclude our "blue-sky" review of our overall provision of schools programming. Once we have finalised our plans to meet the requirements of 14-to-19 year-olds and teachers, and to take best advantage of new media platforms, we will discuss any new plans for delivery of our schools output with Ofcom.

Children's programmes

Channel 4 does not commission programmes made specifically for children.

Science and History

The ambition for Science and History programmes will be to engage large audiences with important subjects, concentrating on areas with contemporary resonance and using innovative formats to take the genres forward.

In line with the international focus outlined in our overall strategy, Tony Marchant's *The Tribe* will portray Saddam's family in the lead up to war in Iraq. *Last Days of the Raj* and *Empire's Children* will tackle multicultural history, and *Belsen* will revisit the liberation of the concentration camp.

We will employ popular formats to tackle social history such as *Never Did Me Any Harm*. *The Search* will try a brand new format mixing history, travel and adventure.

David Starkey will conclude his *Monarchy* series, Bettany Hughes will explore *Athens*, and Carol Thatcher will revisit the Falklands conflict in *Mummy's War*.

In Science, we will tackle the major international debates, with controversial series on global warming, addiction and genetic modification. We will try new formats with risky big events marrying art and science in *Human Footprint*. Richard Dawkins will confront the fault lines between science and belief in *The Enemies of Reason*.

Religion and other beliefs

Channel 4's religious programmes will almost all play in peak, examining faith around the world and reflecting the diversity of belief in the UK, examining the most

diverse subject matter from a religious perspective. Our religious programmes will promote tolerance through increasing understanding of different faiths. There will be a series of 11 pm religion programmes and a new run of *Sharia TV*.

Mark Dowd will explore how environmentalism is affecting organised religions and creating a new theology. Johnny Vegas and Rod Liddle will offer personal explorations of religion, and Channel 4 will chronicle the migration of 300 Hassidic families from Stamford Hill in North London to Milton Keynes. *Sharia Street* will look at a community living under sharia law. Channel 4 will broadcast the controversial film *The Jesus Family Tomb*.

Social issues

As our overall strategy articulates, Channel 4's documentaries will address the most important social issues, exploring how we live now and the complexity of our global links.

In particular, we will look at mental health issues, immigration (including the series *My New Home*, a five year project following the lives of three eleven year-old immigrant children to Britain) and the relationships between different ethnic groups in Britain. We will explore addiction and organ donation. We will also focus on the family, and the institutions around the family, including *Family Justice*, *Born to be Different*, *A Child's Life* and a major observational series *The Family*. *Cutting Edge* will expand its run and tackle issues including childcare and road safety.

Channel 4 will continue with its mission to find accessible ways to illuminate issues of public interest with new formats on literacy, nurses' pay and international aid. Channel 4 will continue to champion tolerance and diversity through all our social documentaries (see also the section on Diversity below).

International coverage

Coverage of international issues will permeate our entire schedule, as we aim to increase the understanding of the world through history, drama and documentary as well as news and current affairs. *The Last Days of the Raj* will tell the story of the birth of modern India and Pakistan. Drama events in 2007 will include *Mark of Cain* on British soldiers' experiences in Iraq. Documentaries will include Kevin Sim's *Iran* and a season on *China*, as well as *Channel 4 News from China* to mark the opening of

the news bureau there. Channel 4's extensive coverage of Iraq will extend beyond *Dispatches* including a documentary season in the summer. Major international issues such as global warming and genetic modification will be covered in science series.

More4 and Film4 will continue to champion international documentaries and films.

Drama

Channel 4 will continue with a strong range of drama singles in 2007. These commissions are intended to be stand-out events for the Channel, generating debate and controversy on key issues such as Iraq, Blair's legacy and paedophilia. As well as focussing on contemporary and international issues, our strategy is to support strong authorship and new talent.

Highlights will include Peter Kosminsky's *Britz*, an exploration of the differing responses within a UK Muslim family to events in Iraq; *Mark of Cain*, Tony Marchant's drama about four young soldiers sent to Iraq; Irvine Welsh's return to Channel 4 with *Wedding Belles*, his first television comedy film; Robert Lindsay's reprisal of his role in *The Trial of Tony Blair*, a speculative vision of Blair's ignominious scuttle from power; and Ronan Joffe's *Secret Life*, which will explore the world of paedophiles.

Turning to drama series, *Shameless* will return for another series and Channel 4 will launch *Cape Wrath*, a new series based around a witness protection programme.

On the digital channels, E4 will show its first major new drama, *Skins*, and More4 will offer strong new UK drama with *Celebration*.

Comedy and Entertainment

Channel 4's ambition in Comedy and Entertainment is to identify and promote new talent. The greatest challenge for us will be to stimulate audiences for new comedies on Friday nights, which has proved increasingly difficult in recent years as the schedules currently do not include any long-running audience-winning hits such as *Friends* that can be relied upon to draw large volumes of viewers to the channel.

We will bring the best cutting-edge writing and performing to the screen with *Comedy Lab*, *Fonejacker*, and E4's short films *Funny Cuts*. *The Friday Night Project*

and *Charlotte Church* will return with new series, and *The IT Crowd*, *Peep Show* and *Bremner, Bird and Fortune* will also return.

Irvine Welsh will return to Channel 4 with a new feature length comedy drama, *Wedding Belles*.

Harvey Goldsmith will turn his hand to rescuing ailing entertainment businesses in *Get Your Act Together*, and Derren Brown will stage another of his mind-bending events.

The new broadband service 4Laughs will be developed to encourage more new comedy talent.

Arts and Music

Channel 4 will continue its strategy to offer high-profile peaktime events, with the highest quality and widest range of subject matter, and which are intended to draw larger audiences to potentially challenging subjects.

We will broadcast Penny Woolcock's *Exodus from Margate*, a major public participation event. Matt Collings will follow in Kenneth Clarke's footsteps with his new series *Civilisation*, and the drama doc *Yellow House* will bring the world of the impressionists alive. We will follow the *Ballet Boyz* to the Bolshoi.

The biggest event in production during 2007 will be *Big Art*, a long term project involving the public in major commissions for public art across the UK and due for transmission in 2008.

On our digital channels, More4 will feature the massive *War Oratorio* and a new production of Pinter's *Celebration*, whilst E4 will offer its very own *School of the Performing Arts*.

Feature films

Channel 4 will continue to spend £10 million per annum supporting new UK film talent. Our development slate supports a wide range of talent and projects, the most prestigious of which include *The Lovely Bones*, led by Lord of the Rings director Peter Jackson, and Mike Leigh's new work.

Films due for release in 2007 include *The Last King of Scotland*, *Hallam Foe*, *Deep Water*, *This is England*, *Garage*, *And When Did You Last See Your Father* and *True North*. Films underway include *Brick Lane*, *How I Live Now*, *Slum Dog Millionaire* and *How to Lose Friends and Alienate People*.

Film4 will work with Drama to champion new UK talent with a range of development schemes, such as the low-budget feature film project *Warp X*. We will fund the *Coming Up* and *Cinema Extreme* schemes, and support writers and directors with the Paines Plough and Traverse Theatre initiatives as well as a new scheme *Direct Access* with the Directors Guild of Great Britain. Channel 4 will also give development deals to two National Film and Television School graduates.

Sport

We will expand our range of sports in 2007 and will offer the new sport of Air Racing on Saturday afternoons. We will also broadcast a number of sports-related documentary series.

Leisure interests

Channel 4 will continue to invent new formats and find new presenters to enhance the quality of our leisure and lifeskills programmes. Key themes for 2007 will be health and body image, and changing attitudes to food and parenting.

SuperSkinnyMe will investigate the “size zero” phenomenon. *Embarrassing Illnesses* will offer a new approach to awkward health subjects.

Channel 4’s features programmes will also tackle major social issues: *The Mummy Diaries* will get adults and children talking about bereavement and the experience of losing a parent, and Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall will turn his attention to recycling and sustainability. *Gordon Ramsay’s F Word* and *River Cottage* will address the changing attitudes to food and food production.

Grand Designs, *Supernanny* and *You Are What You Eat* will continue to offer inspiring and practical advice.

New media

Channel 4 will continue to invest heavily in New Media, driving both commercial innovation and public service initiatives. Overall we will increase our investment in new media to £22 million.

The Channel 4 *News* and *Dispatches* sites will be re-launched with much improved navigability and content, and with investment increasing to £1.1 million. The new Channel 4 programming database will automate online programme support and encourage much more user interaction. The Education department will launch the *Race Debate* website and develop major new multimedia content for 14-19 year olds, due for launch in early 2008. FourDocs and 4Laughs will be developed to encourage more user content.

The launch of E4.com and a mobile TV service will develop the E4 brand into a pan-platform entertainment network. The new 4oD video-on-demand service will also expand its activities: in particular, we will seek to make it available on more platforms, offer more archive content, and improve the user interface and functionality of the stand-alone PC application. There will be improved automated Programme Support in all genres.

There will also be a major re-design of our main website channel4.com, including the development of a suite of web 2.0 tools for use across Channel 4 sites.

6. Additional matters

Cultural and other diversity

Channel 4 is strongly committed to cultural and other forms of diversity.

Cultural diversity

We will commit to reflecting ethnic diversity in all genres, and will commission programmes with specific multicultural subject matter (*including The Last Days of the Raj, The Last Slave Ship, Batty Man, Ain't It Funny Being Colored, The Black Candidate, Boys to Men and My New Home*). We will encourage multicultural presenters in all areas, particularly in News and Current Affairs and in our Features output. We will work with our independent suppliers to ensure they understand our diversity goals in content, casting and production teams. We will audit ethnic

minority representation both on and off screen and we will feed this data back to our suppliers as well as commissioning editors.

We will launch the *Race Debate* website in 2007 giving viewers an opportunity to discuss issues around race and multiculturalism.

In 2007 we will spend more than £500k on ethnic minority training across the industry. We will continue our highly successful researchers scheme in partnership with selected independents and we will fund a journalism bursary scheme with City University.

Disability

Channel 4 will commit £230k to disability initiatives in 2007 and we will launch a new strand for half hour films by disabled talent. We will continue to fund deaf and disabled directors, producers, researchers and runners on short-term placements.

Programmes dealing with disability in 2007 will include *Richard Is My Boyfriend* (a drama doc on young people with learning disabilities), *Strangest Hotel in Britain*, *Born To Be Different*, *Coming Up: The Spastic King* by disabled writer Jack Thorne, *Blind School* and *The Mad Psychologist*.

We will continue to improve casting and on-screen representation of disability across the Channel. Programmes for which producers are making specific efforts to find disabled contributors include *Wife Swap* and T4's *Musicool* as well as all long running features and factual entertainment shows.

We will extend and repeat the disability researcher training scheme, run another 12 month traineeship at Channel 4 News based at ITN, launch a new runner/junior web producer scheme in Channel 4 New Media, support a disabled actor project, and offer in-series training and placements for promising directors with our new 12-part documentary strand, *4Real*.

Repeats

Our policy for repeats will be in line with fulfilling our licence commitments on originated programmes. Our editorial and spending focus is in peak so repeats there will be minimal.

Promotion of media literacy

Channel 4 will make a major contribution to media literacy with Education's *Media Unmasked* season in the Autumn. This includes Greg Dyke's series *Get Me The Producer*, as well as series on television, advertising, media conspiracy theories and young people's experience of the media. The season will be supported by online material. The *Breaking The News* website will continue to provide a unique hands on experience of how news is made.

Channel 4 will be relaunching *4Talent*, a major new website bringing together all of Channel 4's talent schemes and encouraging individuals to participate in the creative industries. *4Talent* Networks will offer regional hubs for local events and masterclasses as well as commissioning new material. The broadband sites FourDocs and 4Laughs will also offer training and outlets for new talent.

Channel 4 will continue to provide viewers with clear information about programmes in listings and other media, on the EPG, and with additional information available on the website. We will offer a clear system of on air and teletext announcements and warnings. We will also extend our content labelling systems to the new 4oD service, based on the well-understood approach (with warnings about strong language, scenes of a sexual nature, adult themes, etc.) used on our linear channels.

Public Input

Channel 4 will continue to seek the greatest possible feedback from viewers in the formulation of programme policy. We will have quantitative and qualitative audience research throughout 2007, and we will conduct in-depth research on viewer perceptions of innovation.

Channel 4 will build on its improved viewer enquiries service, and there will be more scope for feedback and input from viewers through new services in new media.

Kevin Lygo

Director of Television

March 2007