

Open Letter to the BBC's current and next director general from more than 100 personalities about the future of regional television

16 June, 2020

**Lord Tony Hall
BBC Director General's Office
New Broadcasting House
Portland Place
London
W1A 1AA**

Dear Tony and Tim,

We are extremely concerned that the BBC regional current affairs programme Inside Out has had its forthcoming series cancelled and the future of all eleven regional departments in England is under review and could even be cut completely.

All of those who have signed this letter have been pleased to be involved with the respected, award-winning Inside Out or one of the many other documentaries the regional units make for broadcast both locally and on BBC networks.

Never has in-depth investigative journalism, holding people to account and reflecting the regional diversity of England been more important.

With dedicated current affairs output off our screens and politics programmes reduced to a single England-wide edition the BBC is now seriously under-serving regional audiences.

If these cuts were to become permanent they risk damaging English democracy by the failure to provide an important platform for those voices in our communities who need and want to be heard.

Even when faced with financial pressures we urge the BBC to not reduce regional programming and to defend a vital element of public service broadcasting not available anywhere else.

Yours Sincerely,

Letter Signees (125)

Michelle Ackerley Presenter
Samira Ahmed Journalist/Broadcaster/Author
Ayo Akinwolere Presenter / Broadcaster
Marc Almond Musician
Imran Azam Dentist

Nick Baker Naturalist & TV Presenter
Mike Barton Former Chief Constable, Durham Police
Nikki Bedi Presenter
Rob Bell Presenter
Bev Bevan Musician
Jasmine Birtles Journalist/Author/TV Presenter
James Blake CEO Youth Hostels Association
Fern Britton Presenter
Chris Broad Former England Cricketer
Prof John Burn Professor of Clinical Genetics
Alastair Campbell Journalist/Author/Broadcaster/Former Political Aide
Lee Child (James Dover Grant CBE) Author
Sarah Ali Choudhury Chef/ entrepreneur
Terry Christian TV Presenter/Author
Jo Cooke Hoarding Disorders Expert/Author
Daisy May Cooper This Country/Writer/Actress
Paul Cooper Actor
Joe Crowley Presenter
Kevin Cummins Photographer
Edwina Currie Broadcaster /Former Politician
Kit de Waal Author
Terry Deary Author
Les Dennis Actor/Comedian/TV Presenter
Mike Dilger Ecologist/Ornithologist/Broadcaster
Shaun Dooley Actor
Dr Oscar Duke Doctor/Broadcaster
Christopher Eccleston Actor
Kerrie Farrell TV presenter/Actress
Sean Fletcher Tv Presenter/Broadcaster
Shelagh Fogarty Broadcaster
George Friend Footballer, Capt Middlesbrough DC
Stephen Fry Actor/Writer/Presenter
Prof Ben Garrod Biologist/Broadcaster
Dr Clare Gerada Dr/Medical Director Practitioner Health
JoAnne Good Presenter/Actress
Phillipa Gregory Author
Sir John Hall Businessman /property developer
Joanne Harris Author

Tim Healy Actor
Wayne Hemingway Designer
Sir Lenny Henry Comedian/Actor/TV Presenter
Melanie Hill Actor
Peter Hitchens Journalist/Author
Anthony Horowitz Author/Screenwriter
Louise Hlland TV/Radio Presenter/Author
Conrad Humphreys Round the world yachtsman/TV Presenter
Gloria Hunniford TV Presenter/Broadcaster
John Inverdale TV Presenter/Broadcaster
Tommy Jessop Actor/Social Activist/Peacemaker
Jane Jessop Founder, Blue Apple Theatre
Sally Joynson Chief Exec. Screen Yorkshire
Soweto Kinch Jazz musician
Dr Turi King Lead Geneticist King Richard III discovery
Steven Knight Screenwriter, Peaky Blinders
Mark Knopfler Musician
Ray Laidlaw Musician (confirmed title)
Paris Lees Writer
James Lewis Antiques expert/TV presenter
Ken Loach Film Director
Stuart Maconie Broadcaster/Author
Miriam Margolyes Actor
Brian May Musician / Music Producer
Paul Mayhew-Archer Script writer/Producer
Vicky McClure Actor
Paul McGann Actor
Debbie McGee TV Personality and Radio host
Steph McGovern Journalist/TV Presenter
Jimmy McGovern Writer
Liz McIvor Historian/Author/TV Presenter
Ian McMillan Poet/Author/Playwright/Broadcaster
Lula Mebrahtu Musician/Presenter
Kay Mellor Actor/Scriptwriter/Director
Dreda Say Mitchell Author
Blake Morrison Poet/Author
David Morrissey Actor / Filmmaker
Kate Mosse Author

Chris Mullin Author & former MP
Rebecca Munro Director of Fundraising & Comms RSPB
Steve Nallon Actor/Writer/Voice Artist
Johnny Nelson Broadcaster/former world champion boxer
Kirsten O'Brien TV & Radio presenter
Mary-Ann Ochota Anthropologist/Broadcaster
Prof. Mark O'Shea Herpetologist/Broadcaster
Chris Packham Naturalist/Author/TV Presenter
Ben Parkinson Military Veteran
John Phibbs Historian/Landscape Consultant
Fiona Phillips TV Presenter / Author
Johnny Pitts Presenter / writer
Tom Price Actor/Broadcaster
Mark Radcliffe Author/Broadcaster
Satnam Rana Arts and Culture Correspondent
Dame Esther Rantzen Broadcaster/Journalist
Adil Ray Actor
Angela Rippon Broadcaster/Journalist
Dr Ben Robinson Archaeologist / TV Presenter
Paul Rose Broadcaster/Environmentalist/Explorer
Jasvinder Sanghera Campaigner for Gender Equality (checked)
Miranda Sawyer Journalist/Broadcaster
Alexei Sayle Comedian/Actor/Author
Martin Shaw Actor
Wendy Shepherd Gender Based Violence Training and Consultant
Dr Ranj Singh Doctor/TV Presenter/Author
Lemn Sissay Poet / Author / Chancellor of Manc. University
Helen Skelton TV presenter
Sir Tim Smit Founder Eden Project / Broadcaster
Sue Smith Broadcaster/former international footballer
Dr Chris Smith Doctor/Broadcaster
Alison Steadman Actor
Richard Taylor-Jones Filmmaker/Photographer/TV Presenter
Stephen Tompkinson Actor (Confirmed title)
Rick Wakeman Musician/Music Producer/Broadcaster/Author
Donald Wales Record Breaking Driver
Nick Wallis Presenter
Dominic West Actor

Kevin Whately Actor

Anna Williamson TV Presenter

Shaun Williamson Actor

John Wood Social Media Expert

Yasmin Zaman Guru

Benjamin Zephaniah Poet / Musician