

Hello, I would like to add my voice and comments to the recent review of broadcasting outside London.

I am a journalist who has worked for the BBC for most of my career across local and network radio, the World Service and regional and national television from the regions and I would like to make the following comments:

1. If programmes continue to be centred in London, BBC and ITV will alienate themselves irrevocably from their viewers and listeners. I am appalled at the way broadcasting has become so Londoncentric and like so many viewers and listeners outside the South East, I am furious every time London-made programmes refer to the rest of the country as if we were an alien planet..invariably with bad weather or they do a token vox pop of stereotypes in the regions.
2. Broadcasting will become even more middle class and London-minded as the staff employed will be the only ones who will be able to afford to live in the capital.
3. London lives in its own bubble that it has created where it feels superior to the rest of the country intellectually. This creates an imbalance in its output and alienates the rest of the country.
4. There is an assumption that if you stay in the regions you are not good enough to work in the capital.
5. The need to go to London if you are to be taken seriously is a huge pressure for young people joining the industry.
6. Broadcasting is a perfect example of how the country is feeling ignored by the powers that is invariably invested in London and that is reflected in politics, arts, culture and environment.

I spent my whole career flying the flag for the regions and while I'm delighted that some effort has started to redress the balance, I feel this has to be the beginning of a sea-change and not just a box-ticking exercise so they can shut us all up.

Regards

Shirley Mann

Harvest Creative