

Dear Ms Jackson

If Ofcom agrees an application to extend the regional South Devon DAB/Digital radio service to North Devon and Torridge will effectively destroy any chance of us having a truly **LOCAL** radio service for North Devon. It appears quite obvious that Global Radio (Heart) has an ambition to monopolise local radio throughout the UK thus removing choice from the listening public which is clearly not a democratic situation.

I feel that all of this talk about digital radio is clouding the real issue in that we in North Devon want a **truly local radio service** which we had with Lantern FM until it was taken over by Heart FM which, shortly after, closed the studios in Barnstaple with the loss of jobs resulting in our no longer having contact with our local radio presenters. The Voice broadcasting local radio for limited periods, such as its current and shortly to go off air, Festival FM, has tried to fill the gap left by the loss of Lantern FM.

I understand most of the Heart transmissions are networked throughout the UK with presenters such as former Spice Girl, Emma Bunton, presenting some programmes. I am sure she is a very pleasant person but she is no substitute for our own presenters such as Hopps & Chapple and Suse who we can actually chat to on the telephone during broadcasts.

I believe it is quite well known that the digital radio "experiment" in the UK has not really taken off and that the sale of DAB radios can hardly be considered a success. Why would people want to buy DAB radios when their existing FM radios work perfectly well? I believe there is a developing aim to eventually force the public into purchasing DAB radios by shutting down FM broadcasts just as TV viewers were forced into expense by the introduction of digital TV broadcasts with the need, in many cases, to erect aerials on tall poles on roofs just to receive the digital signal. Pensioners already struggling to make ends meet would have to buy new DAB radios for their bedrooms, kitchens, etc and car users would have to update their car radios to receive digital broadcasts.

No, Ofcom, we do not want to go down that road simply to satisfy the ambitions of Global Radio even though they may have offered to fund the cost of digital transmitters. We wish to make it quite clear that we want to have our own local radio station provided by The Voice which will keep us updated with local situations such as traffic problems soon after they occur therefore, to satisfy the need of our local listeners, I ask you to grant a licence to The Voice to enable it to provide us with a **truly local** radio service.

Yours sincerely

Robin Harman  
Barnstaple.