



# Coventry UK City of Culture 2021-2022

## Broadcast Evaluation

**Produced by MTM**

Commissioned by Warwick Business School and Coventry City of Culture Trust

**March 2023**

## Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>6</b>
About UK City of Culture .....	6
About the broadcast programme.....	6
About this report.....	7
<b>Strand I: Traditional Broadcast.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Structure & Approach .....	10
Resources invested .....	17
Key outputs .....	19
BBC.....	19
BBC: Original Content Commissioned .....	20
BBC: Coverage Across Visiting Propositions .....	21
BBC: Coverage of Live Events Coventry Moves: Coventry's opening event, Coventry Moves, received coverage across a range of BBC brands, including features on The One Show, BBC Breakfast, BBC News, Radio 4's Today Programme, BBC World News, BBC website, and across local and regional services (including 12 hours of live coverage on BBC West Midlands website). .....	21
BBC: Local and Regional Coverage .....	22
Sky .....	24
Sky: Content Commissioned .....	24
Content reach.....	25
Broadcaster viewing data .....	26
Content coverage & quality .....	27
Achievements.....	29
Thumbnail Case Study 1: 'Unlocked' for Sky Arts .....	32
Thumbnail Case Study 2: '2 Tone, The Sound of Coventry' .....	33
Thumbnail Case Study 3: 'Skint' for BBC Four.....	34
Review of strategic partnerships (BBC and Sky).....	35
Research & Development .....	39

Challenges .....	39
Learnings .....	41
Resource.....	42
Partnerships .....	43
<b>Strand II: Digital Broadcast.....</b>	<b>45</b>
Structure & Approach .....	45
Resources invested .....	45
Key outputs .....	46
Content reach.....	47
Content coverage & quality .....	48
Learnings .....	49
Resource.....	49
<b>Wider impact .....</b>	<b>50</b>
Increasing opportunity .....	50
Mentorship, training & development.....	52
<b>Evaluation table [summary] .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>56</b>
Exhaustive list of all activity with broadcasters.....	56
Coventry City of Culture Trust – People and structure for broadcast & digital broadcast work ...	58

## Executive Summary

MTM was commissioned by Warwick Business School and Coventry City of Culture Trust (CCoCT) to conduct an evaluation of all broadcast activities that occurred as part of Coventry's City of Culture year.

As part of this research, MTM conducted interviews with 7 key stakeholders across CCoCT, BBC, Sky and The Space, and performed analysis on social media data and proprietary data provided by broadcasters.

Coventry's City of Culture year was unlike previous UK City of Culture (UKCOC) years due to occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consecutive lockdowns placed significant constraints on the Trust's ability to conduct events with a live audience, but also presented an important opportunity for broadcast to play a greater role in ensuring that audiences locally, nationally and internationally were able to participate in Coventry's City of Culture programme.

The success of Coventry's broadcast programme rested on the partnerships that CCoCT set up with Senior Officers and Programme Department leads at the BBC, Channel 4 and Sky Arts. These partnerships enabled CCoCT to secure national and international coverage of Coventry's City of Culture year, and investment in originated programming.

Sky Arts' partnership was a first for a UK City of Culture, providing fully funded support and leveraging their existing propositions to promote Coventry and the City of Culture. The BBC was involved on a wider scale, developing the 'COV' approach to encourage broadcast teams at the BBC to identify potential opportunities for Coventry City of Culture across 'Coverage': news and review, 'Originate': livestreams and new commissions and 'Visit': existing propositions with Coventry element, talent or location. They commissioned 8 original programs and featured Coventry across many of their existing propositions and mainstay brands.

Strategic partnerships with major UK broadcasters helped CCoCT to deliver against its core objectives of creating original content, developing emerging talent and reaching new audiences as evidenced by the amount of original content produced (9 original commissions across the BBC and Sky), and the number of viewers reached in the UK and beyond (100m+ reach on BBC linear TV channels, 6m+ iPlayer requests, 376K reach on Sky Arts). In addition, emerging local talent achieved their first broadcast commission and appearances during the year, most notably in the 'Unlocked' film series, that granted 10 Coventry artists the opportunity to create short films for Sky Arts, and in 'Skint' a series of short episodes on poverty in the UK that saw Coventry director, Corey Campbell, make his broadcast directorial debut on BBC Four.

Co-productions and collaborations were a key feature of Coventry's City of Culture year. This was a notable point of departure from previous City of Culture years as neither Hull nor Derry took an editorial or rights stake in their work with broadcasters. CCoCT structured several co-productions with independent producers, cultural organisations and broadcasters, highlighting several economic and editorial advantages to this funding model, such as ensuring a say in the production process

and securing rights to the onward distribution of broadcast content. Through this work, CCoCT hope to have created a blueprint for future UKCOC cities to undertake co-productions as part of their broadcast activities.

Finally, CCoCT created a significant digital footprint for Coventry City of Culture, including a total of 82.5K followers across Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter, and over 7.6m video views on Facebook and YouTube. However, it is important to note that this does not exceed the number of views and followers amassed by Hull City of Culture, largely because of a 6-month delay in appointing a Social Media Manager. CCoCT have acknowledged that failing to employ a Social Media Manager from the outset was an oversight that they would encourage future UKCOC cities not to repeat.

## Introduction

### About UK City of Culture

UK City of Culture (UKCOC) is a competition run every four years by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The competition sees cities from across the UK (outside of London) bid to be awarded the designation of 'UK City of Culture' for 1 year, with the winning city provided a pool of funding to conduct a range of cultural activities in their city during the year. The competition aims to deliver social and economic benefits to areas that have traditionally been underserved and under-represented within arts and culture in the UK, and to increase civic pride in, and tourism to such areas.

Coventry was awarded the title in December 2017, after competing against 11 other cities. Coventry's year in the spotlight ran from May 2021-May 2022.

Coventry City of Culture Trust (CCoCT) is an independent charity responsible, alongside a variety of partners, for delivering the year.

### About the broadcast programme

Coventry City of Culture 2021 embedded broadcast across its creative programme to ensure that people across the city, region, nation and world could engage with the story of the city, its people and its place.

A comprehensive broadcast programme that supplemented Coventry's wider City of Culture line up enabled CCoCT to:

- A. Facilitate coverage of live events
- B. Extend the reach of the City of Culture
- C. Increase community engagement (especially communities outside of Coventry, and those harder to reach)
- D. Increase the public value of City of Culture events and content
- E. Increase representation of Coventry nationally and internationally

Coventry's approach to its broadcast programme was informed by strategic planning work commissioned in 2018 and 2019.

CCoCT initially commissioned reports from Prof. Will Saunders (Professor of Creative Industries at Royal Holloway, University of London and Chief Creative Officer at StoryFutures), and The Space.

These reports outlined an approach to broadcast that involved co-producing and co-commissioning content with major broadcasters. Prof. Saunders and The Space suggested that this approach would maximise the number of opportunities available to local talent, production companies and cultural organizations, and would ensure that Coventry COC reached new and bigger audiences. In addition, the reports emphasised the need for specialist expertise to meet the challenging timeline and to ensure CCoCT's approach was as innovative as possible.

A third report was commissioned from Creative Consultant Katherine Jewkes in January 2021. Jewkes outlined a digital broadcast programme that would seek to extend the reach of live programmes using online platforms and social media.

As such, CCoCT went on to deliver two strands to their broadcast programme, a traditional (TV, radio and web) broadcast strand and a digital broadcast strand, each with their own unique objectives and outputs.

### **Strand I: Traditional Broadcast**

Coventry's traditional broadcast programme was part of CCoCT's wider creative programming and production Directorate. The traditional broadcast programme was led by Creative Director of CCoCT, Chenine Bhathena, with support from Broadcast Consultant to the Creative Director, Gill Johnson.

The programme ran across 4 years (2018 – 2022) and consisted of a series of programming and live coverage across broadcast channels, as well as R&D work with major broadcasters. Each content offering was structured differently, ranging from propositions that were fully funded by broadcasters to editorial co-commissions, co-productions and acquisitions.

At the centre of CCoCT's traditional broadcast programme were strategic partnerships that CCoCT formed with the BBC and Sky. CCoCT developed close working relationships with broadcast partners over the course of 4 years, which culminated in the delivery of a wide breadth of broadcast content.

### **Strand II: Digital Broadcast**

Following the Jewkes report, a digital broadcast programme was implemented from March 2021, with its primary aim to extend the reach of major live events and Coventry storytelling through establishing a content portfolio across digital broadcast channels (e.g. YouTube, CCoCT website) and social media.

This programme of work was tested from March to September 2021 and then implemented across Coventry's City of Culture year to May 2022.

The digital broadcast programme was part of CCoCT's wider Marketing and Audiences Directorate. It was led from September 2021 by CCoCT's Head of Content and Digital Broadcast, Hayley Pepler.

### **About this report**

MTM was jointly commissioned by Warwick Business School and CCoCT to conduct an evaluation of all broadcast activities that occurred as part of Coventry's City of Culture year.

As part of this, MTM conducted interviews with **7 key stakeholders** from across the CCoCT, BBC, Sky, and The Space, including:

#### **Coventry City of Culture Trust**

- Chenine Bhathena, Creative Director

- Hayley Pepler, Head of Content & Digital Broadcast
- Gill Johnson, Broadcast Consultant to Creative Director

**Sky**

- Vanessa Woodard, Head of Partnerships Sky Arts

**BBC**

- Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands
- Teresa Bogan, Senior Producer

**The Space**

- Fiona Morris, Chief Executive & Creative Director

Insights in this report draw on interviews with key stakeholders listed above, as well as proprietary data provided by broadcasters, data/information provided by CCoCT/Warwick Business School, and MTM analysis of social media data (YouTube, Twitter, Instagram).



## Evaluation framework

Programme Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Wider impact
<p><b>Coventry City of Culture funding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme spending</li> <li>Team of broadcast, business creative experts employed/contracted</li> </ul> <p><b>Public and private investments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BBC funding</li> <li>Sky funding</li> </ul> <p><b>Project specific contributions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCoCT</li> <li>Arts Council England</li> <li>Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)</li> <li>British Council</li> <li>West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)</li> <li>Channel 4</li> <li>The Space</li> <li>Hopscotch Films</li> <li>Creative Scotland</li> <li>Full Fat TV</li> <li>Naked Productions</li> <li>Warwick Arts Centre</li> <li>Coventry Cathedral</li> <li>Rural Media</li> <li>Media Mania</li> <li>ScreenSkills</li> <li>Youthful Cities</li> <li>Coventry community radio stations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>8</b> BBC original commissions</li> <li>• <b>2</b> Sky original commissions</li> <li>• <b>11+</b> existing BBC propositions with Coventry element</li> <li>• <b>2</b> existing Sky propositions with Coventry element</li> <li>• <b>BBC news coverage</b> across national/regional/local new brands</li> <li>• <b>Coventry box set</b> added to BBC iPlayer (incl. all coverage and commissions with BBC)</li> <li>• <b>585</b> YouTube videos</li> <li>• <b>692</b> Facebook videos</li> <li>• Young People Broadcast and Media Skills training programme</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key questions:</b></p> <p>Did the content created <b>increase the reach, profile, and impact</b> of the City of Culture programme?</p> <p>Did the content focus on <b>showcasing Coventry talent and ideas</b>?</p> <p>Did the content <b>reflect and represent</b> the citizens of Coventry?</p> <p>Was the content judged to be of a <b>high quality</b>?</p> <p>Did broadcast activities enable and broker <b>new co-creation opportunities for Coventry talent</b> to work with broadcasters and independent producers?</p> <p>Did the programme <b>prioritize broadcast and co-creation partnerships with local/regional partners</b> to ensure the sustainability of the broadcast sector in the region?</p> <p>Did the broadcast programme <b>attract further in-kind and cash investment</b> into the UK City of Culture programme?</p> <p>Did the programme <b>provide value for money</b> for CCoCT and partners?</p> <p>Was the programme <b>innovative in its structuring and development</b> of cultural/broadcast <b>partnerships</b>?</p> <p>Was the programme <b>innovative in terms of the format and delivery of content</b> created?</p>	<p><b>Key questions:</b></p> <p>Did the content produced <b>improve perceptions</b> of Coventry?</p> <p>What was the <b>impact on local creative talent</b>?</p> <p>What was the <b>impact on the local community</b>?</p> <p>What was the <b>impact on the local economy</b>?</p> <p>Did the content produced have an <b>impact on tourism and wider interest in the city</b>?</p> <p>Did the programme <b>facilitate sectoral innovation</b> (i.e. piloting new ways of working, new partnership structures, new content formats)?</p>

## Strand I: Traditional Broadcast

### Structure & Approach

#### Aims

CCoCT set five key aims for the traditional broadcast programme:

1. To increase the **reach, profile and impact** of the City of Culture programme
2. To increase the **presence of Coventry on network platforms** (UK and international)
3. To **invest in and showcase Coventry**, Warwickshire and West Midlands talent, ideas, and stories, and reveal the city's past, current and future identity
4. To **innovate in cultural/broadcast partnerships**: enabling and brokering new co-creation opportunities for Coventry talent to work with broadcasters and independent producers; helping them to actively shape, participate in and benefit from new content commissions
5. To **incentivise and attract further in-kind and cash broadcast investment** into the UK City of Culture programme

*"Our vision was about extending the reach [of Coventry City of Culture], promoting the identity of the city and putting Coventry at the center of conversation. In lockdown, it was clear we couldn't do some of the work that we wanted to do, but the broadcast programme enabled us to create different national platforms for artists in the city to show their artistry and creativity." – **Chenine Bhatena, Creative Director, CCoCT***

#### Approach

Central to the traditional broadcast programme was strategic partnerships that CCoCT set up with the BBC, Channel 4 and Sky Arts, which provided CCoCT with a platform to amplify Coventry storytelling within the UK and beyond. These partnerships enabled CCoCT to secure national and international coverage of Coventry's City of Culture year, as well as investment in original programming with a focus on harnessing local talent.

To deliver against the aims of the programme, CCoCT's broadcast programme was made up of a series of phased approaches across 4 years:

- **Partnerships Building with Broadcasters**

- CCoCT <sup>1</sup> built strategic relationships with broadcasters (BBC<sup>2</sup>, Channel 4<sup>3</sup>) from July 2018 to Jan 2020
- During this time, relationships between senior directors at the BBC and senior leadership at CCoCT were established, with both the BBC and CCoCT developing organizational structures to facilitate close working relationships and co-creation

<sup>1</sup> Led by Creative Director, Chenine Bhatena

<sup>2</sup> With Senior Directors Joe Godwin and Teresa Bogan until March 2021, then Stuart Thomas and Teresa Bogan until June 2022

<sup>3</sup> With Channel 4 contact Angela Chan until March 2019, then followed by her colleagues until March 2020

- At the end of this phase CCoCT had cemented strategic relationships with BBC Arts and Sky Arts

- **Developing & Pitching Ideas**

- From January 2020, CCoCT<sup>4</sup> invested in scoping and developing a potential portfolio of original broadcast programming (including co-productions) in partnership with broadcasters (BBC, Sky, Channel 4)
- CCoCT engaged artists/creatives from Coventry and across the region to ensure that ideas for original content came from both CCoCT producers<sup>5</sup> and local creative talent

- **Implementation & Delivery**

- From January 2021 to January 2022, CCoCT<sup>6</sup> focused on the implementation and delivery of their broadcast programme
- Throughout this time, CCoCT<sup>7</sup> continued to engage with broadcasters (BBC, Sky Arts) on content ideation and identification of broadcast opportunities across live, original and visiting content propositions

### **Acquiring broadcast expertise**

CCoCT worked with broadcast experts to help build relationships with broadcasters and to strengthen their understanding of the organizational structure, governance, budgets, pitching process and programme planning of UK broadcasters.

In January 2020 CCoCT contracted broadcast consultant Gill Johnson (co-founder of the Space and former Arts Council England Creative Media Director and Head of Development at BBC Arts) to work directly with Chenine, CCoCT's Creative Director across strategic partnership building, content ideation and delivery. Johnson continued to play this role throughout the duration of the broadcast programme, until its conclusion in January 2022.

CCoCT also worked with The Space to identify opportunities for broadcast collaborations aligned with their vision and themes. The Space were engaged on a project basis, collaborating with CCoCT on 'Unlocked', a series of short films for Sky Arts, and 'Youthful Cities programme', a cultural and creative skills exchange between young people across the globe, facilitated by CCoCT and the British Council.

---

<sup>4</sup> Led by Creative Director, Chenine Bhatena and Gill Johnson, Broadcast Consultant to Creative Director

<sup>5</sup> Broadcast Consultant to Creative Director, Gill Johnson led ideation sessions with producers across all 3 CCoCT teams (Marketing, Broadcast, Digital Broadcast)

<sup>6</sup> Led by Broadcast Consultant to Creative Director, Gill Johnson

<sup>7</sup> Led by Creator Director, Chenine Bhatena with the BBC, and Gill Johnson, Broadcast Consultant to Creative Director with Sky Arts

### Structure of working relationships with broadcasters

Key points of contact were appointed at CCoCT and the BBC/Sky to facilitate partnerships. Points of contact caught up on a monthly basis to discuss the workings of the partnership, and to resolve any issues.

- Chenine Bhathena, Creative Director was appointed key contact at CCoCT
- Stuart Thomas, Head of BBC Midlands, and Teresa Bogan, Senior Producer were appointed key contacts at the BBC
- Vanessa Woodard, Head of Partnerships, Sky Arts was assigned key contact for Sky

To facilitate alignment of teams across the BBC, the BBC also formed a pan-BBC national steering group, led and chaired by Joe Godwin, Director of Partnerships BBC Nations from July 2018 and then by Stuart Thomas, Head of BBC Midlands from March 2021. The steering group consisted of senior leadership from CCoCT and content leads from across the BBC. Its primary aim was to:

- Encourage engagement across the BBC
- Build internal partnerships across the BBC for UKCOC
- Identify content opportunities
- Coordinate responses and outputs
- Ensure all outputs matched CCoCT's vision

The steering group met semi-regularly (on average every 2 months) to share information and content ideas. Additional meetings<sup>8</sup> were set up to discuss specific broadcast moments (such as Coventry Moves, and Radio 1's Big Weekend). The group played an invaluable role in bringing together content producers from across the BBC who could identify and exploit opportunities for CCoCT.

*"Whenever there was a moment coming up, or we hadn't met for a while, we would pull the group together from across the BBC and we would ask Chenine to take us through the next big event or what was happening, to allow all of the different program teams across the BBC to understand what they were covering. Throughout, not just those moments, Chenine and Teresa would get together on a monthly basis and discuss any issues. At any point in between, there was constant open communication between Chenine, Teresa and myself, to make sure there was a dialogue going on."* – **Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC**

*"I was in contact with lots of people across BBC program departments. I could tell them about what we were trying to achieve in Coventry. There is a focus in our Coventry programme on youthfulness, Coventry as a music city, mental health, poverty, communities and migration. We were trying to get across who we are. With broadcasters they often only focus on your history if you don't have those conversations"* – **Chenine Bhathena, Creative Director, CCoCT**

---

<sup>8</sup> CCoCT producers joined BBC meetings with Creative Director, Chenine Bhathena where appropriate to pitch ideas

## Partnership structures: Commissions, Co-productions, Acquisitions

### BBC

In June 2018 after Coventry had won the UKCOC title, the BBC Director General, Lord Tony Hall, committed the BBC to put as many resources behind Coventry UKCOC as possible. Lord Hall asserted that the BBC had helped to spread Hull's message in 2017 to local, national and international audiences, and that Coventry should see the same level of support.

In order to maximise coverage and support, the BBC wanted to ensure that Coventry was woven into as many types of BBC content as possible. They proposed the 'COV' approach to encourage broadcast teams across the BBC to identify opportunities where they could amplify Coventry storytelling:

**Cover:** News and review

**Originate:** Livestream, co-productions, collaborations and new commissions

**Visit:** Existing BBC propositions with Coventry element/talent/location included

**NB.** Original content commissioned with the BBC fell under the following three partnership models:

**Commissions (original):** BBC led editorial commissions of original content and news/coverage. These content offerings were fully funded by the BBC and the BBC was editorially responsible.

**Commissions (existing):** BBC led commissions of existing propositions with Coventry element (i.e. talent, theme, location). These content offerings were fully funded by the BBC and the BBC was editorially responsible.

**Co-productions:** Content funded and created by the BBC and CCoCT (with or without additional partners). The establishment of co-productions with the BBC was a first for UKCOC. BBC had ultimate editorial control of co-produced content, but the co-production model allowed for greater involvement/input from CCoCT and established joint rights/credits to enable legacy use of broadcast assets.

**Acquisitions:** Content produced by CCoCT (with or without additional partners) acquired by the BBC for distribution via BBC channels.

### Sky

CCoCT's partnership with Sky Arts was a first for Sky Arts and UKCOC.

Sky Arts' approach to a content partnership with CCoCT largely involved bringing Sky propositions, old and new, to Coventry (i.e. involving Coventry location, talent, themes). Sky made one acquisition over the course of their partnership with CCoCT, acquiring 'Unlocked', a series of short films from Coventry artists, for Sky Arts.

Content commissioned with Sky fell under the following two partnership models:

**Commissions (existing):** Sky led commissions of existing propositions with Coventry element (i.e. talent, theme, location). These content offerings were fully funded by Sky and Sky was editorially responsible.

**Acquisitions:** Content produced by CCoCT (with or without additional partners), acquired by Sky for distribution via Sky Arts.

### **Partnerships with Independent Production Companies & Local/Regional Organizations**

CCoCT, in conjunction with Sky and the BBC, partnered with a range of independent production companies, from both in and outside of the region, on co-productions and creative collaborations, including:

- **Hopscotch Films (based in Glasgow)**
  - Co-produced 'Skint' short films (BBC Four)
- **Full Fat TV (based in Birmingham)**
  - Co-produced '2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry' (BBC Two)
- **Naked Productions (based in Manchester)**
  - Co-produced 'Middlemarch Monologues' (BBC Radio 3)
- **Primal Media (based in London)**
  - Commissioned to create episodes of 'Landmark' (Sky Arts)

This ensured that independent and local/regional production houses were involved in the production of broadcast content, and that emerging local talent had the opportunity to work alongside, and create relationships with, broadcasters and independent producers.

Working with these partners also increased the amount of cash/in kind support available for broadcast projects through the establishment of co-productions.

In addition, CCoCT set up collaborations with a variety of local/regional organizations. Close working relationships with local partners provided broadcasters and CCoCT access to important filming locations and encouraged a range of local organizations and voices to meaningfully engage in the creation of broadcast content.

Organizations involved included:

- **Coventry City Council**
  - Provided upfront investment in Radio 1's Big Weekend (BBC Radio 1) and MOBO awards (BBC One) to secure Coventry location for these events
  - Funded public arts platform to enable Coventry as location for 'Landmark' on Sky Arts
- **Shoot Festival**
  - Co-produced 'Unlocked' (Sky Arts) with CCoCT and The Space
- **Warwick Arts Centre**
  - Co-commissioned 'Middlemarch Monologues' (BBC Radio 3) with BBC Arts and BBC Radio 4
  - Filming location for 'Dance Passion' (BBC Four)

- **Compton Verney**
  - Collaboration with Sky Arts and CCoCT resulted in Compton Verney location for 2 episodes of 'Landscape Artist of the Year' on Sky Arts
  
- **One Dance UK**
  - Collaboration with CCoCT resulted in Warwick Arts Centre location for filming of 'Dance Passion' (BBC Four)
  
- **Assembly Festival Gardens**
  - Location of the handover of UKCOC title to Bradford on BBC's The One Show
  - Location of Last Night of the Proms (BBC One, BBC Two)
  - Sound of Cov, an 8-hour simulcast of jointly created content from local radio stations and BBC CWR was broadcast from Assembly Festival Garden
  
- **Coventry Cathedral**
  - Co-funded, with CCoCT and ACE, live content that was used to make 'Ghost in the Ruins' (BBC Four)
  - Antiques Roadshow special episode (World War II - The Aftermath) was hosted at Coventry Cathedral
  - Location of 'Songs of Praise', a live event of hymns and songs broadcast on BBC One as part of CCoCT's 'Faith' multi-day event
  - Location of Stirling Prize Awards, broadcast for BBC iPlayer



## Resources invested

### Inward investment

From the outset, CCoCT believed that **a sizeable broadcast programme would be integral to their ability to extend the reach and impact of Coventry City of Culture** and amplify Coventry storytelling. As such, CCoCT developed an ambitious plan for their broadcast programme, including live events and cultural activities supplemented by broadcast coverage and a significant portfolio of broadcast content.

Early development and planning commenced years in advance of Coventry's City of Culture year (c. July 2018). However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the constraints that it placed on conducting events with a live audience, the broadcast element of Coventry's City of Culture year attracted **more resource and attention** than CCoCT initially anticipated.

Investment in the broadcast programme increased largely because:

- Live events that were due to host significant audiences such as the opening event, Coventry Moves, could no longer go ahead in the planned format, and instead relied on a combination of pre-recorded films, livestreaming and live coverage to reach audiences.
- Whilst CCoCT originally intended broadcast content to predominantly reach and engage audiences outside of Coventry, linear and digital coverage/programming also became a means to include local audiences, some of whom were reluctant to participate in person because of concerns for personal and public health.

As a result of the ongoing pandemic, CCoCT received additional investment from the DCMS to extend their broadcast programme in June 2021, which enabled them to build out their broadcast team and widen their scope of activities.

At the conclusion of the programme, CCoCT had invested an estimated total of c.£1M+ across both traditional and digital strands of the programme (estimated total of c.£650K+ invested in traditional broadcast strand by CCoCT).

*"Broadcast wasn't as negatively affected as the rest of the arts and culture world. It was the only opportunity immediately ahead of us to keep creating and promoting work. It felt really important that we pushed on with the broadcast partnerships. Even if people didn't want to leave their houses they could engage in the broadcast coverage. It enabled us to tell the story of the city"- **Chenine Bhathena, Creative Director, CCoCT***

*"We played a bigger role due to the pandemic, as we could bring what was going on to the masses. The pandemic meant that people could not participate in person, but we brought the story to them. [The broadcast programme] ended up being more important than in a traditional city of culture year that did not happen in the midst of a global pandemic."- **Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC***

### Investment from partners

As for CCoCT's broadcast partners, it is difficult to gauge the amount that was invested.

The BBC did not allocate a bespoke budget for Coventry City of Culture and given the breadth and depth of BBC coverage and programming, it is hard to put a financial value on their involvement.

Sky's participation is equally difficult to quantify given that, for the most part, they harnessed their existing propositions.

Co-productions on specific projects (*i.e. Skint, 2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry and 'Unlocked' films*) invited investment from independent production companies and arts and cultural organizations such as The Space, which invested £10K of funds, £20K of budgeted time, and £10K of time pro-bono time into the 'Unlocked' films for Sky Arts.

In addition, BBC Radio 1's Big Weekend secured £300K investment from CCoCT and Coventry City Council (CCC) to ensure the event took place in Coventry, and the MOBO Awards secured £250K of investment from CCC, plus in-kind support from Coventry Building Society Arena, to facilitate Coventry hosting the awards ceremony.

A small number of programs also received Arts Council England (ACE) funding, including: 'Middlemarch Monologues', 'Dance Passion', 'Unlocked' film series and 'Contains Strong Language' festival (CCoCT contributed £50K and ACE contributed £100K).

CCoCT estimates that they leveraged a total of c.£2.7M+ for the traditional strand of the broadcast programme, with significant contributions made by broadcast and local/national partners such as the BBC, Arts Council England and Coventry City Council.

*"Sky had never worked to throw all their resources to show a moment. The fact that they did for Coventry felt like they really cared about the city...The BBC put all its resources into Coventry, which was pretty amazing. I think moving forwards, every city of culture needs to think about how the BBC can flex its muscle to help emphasize and increase the priority of culture in the broadest sense"* - **Gill Johnson, Creative/Business Consultant**

*"It's really difficult to answer [how much we invested]. We will have spent huge amounts. It's all on programs that we would have had to make somewhere else anyway, we just focused on Coventry. BBC Arts would have had to produce a certain amount of content anyway, so it's less about the amount we spent, and more about how much we have diverted to Coventry"* – **Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC**

## Key outputs

The broadcast programme delivered a wide range of outputs.

### BBC

CCoCT's broadcast partnership with the BBC delivered 8 original commissions as part of the Coventry City of Culture year, including:

- **Bespoke commissions** inspired by Coventry City of Culture (e.g. *Delia Derbyshire: The Myths and the Legendary Tapes*, *Classic British Cars: Made in Coventry*, *Coventry Cathedral: Building For a New Britain*, *Curtain-Up on Coventry*)
- **Co-productions with CCoCT** (e.g. *Skint*, *2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry*)
- **Co-commissions with CCoCT** (e.g. *Middlemarch Monologues*, *Ghost in the Ruins*)
- **Creative collaborations with CCoCT** (e.g. *Horrible Histories*)

As a result of the BBC's COV model, many of their existing content offerings embraced Coventry talent and Coventry locations, including:

- Antiques Roadshow
- Radio 1's Big Weekend (CCC collaboration, War Memorial Park location)
- Last Night of the Proms (Assembly Festival Gardens collaboration and location)
- Dance Passion (Warwick Arts Centre collaboration and location)
- Songs of Praise

In addition, the BBC broadcast a significant volume of live coverage across their mainstay news brands (incl. *BBC News*, *BBC Breakfast*, *The One Show*, *BBC World Service*) and radio stations (incl. *Radio 4*, *Radio 1*), with a monthly round-up of Coventry activities shown on a loop across BBC News during the last weekend of each month.

Local and regional BBC TV and radio teams (*Midlands Today*, *BBC CWR*) played an important role in covering Coventry City of Culture for local audiences, with BBC CWR covering most of Coventry's events throughout the year, either via radio, online or social media.

## BBC: Original Content Commissioned

Title	BBC channel	Funding model	Commissioning parties	About
<b>Skint</b>	BBC Four	Co-production BBC CCoCT Hopscotch Films	BBC Arts CCoCT Creative Scotland	8 x 15 min episodes from writers with lived experience of poverty from across the UK.  BBC original content involving creative collaboration with CCoCT.  Hopscotch have created a feature film with funding from Creative Scotland.
<b>2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry</b>	BBC Two BBC England BBC One (in West Midlands)	Co-production BBC CCoCT Full Fat TV	BBC Arts CCoCT Full Fat TV	60 min documentary on 2 Tone, the Coventry music movement.  BBC original content involving creative collaboration with CCoCT.
<b>Middlemarch Monologues</b>	BBC Radio 3	Co-commission of CCoCT Naked Productions	BBC Radio 3 BBC Arts Warwick Arts Centre (funding secured through contributions from CCoCT and ACE)	Re-imagining Middlemarch in 21 <sup>st</sup> century Coventry with 8 x 15 min monologues, forming a 2 hour radio drama.  BBC original content involving creative collaboration with CCoCT.
<b>Delia Derbyshire: The Myths and the Legendary Tapes</b>	BBC Four BBC iPlayer	BBC commission	BBC	Docudrama portrait of Delia Derbyshire, the electronic sound pioneer behind the Doctor Who theme tune.
<b>Classic British Cars: Made in Coventry</b>	BBC Four BBC iPlayer	BBC commission	BBC	Coventry local Mark Evans tells the history of classic cars made in Coventry, including the Daimler, Triumph, Riley and Jaguar.
<b>Coventry Cathedral: Building For A New Britain</b>	BBC Four BBC iPlayer	BBC commission	BBC	The story of Coventry's new cathedral (the original was destroyed in World War 2) and the time in which it was built.
<b>Ghost in the Ruins</b>	BBC Four BBC iPlayer	BBC Arts acquisition  Co-commission between BBC and CCoCT, using live content funded by CCoCT, ACE and Coventry Cathedral	BBC CCoCT	Film of the performance piece commissioned to mark the 60 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Coventry Cathedral, featuring music and projections of archive imagery and poetry.
<b>Curtain-Up on Coventry</b>	BBC Four BBC One (West Midlands)	BBC commission using live content funded and created by CCoCT	BBC	TV documentary showcasing Coventry's newly transformed streets as it commenced celebrations for the start of its UK City of Culture year.  Footage funded and created by CCoCT was instrumental in the BBC's ability to create this program.

### BBC: Coverage Across Visiting Propositions

**Antiques Roadshow:** 3 episodes were filmed in Coventry. 2 episodes were hosted at Kenilworth Castle, in Warwickshire, and 1 special episode (World War II – The Aftermath) was hosted at Coventry Cathedral.

**Horrible Histories:** CBBC's much-loved historical children's TV programme filmed 3 sketches in Coventry about historical figures with ties to Coventry. Collaboration between CCoCT and the BBC as part of Coventry Great Place scheme (funded by Heritage Lottery Fund and ACE).

**TV and Radio news coverage:** Coventry City of Culture was covered across most BBC news brands including BBC Breakfast, The One Show, BBC News, Radio 4 (Today Programme), and Front Row. Stories about Coventry City of Culture also appeared on BBC World Service and BBC World News.

**iPlayer box set:** All coverage and commissions with the BBC were added to the Coventry box set on iPlayer. The box set is still available on iPlayer.

**BBC website:** The BBC created a bespoke webpage for Coventry City of Culture. Coventry's opening event, Coventry Moves, featured on the frontpage of the BBC website.

### BBC: Coverage of Live Events

Coventry Moves: **Coventry's opening event, Coventry Moves, received coverage across a range of BBC brands, including features on The One Show, BBC Breakfast, BBC News, Radio 4's Today Programme, BBC World News, BBC website, and across local and regional services (including 12 hours of live coverage on BBC West Midlands website).**

**Contains Strong Language Festival:** Co-production between BBC Radio 1 and CCoCT, with additional ACE funding. BBC's annual four-day poetry and spoken word festival was designed and planned by CCoCT. The festival was hosted across Coventry at Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Belgrade Theatre and Fargo Village, with programming across BBC radio stations (BBC Radio 1, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 4, Radio 5 Live, Radio 6 Music, Asian Network).

**Radio 1's Big Weekend:** Radio 1's biggest live music event of the calendar year (featuring world class acts such as Harry Styles and Ed Sheeran) was hosted at War Memorial Park in Coventry, with live coverage of the event across Radio 1 and BBC One. The Radio 1 Breakfast Show with Greg James also came live from Coventry for the week preceding the event.

**The One Show:** Filmed the handover of the UK City of Culture title to Bradford 2025 live in Coventry at the Assembly Festival Gardens. The programme featured a range of clips from the year, and interviews with Coventry figures who had been instrumental to the success of Coventry City of Culture year.

**Last Night of the Proms:** Closing event of an 8-week summer season of daily classical music concerts was hosted at the Assembly Festival Gardens in Coventry. Broadcast on BBC One and BBC Two, and later made available on iPlayer.

**Dance Passion:** A UK-wide celebration of dance in all its forms. CCoCT collaboration with One Dance UK and BBC Arts resulted in Warwick Arts Centre location for filming. Aired on BBC Four and made available on BBC iPlayer.

**Songs of Praise:** A specially broadcast concert of hymns and songs, with speakers sharing stories of their faith as part of CCoCT's Faith programme (a 24-hour programme with various events occurring across the city). The concert was created by the Royal Shakespeare Company in association with Coventry's faith communities. CCoCT collaboration with the BBC secured Coventry Cathedral as the location for the 2021 broadcast. Aired on BBC One.

**MOBO Awards:** UK's biggest celebration of black music and culture was hosted at the Coventry Building Society Arena, with coverage on BBC Radio 1Xtra. BBC One also broadcast a special behind-the-scenes program with exclusive interviews and backstage content.

**Turner Prize Awards:** Filmed for BBC iPlayer from Herbert Art Gallery & Museum in Coventry. Co-funded by the BBC, CCoCT, ACE and Herbert Art Gallery & Museum.

**Stirling Prize Awards:** Virtual event live from Coventry Cathedral. The broadcast marked the first time the Stirling Prize Awards have been broadcast from outside of London. Produced by Royal Institute of British Architects and the BBC. Coverage on BBC News and BBC Radio 4's Front Row.

### **BBC: Local and Regional Coverage**

**BBC News Channel:** Broadcast a monthly update on Coventry programmes and highlights (with CWR presenter Trish Adudu). BBC News Channel also showed 'Curtain Up on Coventry', a short 30 minute film about Coventry's opening event, on a loop over Christmas 2021. 'Curtain Up on Coventry' was also included in their 'Top 10 Events of the Year'.

**BBC Midlands Today:** BBC's regional news program covered key events (e.g. Coventry Moves) and interviewed 2021 CCoCT bosses and artists/talent at key moments throughout the year.

**BBC West Midlands:** Regional version of the BBC website covered Coventry City of Culture in detail throughout, including 12 hours of live coverage of Coventry's opening event, 'Coventry Moves'.

### **BBC CWR:**

**Coventry Moves (opening event):** BBC CWR conducted 15-hour live broadcast across radio, social and online.

**Closing celebrations:** BBC CWR conducted 3 live broadcasts of the event. The celebrations were also extensively covered on CWR's social media pages.

**Creative partnership with 8 local community radio stations:** CCoCT collaborated with BBC CWR and 8 local community radio stations to deliver 'Coventry Moves Together', a musical event which saw each radio station play the same stream of music simultaneously. The creative collaboration also generated 'Sound of Cov', an 8-hour simulcast of jointly created content across all participant stations, broadcast live from the Assembly Festival Gardens.

**Coventry Creates:** BBC CWR commissioned a weekly hour-long radio programme to showcase Coventry's creative talent (local creatives had to upload their work to BBC CWR's website for a chance to get on the show).

**Coverage of Radio 1's Big Weekend:** BBC CWR conducted 35 hours of live coverage of Radio 1's Big Weekend, with a presence on linear radio, BBC Sounds and online (incl. social media).

## Sky

Sky Arts took a slightly different approach, mainly making use of existing content propositions and including a Coventry element, such as:

- Coventry location (e.g. *Landmark*, *Landscape Artist of the Year*)
- Coventry spotlight (e.g. *Inside Art* episode exploring artistic events taking place as part of Coventry City of Culture)

However, Sky did make 1 unique commission as part of their involvement, co-producing and acquiring 'Unlocked' films made by local artists and aired on Sky Arts in May 2022.

### Sky: Content Commissioned

Title	Sky channel	Funding model	Commissioning parties	About
<b>Landmark</b>	Sky Arts	Sky fully funded CCC funded the public arts platform and supported delivery	Sky commission of Primal Media	8-part series. Unknown artists compete to create a sculpture representing their home region.  Early collaboration between CCoCT, CCC and Sky Arts resulted in selection of Coventry as location and focus for the final winning artwork.
<b>Inside Art</b>	Sky Arts	Sky fully funded	Sky commission	Special episode of Inside Art series, exploring the events happening as part of Coventry City of Culture year.  CCoCT and Unity House collaboration.
<b>Landscape Artist of the Year</b>	Sky Arts	Sky fully funded	Sky commission	Competition searching for UK's best landscape painter. Series 6 features 2 episodes based in Compton Verney (stately home in Warwickshire). Early collaboration with Sky Arts secured Coventry locations to feature within series.  CCoCT, Compton Verney and Storyvault Films collaboration.
<b>Unlocked</b>	Sky Arts	Co-production The Space Shoot Festival CCoCT  The Space secured ACE funding  Acquired by Sky Arts	Sky commission	10 Coventry artists create new films on the theme 'Unlocked – what does it mean to be free?'.  CCoCT worked with The Space to secure ACE project funding and Sky Arts partnership.



## Content reach

Broadcast enabled Coventry City of Culture to tell a wealth of different stories and showcase Coventry to a broad range of audiences. As outlined above, CCoCT's linear broadcast activities proved to be hugely valuable in **enabling Coventry City of Culture to reach and engage audiences on a national and international scale.**

*"It comes out of the ability to see things on screen, whether it is cinema or broadcast TV, that mediated arts and culture allows you to get to more of an audience...It is a UK City of culture, and the UK part is important, but if it's really going to have impact, it needs to get to people beyond the city" - Gill Johnson, Creative/Business Consultant*

*"As a result of the pandemic, Coventry were forced to engage more with broadcast and it has obviously come off well. They had huge viewing figures." – Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC*

Overall, **BBC programs and coverage reached a larger audience than content aired on Sky Arts.** Three of the top five highest reaching shows were on BBC Four (including one 1m+ programme), despite its weaker channel position vs. BBC One and BBC Two.

Important viewership figures to note (as identified by the BBC) include:

- Combined reach of network BBC TV programmes featuring Coventry City of Culture is **in excess of 100m.**
- There have been over **6m BBC iPlayer requests** for Coventry City of Culture content.
- Coventry Moves, Coventry City of Culture's opening event, gained **international viewership from 88 countries.**
- There were **4m BBC iPlayer and BBC Sounds requests** for Radio 1's Big Weekend in Coventry.
- **3.7m** watched The One Show featuring Coventry Moves, **2.2m** watched The One Show from Coventry revealing Broadford as the next UKCOC
- The Antiques Roadshow episodes from Kenilworth Castle had an **average audience of ~6m viewers** on BBC One.
- Middlemarch Monologues received more than **165,000 BBC Sounds requests**
- There were **25,464 page views** for the BBC's Coventry City of Culture webpage
- Total reach of Sky content is **over 376,000**

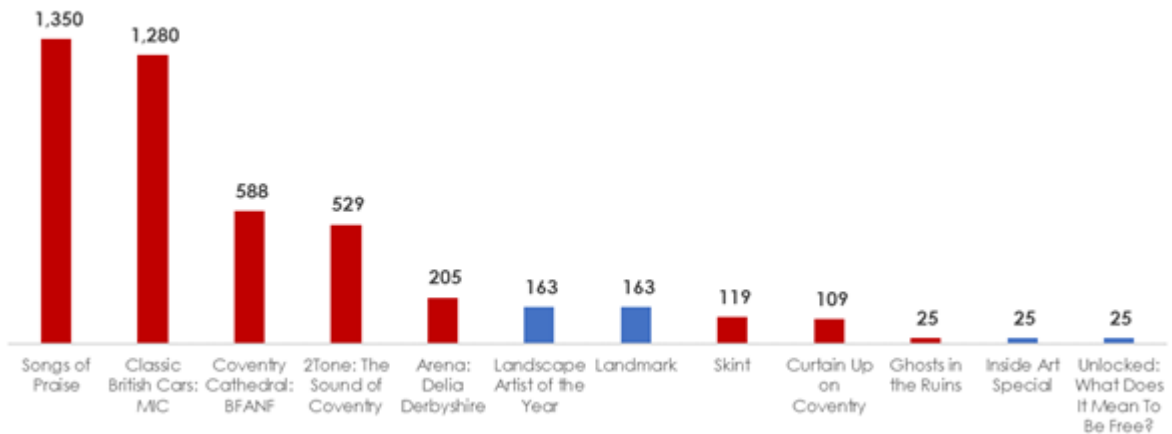
**Broadcaster viewing data**

BBC and Sky TV programme reach (excl. radio programmes commissioned)

Programme	BBC/Sky	Channel	TV reach* (k)	iPlayer requests (k)
Songs of Praise	BBC	BBC One	1,350	41
Classic British Cars: MIC	BBC	BBC Four	1,280	172
Coventry Cathedral: BFANF	BBC	BBC Four	588	122
2Tone: The Sound of Coventry	BBC	BBC Two	529	133
Arena: Delia Derbyshire	BBC	BBC Four	205	94
Landscape Artist of the Year	Sky	Sky Arts	163	n/a
Landmark	Sky	Sky Arts	163	n/a
Skint	BBC	BBC Four	119	200
Curtain Up on Coventry	BBC	BBC Four	109	158
Ghosts in the Ruins	BBC	BBC Two	25	12
Inside Art Special	Sky	Sky Arts	25	n/a
Unlocked: What Does It Mean To Be Free?	Sky	Sky Arts	25	n/a
Dance Passion	BBC	n/a	n/a	90

**NB.** BBC TV figures are from BARB and based on 15-minute reach amongst all individuals (aged 4+). Sky TV reach is a final 28-day cumulative series average. iPlayer requests are for starts (people who click play and start watching).

BBC and Sky TV reach (000s)



**Sky programme audience**

Programme	% Male	% Female	Average Age	% <25	% 25-34	% 35-44	% 45-54	% 55+
Landscape Artist of the Year	35	65	58	6	3	6	13	72
Inside Art Special	45	55	69	-	7	-	4	89
Landmark	44	56	61	5	4	6	28	57
Unlocked: What Does It Mean To Be Free?	6	94	50	-	-	-	41	59

### Content coverage & quality

Coventry's broadcast programme championed diversity, representing diverse talent within its content and coverage, and focusing on stories that shared the identity and lived experience of people in the city. This was exemplified in:

**Skint** - monologues from diverse range of people with lived experience of poverty, including from those living in Coventry

**Dance Passion** – wide variety of dance troupes and dancers across all genres including kathak, afrobeats and voguing

**Contains Strong Language festival** – established poets and emerging talent from all backgrounds and across all age groups

**'Unlocked' artist films** – films from a diverse range of emerging talent from across the UK, all with different backgrounds, experiences, and stories

A great deal of Coventry's broadcast content amplified the City of Culture's key themes, focusing on:

- **Activism and social issues** in '2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry' and 'Skint' for the BBC
- **Female empowerment** in 'Middlemarch Monologues' and 'Delia Derbyshire' for the BBC
- **Hope and freedom** in 'Unlocked – what does it mean to be free?' on Sky Arts

In addition, CCoCT's broadcast programme incorporated high-profile talent, including the inclusion of Pauline Black<sup>9</sup> and Jeremy Dammers<sup>10</sup> in '2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry' for BBC Two.

Moreover, Coventry's City of Culture programming received highly positive reviews and coverage:

**Curtain Up on Coventry**, a short 30 minute film about Coventry's opening event, 'Coventry Moves', was filmed and edited in collaboration with CCoCT. It was shown on BBC News Channel, and was voted one of the best news segments created in 2021. It was subsequently shown on a loop on BBC News Channel during Christmas 2021.

**Skint**, the series of 8 short dramas for BBC Four examining experiences of modern-day poverty in the UK received critical acclaim and coverage from a number of outlets and publications:

<sup>9</sup> Lead singer of The Selecter, a 2 tone ska revival band formed in Coventry

<sup>10</sup> Keyboardist and songwriter for 2 tone ska revival band The Specials, The Special A.K.A and The Spatial AKA Orchestra, and founder of 2 Tone Records

- The series of short episodes received 4-star reviews from The Guardian, The Times, The Sunday Times and The Observer
- The series was selected as a 'top pick' by The Guardian, The Sunday Times, The Observer, Mail on Sunday, The Sun, The i, Irish Times, Screen Scotland and The Big Issue
- The series was covered in interviews, profiles and articles by The Guardian, The Big Issue, The National, Radio Times, Stylist Magazine, Bustle
- 2 artists who worked on monologue 'Hannah' (writer Kerry Hudson and lead actor Emma Fryer) were interviewed on BBC radio (Woman's Hour on Radio 4, and CWR in conversation respectively)

Anecdotally, CCoCT received praising feedback from members of the community regarding broadcast content aired on BBC and Sky Arts:

*"We heard from people in the city, saying that the [broadcast] content was amazing and came across really well. 'Inside Art' on Sky Arts for example, people said it gave a great overview of the visual arts programme and events in the city, and captured so much of what we were doing. The crowd went wild for the 2 Tone documentary, people loved it. So many long-standing Coventry residents thought that it was special"*  
– **Chenine Bhatena, CCoCT**

CCoCT received 8 nominations at the RTS Midlands Awards 2022 for '2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry' (BBC Arts), 'Unlocked' (Sky Arts) and 'Ghost in the Ruins' (BBC Arts). CCoCT won 2 awards:

**Best Documentary:** 2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry (BBC Arts)

**Best Short:** 'Irish' and 'Blacks and Dogs' part of 'Unlocked' series (Sky Arts)

## Achievements

### New partnerships, editorial commissions & broadcast coverage

Coventry was the first UKCOC to deliver a partnership with Sky, collaborating with Sky Arts to imbue their existing content offerings with Coventry themes, talent and locations. The partnership culminated in Sky Arts' acquisition of 'Unlocked' artist films, a co-production between The Space, Shoot Festival and CCoCT.

- CCoCT worked closely with Sky Arts to develop 'Landmark', a new program format. The series, which saw budding artists compete to have their sculpture work displayed in Coventry, secured £250K of investment and resulted in a new temporary public artwork for Coventry.

In addition, Coventry substantially exceeded previous UKCOC's in its originated programming and broadcast coverage.

- Coventry received largest swathe of broadcast coverage of any UKCOC to date
- Coventry delivered a **total of 9 new editorial commissions** across the BBC and Sky (excluding visiting/existing propositions). These included:

#### BBC

- Skint
- 2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry
- Middlemarch Monologues
- Delia Derbyshire: The Myths and the Legendary Tapes
- Classic British Cars: Made in Coventry
- Coventry Cathedral: Building For A New Britain
- Ghost in the Ruins
- Curtain-Up on Coventry

#### Sky

- Unlocked

### Innovation: Collaborations, co-productions & acquisitions

CCoCT's approach to structuring more strategic broadcast partnerships through the establishment of co-productions and collaborations was **a first for a UKCOC**.

CCoCT initially pitched the idea of undertaking co-productions to the BBC. After preliminary discussions, both parties agreed that funding content through co-productions would be mutually beneficial by supporting more original programming than the initially planned slate of content.

Co-productions began in January 2020 and involved significant fundraising and inward investment from CCoCT. Whilst the BBC was ultimately editorially responsible for all co-productions with CCoCT, the co-production model afforded CCoCT **a greater say in the production process** (i.e. creative, editorial and distribution decisions) and **secured CCoCT the credits and rights to broadcast content** produced under this structure, including **legacy use and onward distribution**.

As such, piloting new ways of structuring partnerships through co-productions and collaborations is a **significant achievement** of Coventry's City of Culture year.

- The City of Culture years that preceded Coventry (Hull and Derry) did not take an editorial or rights stake in their work with broadcasters
- Conversely, CCoCT structured several co-productions with broadcasters, independent producers and cultural organisations

Furthermore, structuring co-productions enabled CCoCT to **engage regional/local production companies, talent, producers and directors, as well as local organizations** in the production of broadcast content

- This created a bridge between the creative industries and the arts and cultural sectors and facilitated sectoral innovation
- CCoCT was the first UKCOC to facilitate co-creation between a UKCOC trust, broadcasters, independent production companies, artists and local communities
- 17+ independent production companies developed projects as part of CCoCT's broadcast programme

Strategic co-productions and co-commissions piloted in the year of the programme include:

#### Co-productions

- **2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry:** a BBC, CCoCT and Full Fat TV co-production
- **Skint:** a CCoCT and Hopscotch Films co-production (later additionally funded by Creative Scotland to turn the series of 8 short episodes into a film)
- **Unlocked:** a CCoCT, Shoot Festival and The Space co-production
- **Contains Strong Language Festival:** a BBC Radio 1 and CCoCT co-production, with additional ACE funding

#### Co-commissions

- **Ghost In the Ruins:** a BBC and CCoCT co-commission, using live content funded by CCoCT, ACE and Coventry Cathedral
- **Middlemarch Monologues:** a BBC and WAC commission of BBC, CCoCT and Naked Productions

CCoCT also **piloted acquisitions** during Coventry's UKCOC year.

- **Ghost in the Ruins** was acquired by the BBC for BBC Four
- **Unlocked** artist films were acquired by Sky for distribution on Sky Arts

*"Thinking about doing co-productions requires an ingenious approach. It isn't about subsidizing what a broadcaster would be doing, it's an entrepreneurial approach to saying we have a mutual interest in Coventry...Martin and Chenine took a risk. They really embraced the spirit of R&D, and were innovative in their approach...In my opinion, co-productions are best. You have more of a stake in what you are doing. City of Culture can't use the BBC coverage that was not a co-production. I'm very pro co-pro model. "* - **Gill Johnson, Creative/Business Consultant**

*"A smallish stake could be difference between commission happening or not, and credits also follow, which is important. I think a key learning is to have a stake. We were a small stakeholder but [BBC] gave us huge input and were really generous about how we worked together, it's brilliant really."* - **Gill Johnson, Creative/Business Consultant**

## Thumbnail Case Study 1: 'Unlocked' for Sky Arts

### Case Study: 'Unlocked' for Sky Arts

#### WHAT

- 'Unlocked' artist films on Sky Arts saw Sky award **10 of Coventry's brightest creative talents commissions to create short films** exploring ideas around freedom, working with Arts Council England (ACE), The Space and CCoCT
- Innovative partnership between The Space, CCoCT, Sky Arts and Shoot Festival



#### HOW

- The Space led on application to ACE project grants, **securing £98K of ACE funding**
- **10 diverse artists were selected by the core partners** and then supported by The Space and Shoot Festival to make their films
- Project was **managed and Exec Produced by The Space**
- Films were **acquired by Sky Arts through Sky acquisition structure for films**, and were then **curated into programs for broadcast audiences by Sky Arts**
- Films were **made available on Sky Arts and Sky On Demand for a specified period of time**, after which the artists were able to self-distribute and promote their work

#### BENEFITS

- Focus on **enabling performing arts and visual arts creatives to make films was a first for Sky Arts**
- Emerging Coventry artists were given a platform to create broadcast content for the first time
- CCoCT were provided with **distinctive, high quality commissions**
- **Shoot Festival gained invaluable experience** of working on a broadcast project
- The Space were provided an opportunity to **expand their work in the Midlands**
- Sky Arts were provided an opportunity to **extend their regional profile and expand their cultural offer to audiences**
- Gained industry recognition for 2 of the films at the **RTS Awards**

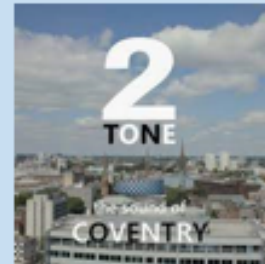


## Thumbnail Case Study 2: '2 Tone, The Sound of Coventry'

### Case Study: 2 Tone The Sound of Coventry

#### WHAT

- Documentary on 2 Tone, the **Coventry music movement**
- Innovative partnership between CCoCT, BBC England, BBC Music and Full Fat TV
- First BBC documentary on 2 Tone since 1980s' Arena Film. Featured first broadcast interview from Jeremy Dammers in a number of years
- Broadcast on BBC One in the Midlands, nationally on BBC Two, and then made available on BBC iPlayer for 1 year



#### HOW

- Arose through **proactive discussions and strategic partnership approach between CCoCT and BBC England** and then involving BBC Music and BBC Two
- Regional tendering process involving CCoCT resulted in **appointment of Full Fat TV as production company**
- CCoCT entered into a **development and co-production agreement, alongside the BBC, with Full Fat TV**. CCoCT took a 30% stake in the documentary
- CCoCT supported Full Fat TV in delivery and **took credits for Associate Producer and co-producer**. CCoCT also secured educational rights to the content
- BBC retained full editorial control

#### BENEFITS

- Showcased and **profiled leading Coventry talent**
- Established a **new regional commissioning framework for independent producers** with the BBC
- West Midlands independent production company, Full Fat TV, received their **first BBC commission** and have since built on this with **further BBC and other broadcast commissions**
- Regional launch on BBC One in the Midlands secured a **rare opportunity for the arts on mainstream BBC One**

## Thumbnail Case Study 3: 'Skint' for BBC Four

### Case Study: Skint for BBC Four

#### WHAT

- Series of **8 monologues** for BBC Four exploring experiences of **poverty in the UK**
- Innovative partnership between CCoCT, BBC Arts, Hopscotch Films and Creative Scotland
- Broadcast on BBC Four and then made available on BBC iPlayer for 1 year
- Made into a **feature-length film** by Creative Scotland



#### HOW

- Arose through **proactive discussions** and **strategic partnership approach between CCoCT and BBC Arts**. Prospect of engaging new/up-and-coming talent of mutual interest to BBC Arts, that wished to continue offering new opportunities for emerging talent
- National tendering/commissioning process established by BBC Arts involved CCoCT in the selection of a production company. **Hopscotch Films was selected**
- CCoCT entered into a **co-production contract with Hopscotch and took a 15% stake in the final monologue series**. Creative Scotland also took a stake in the production to turn the monologues into a feature-length film
- CCoCT conditions of funding required Coventry music, actors and directors to be involved in one or more monologues

#### BENEFITS

- Highlighted key theme of Coventry UKCOC: **activism and social issues**
- **Coventry talent secured first broadcast commission/appearance**
  - Corey Campbell made broadcast directorial debut
  - Sayan Kent obtained first network commission for a musical score
- CCoCT secured **credits and rights to onward distribution** through co-production
- Independent organizations/talent involved in creation of broadcast content
- Received **critical acclaim** from major news outlets/publications in the UK

### Review of strategic partnerships (BBC and Sky)

Sky Arts and the BBC are **committed to showcasing arts and culture in the UK outside of London**. This forms a large part of their current remit and is a significant factor in their decision to create or commission new content. As such, both broadcasters were keen to get involved in Coventry's City of Culture year.

*"We want to ensure that we are not London-centric, and that we are showcasing arts and culture outside of the capital city. We got involved in the Coventry City of Culture programme because we want to be part of the cultural conversation, and we are particularly focusing on being part of the conversation outside of just broadcast film and TV. We want to identify opportunities to get involved with arts and cultural organizations off-air and raise our profile. Coventry City of Culture programme felt perfectly aligned with this."* – **Vanessa Woodard, Head of Partnerships Sky Arts, Sky**

*"We are very happy with our involvement. It has given us a story for national, regional and local output that is positive and celebratory, and that is fantastic for our audiences. The focus on the Midlands for the BBC is fantastic, and a good step in moving the BBC out of London, that has been hugely beneficial for us."* – **Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC**

As mentioned earlier, CCoCT established partnerships and close working relationships with the BBC and Sky Arts.

- Sky Arts' partnership was a first for a UKCOC. They provided **fully funded support and leveraged their existing propositions to promote Coventry and the City of Culture**.
  - Both Sky and CCoCT recall that timings aligned perfectly to enable Sky's participation
  - Sky Arts pivoted to airing on Freeview during the pandemic. As a result, they needed a broader slate of content and were open to content ideas and collaborations
  - This occurred around the same time that CCoCT were looking to establish broadcast partnerships
- The BBC was involved on a much wider scale, **striving for pan-BBC participation**.

*"Our partnership with Sky tallied with Sky Arts going to Freeview and needing more content, it was a brilliant moment when they were open to us pitching ideas to them."* – **Chenine Bhathena, Creative Director, CCoCT**

Partnerships with broadcasters were facilitated through the appointment of key points of contact at both CCoCT, and the BBC/Sky. **Points of contact acted as the bridge between CCoCT and the broadcast organization**, catching up on regular basis to discuss potential opportunities and to resolve any outstanding issues.

**NB.** The BBC also formed a steering group of senior BBC and CCoCT leadership to facilitate alignment of teams across the BBC and encourage pan-BBC participation.

- All stakeholders (CCoCT, BBC, Sky) agree that this partnership structure worked well to ensure that CCoCT could **access different teams and areas within the broadcast business through a single conduit.**

*"I worked a lot with consultant Gill Johnson. She was the one who developed and discussed ideas with us. We spent a lot of time going through propositions and opportunities. You need someone like that who is an ideas generator so that you can creatively brainstorm really early on. Without that it would have been a struggle."* – **Vanessa Woodard, Head of Partnerships Sky Arts, Sky**

*"Having the model of people assigned to work with broadcasters, so Gill Johnson working with Vanessa at Sky and Teresa, Partnerships Producer at the BBC, that worked really well. For example, with Ghost in the Ruins, I sent Teresa an email saying: 'this is the project I have and I think it could be on TV'. She then connected me with the Commissioning Editor. We had a meeting and then we were off!"* – **Hayley Pepler, Head of Broadcast & Digital Content, CCoCT**

All stakeholders (CCoCT, BBC, Sky) were **very positive about the partnerships formed** during the broadcast programme.

- CCoCT believe that **forming a strong relationship with broadcasters was instrumental to the success of the broadcast programme**, as this gave them a strong voice with partners, and an ability to leverage all potential opportunities.
- **Close collaboration with the BBC and Sky helped CCoCT to deliver its core objectives** of creating original content, developing new talent and reaching new audiences, as evidenced by the amount of original content produced and the number of viewers reached in the UK and beyond
  - 10 new commissions across BBC and Sky
  - 100m+ reach on BBC linear TV channels, 6m+ iPlayer requests, total reach 376K on Sky Arts
- In addition, **emerging local talent were given the opportunity to secure their first broadcast commission and appearances.** Highlights included:
  - 10 Coventry artists created short films, in association with The Space, for Sky Arts
  - Coventry's Corey Campbell made his BBC debut as a director on one of the 'Skint' monologues
  - West Midlands independent producer Full Fat TV produced '2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry', the company's first commission for the BBC

Broadcast partnerships enabled CCoCT to **successfully navigate challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.** Whilst restrictions on public gatherings remained in place throughout most of Coventry's City of Culture year, working with the BBC ensured that Coventry City of Culture events could be shared with audiences around the world.

Moreover, content produced with Sky and the BBC was **imbued with the key themes of Coventry's City of Culture year**, and increased representation of Coventry on screen.

*“A lot of Sky Arts’ work is aimed at an older audience, but ‘Unlocked’ is meant for a younger audience. Sky were a really supportive partner, they were open to supporting ‘Unlocked’ even though it didn’t necessarily reflect their demo” - Gill Johnson, Creative/Business Consultant*

As a result, all stakeholders interviewed (BBC, Sky, The Space, CCoCT) agree that the broadcast programme was a **great success** and recognise that the relationships formed were mutually beneficial.

- CCoCT were provided with a **huge platform to distribute and amplify their content**
- Sky and the BBC were provided with a **stream of high quality content ideas**

*“We have had so much coverage on TV. The amount of media spend it would cost to get that kind of coverage is huge, so that was amazing for us. It was beneficial to the [broadcasters] as well, they had a constant supply of new material” – Hayley Pepler, Head of Broadcast & Digital Content, CCoCT*

*“Our partnership was a success. The Landmark series was great, every episode mentioned Coventry and to have the final in Coventry in the year of City of Culture, that was really great. The artists involved in that competition will definitely benefit from it as well.”- Vanessa Woodard, Head of Partnerships, Sky Arts*

*“Sky show their programs again and again, we know that those programs are out there now, and it’s really put Coventry on the map. With the BBC, it’s not just commissions, it’s all the coverage that we got as well. Every month they filmed a half hour roundup of City of Culture to showcase what was going on and showed it on the news. That was powerful as it went global. The BBC also created a documentary about Coventry Moves, and it was placed in the top 10 programs they had created in 2021. Creating that documentary might not have happened if we hadn’t had such a strong relationship.” – Chenine Bathena, Creative Director, CCoCT*

*“Phil and Vanessa from Sky Arts have a genuine remit that they believe in to put a light on culture across the UK. The artists that we have worked with got so much out of the programme. The experience of delivering a broadcast project, and the fact that they can now put that on their CVs is super valuable” – Fiona Morris, Chief Executive & Creative Director, The Space*

*“The focus from the BBC has allowed art in Coventry to have a spotlight that couldn’t have happened without City of Culture. There are so many bits of evidence to show that it was a success: the amount of new content that was created, the number of Coventry writers and creatives who were involved, Corey Campbell had his directorial debut. Hopefully there is legacy there” – Teresa Bogan, Senior Producer, BBC*

Looking forward, both broadcasters are **highly likely to continue their involvement with City of Culture.**

- It is **almost certain that the BBC will look to be involved** in the future given their PSB remit to ensure citizens across the country are equally represented in BBC content.
- **Sky Arts’ involvement is likely to be contingent on commercial interest**

- This means that they are unlikely to create bespoke content, preferring to focus on their visiting/existing properties
- Sky Arts believe this is of benefit to both Sky and the City of Culture Trust, as it a) reduces the risk for Sky, and b) provides the City of Culture Trust with an existing base of reach for their content (i.e. pre-established brand recognition and engagement).

*“When we talk to the Corporate Affairs team and they want to know what we've achieved in terms of moving our activities outside of London, I can show what we've done in Coventry. I will continue to work with City of Culture, whatever the city may be”*  
– **Vanessa Woodard, Head of Partnerships, Sky Arts**

*“I think the BBC sees the value in focusing on one area, especially if it's an area that has not been well represented. Our focus is more and more out of London, and City of Culture gives you the hook to do that. I hope that with Coventry we have set a new minimum level for the BBC's involvement”* – **Teresa Bogan, Senior Producer, BBC**

*“My role is to make sure the Midlands has a fair crack at BBC resources, and that it is well represented in BBC content. People see the BBC as London centric, so reflecting the Midlands in our content is really key. As Head of the Midlands, it is a no brainer to get involved with City of Culture if it's going to support that..”* – **Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC**

*“I think it is a case of right time, right place. We had existing propositions we could take to Coventry which is why it worked. Creating content from scratch would have been much harder, we probably wouldn't have done that. We don't have a big budget, so the easiest thing to do is to look at our existing propositions and seeing if they can travel. I think we were lucky with the timings. There has to be something there, some [alignment] with our content”* – **Vanessa Woodard, Head of Partnerships Sky Arts, Sky**

## Research & Development

It is important to mention broadcast work that CCoCT invested in, but that **did not proceed to production or commission**. Referencing these examples highlights the risks of programme development and **underlines the success that CCoCT achieved across the board despite these challenges**.

### Channel 4

CCoCT commenced R&D with Channel 4 in July 2018. They entered into individual programme **development contracts for two co-productions with Channel 4**, Ira Aldridge and FutureMakers (with Rural Media for E4), but these were **not taken forward to commission**.

This broadcast work led to the eventual development of the Young People Broadcast and Media Skills Programme (with Channel 4, ScreenSkills, Rural Media and Media Mania), brokered by CCoCT.

### Other

CCoCT commissioned R&D from Debbie Issit for a new Christmas film, Coventry Carol. CCoCT **committed c. £60K of R&D budget**, however the project **did not get taken forward to production**. This was predominantly due to reductions in budget brought about by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CCoCT also commissioned work to produce an anthem for the BBC's coverage of the Rugby World Cup in Autumn 2021, committing £30K to R&D on this project. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this event was moved to 2022 and so fell outside of Coventry's City of Culture year.

## Challenges

Whilst Coventry's broadcast programme was **highly successful in the breadth and reach of its content offerings and in its modes of partnerships, it did not come without its challenges**. CCoCT have highlighted the following key challenges that they encountered during the development, implementation and delivery of their broadcast programme:

- **Retaining editorial vision across partnerships:** CCoCT have highlighted that it was difficult to retain control of their editorial vision, and to keep this at the centre of all work produced, when working with multiple partners with different agendas (e.g. broadcasters, independent producers and talent, cultural organizations).
- **Timing:** Although CCoCT engaged with broadcasters in the very early stages of development, some program departments had already planned their budgets and programs for 2021, others had shorter timelines. This was not outlined at the outset, and CCoCT had to discover commissioning timelines through a process of trial and error.

- **BBC's journalistic neutrality:** Whilst the BBC were a key creative partner of CCoCT, they also had to remain neutral in their news coverage of Coventry City of Culture. CCoCT found this balance difficult to navigate.
- **COVID-19 pandemic:** The COVID-19 pandemic affected Coventry's City of Culture year in a number of ways. Firstly, it delayed the start of its programme of events (both broadcast and non-broadcast) and put restrictions on public events that impacted the scale of events that were delivered. The pandemic also affected the physical production of broadcast content (i.e. content producers had to find COVID safe ways to shoot that ensured film crews were socially distanced) which required additional planning and preparation (i.e. regularly testing cast and crew etc).



## Learnings

### Funding models and overall strategy

A broadcast programme is a hugely valuable asset to any UKCOC, and therefore **should always be accounted for upfront**

- This means **articulating a broadcast strategy** that sits firmly within a wider creative/audience strategy, but that has its own unique approach

*“If I was going back and designing the team again, I would have a broadcast team within the creative team. It is so important for storytelling and engaging local talent. It's such a good way of engaging with audiences and extending the reach of what we are doing. There are so many broadcasters and they are all looking for content all the time. Not just because of the pandemic, I would put it at the center of a creative team going forwards” – **Chenine Bhathena, Creative Director, CCoCT***

*“Broadcast should be thought about in its own right. It has its own events that play into your broader theme. It should be thought about early doors if you want to maximize impact. Broadcast strategy is not an extension of a marketing and comms strategy. It needs its own investment and objectives...So, you need to think about the amount of budget you are allocating to broadcast vs. what you want to execute. Don't just assume that the broadcaster will pay for everything, that's not necessarily how it works.” – **Fiona Morris, Chief Executive & Creative Director, The Space***

- Adopt a broadcast-first mindset. To create a library of high-quality, engaging broadcast content, the city should **consider what their big broadcast moments might be**, and plan for those accordingly

*“The sooner you can have conversations [with a broadcaster] about what your broadcast firework moments are, the better. You need to plan and understand that it's not just going to be wall to wall coverage” – **Fiona Morris, Chief Executive & Creative Director, The Space***

*“Understanding what works well visually for broadcast, and then designing events that have thought about broadcast at the heart of the moment, that is something I would encourage the next group to think about.” – **Teresa Bogan, Senior Producer, BBC***

*“[The next city] should really think about the key broadcast moments in their programme and be driving that. Don't wait for the BBC to suggest things, tell them what you want and see where there are synergies. Go in with themes and stories that you want to tell and be open to developing those with broadcasters” – **Chenine Bhathena, Creative Director, CCoCT***

- Think bigger and outside of the box. **Consider potential partnerships and collaborations with major streaming services** (e.g. Netflix, Amazon) and digital platforms

*“There could be international co-pro partnerships. The City of Culture is a chance for extra investment, they come up with themes that are of international interest” - **Gill Johnson, Creative/Business Consultant***

*“If I were to do it again, we would look to extend the reach of digital and broadcast activities and meet with the likes of Netflix and Amazon to develop ideas with them. Gill pitched Seaview, the Belgrade Theatre TV series (funded by CCoCT) to Amazon and they were really interested. There is a real opportunity for theatre to build relationships with content providers. It feels to me from conversations with Amazon, Netflix and Sky that there is appetite for it, but they don't necessarily want to put money in at the start. It feels as though you need production funding for them to be interested in working with you” – **Chenine Bhathena, Creative Director, CCoCT***

Future UKCOCs should **seriously consider co-productions** as a means to fund the creation of content

- This should be planned for well in advance, as co-productions can take up to 2 years
- If a city has not secured adequate funding to facilitate co-productions, they should be active in seeking out collaborations to ensure they have a meaningful say in the editorial process

## Resource

Ensure a **realistic/generous amount of budget and resource** is allocated

*“If we were to do it again, we'd allocate more resources, including money, upfront to the broadcast part of the programme as it was hugely important. Our initial budget was £350K for broadcast, but we spent around £500K, but we could have done a lot more if more money and resource were allocated” - **Chenine Bhathena, Creative Director, CCoCT***

*“We've supported Hull and Coventry, and I've learnt that you need way more than you think you need in terms of human resource. Think of the hours you think it may take, and then double it” – **Fiona Morris, Chief Executive & Creative Director, The Space***

Bringing in experienced broadcast specialists and freelancers will widen the breadth of skillsets to draw upon, and **improve the quality of outputs**

- This is particularly true when collaborating with small production companies and cultural organisations
- This includes: professional producers, script writers
- It can also be valuable to bring in specialists to assist with the business side of content creation (e.g. drafting legal documents and agreements, structuring partnerships, business affairs)

*“A specialist team is really important. Neither City of Culture nor a broadcaster knows what needs doing in the middle in terms of the production process...a lot of the young talent we engaged were new to making films in a professional sense, they don't know about script development for screen. We bought in a cast of associates from our end, to connect [the talent] with a script consultant, for example, that was invaluable.” – **Fiona Morris, Chief Executive & Creative Director, The Space***

## Partnerships

Partnerships with broadcasters and other stakeholders (cultural organisations, regional production companies) work best when a **high level of trust is established**, as this enables more meaningful collaboration

- The more **transparent** the City of Culture Trust can be with broadcasters from the outset, the better
- This includes preparing **a clear roadmap of the broadcast programme** for initial meetings, and articulating exactly what they would like to capture/create and when, so that ample time is given to planning and creating outputs

*“Sitting down before it has begun, and talking about trust and where we fit into that process is important. There will be things that we can't tell anyone, including them, about until they are ready, and they can trust us on that. Similarly, it might have been more helpful to understand the whole program for the year earlier on. Obviously it was difficult for them as the pandemic changed so much of what they initially had planned.” - **Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC***

*“We had a couple of times at the start where it felt like they [CCoCT] didn't trust us. We were open, and said we needed to know, but it felt like they didn't trust us to know about some plans without revealing them. It was difficult, because we need to know, our job is to be their critical friend” – **Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC***

*“Strong partnerships are so important to delivering on your vision. Developing a great working relationship [with the BBC] means that you can connect with different departments easily. It's best to be really clear about what you want to achieve, what your budget is and have a team in place to lead it, so you can do a lot more” – **Chenine Bhatena, Creative Director, CCoCT***

It is useful to **engage with broadcasters from the first opportunity**, as large-scale commissions take time to plan and deliver. In addition, **cities would do well to 'sell their assets'** as this will help broadcasters to identify content opportunities

- It is important for cities to have an understanding of the BBC/Sky/other broadcasters commissioning processes, so that they have an idea of where there might be potential opportunities, and realistic timeframes for delivery
- The BBC in particular would value the provision of information packs on the city and the arrangement of visits to key attractions/potential filming locations
  - Location visits conducted as part of Coventry City of Culture resulted in more engagement from the BBC and a better understanding of content opportunities

*“The next city should be ready to sell their assets from the outset. Our job was to show off what Coventry has to offer. Our colleagues at the BBC put together a good guide, and researched venues as well, but that would be really helpful from the outset from a practical point of view” – **Teresa Bogan, Senior Producer, BBC***

*“The reality of commissioning in the BBC Arts department is that they are already working on stuff to go out in 2 or 3 years time. You cannot just wait until 6 months before it needs to go out, that is long since budgeted and arranged. But then on the other side, Midlands Today wait until the day before to decide what they are going to report.*

*You have these extraordinary ends of the spectrum that you need to understand. BBC News want to know about it the day before, and BBC Arts you need to tell them 3 years before!" – **Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC***

Cities should be **ambitious but realistic** about what broadcasters can deliver

- City of Culture teams will naturally envisage outputs that align with their wider vision, however it is important to note that this must align, to an extent, with the vision of the broadcaster and what works well for their audiences
  - I.e. Coverage on big BBC brands such as BBC One and BBC News will likely only be secured for major broadcast moments, such as an opening ceremony or other significant events

*"It's definitely important to sit down and understand the makeup of broadcasting, understanding all the program teams and organizing meetings with department leads to get a feel for what they can offer." – **Chenine Bhatena, Creative Director, CCoCT***

## Strand II: Digital Broadcast

### Structure & Approach

The digital broadcast strand of CCoCT's broadcast programme was overseen by CCoCT's Marketing and Comms department, and was aligned to audience development. The digital **programme primarily consisted of creating content for digital platforms** (i.e. CCoCT's website) **and social media platforms** (i.e. YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).

Digital broadcast activities commenced in April 2021 (following the Jewkes report) to extend the reach of live events via CCoCT's website and social media channels. However, it wasn't until June 2021, when CCoCT brought on Head of Content and Digital Broadcast, Hayley Pepler, that a strategy for CCoCT's digital broadcast work was articulated.

Pepler created two separate workstreams for CCoCT's digital broadcast work, digital content production and digital platform/social media management. With support from CCoCT senior leadership, she built out the digital broadcast team, hiring a Digital Content Producer and a Website and Social Media Manager. To facilitate the creation of digital broadcast content, Pepler worked extensively with external teams from a range of local organizations, including BBC CWR, Coventry University and community hubs.

**Whilst the digital broadcast and traditional broadcast teams largely operated separately, there were key moments during Coventry's City of Culture year when the two teams converged.** This was typically when live events occurred, as these often invited both BBC and CCoCT coverage (via social media and livestreams on their website).

### Resources invested

CCoCT's digital broadcast programme secured DCMS funding to support its scope of content and activities.

CCoCT invested the following to recruit core members of the digital broadcast team (salary figures):

- **Head of Content and Digital Broadcast:** £43K
- **Digital Content Producer:** £22K-£25K
- **Website and Social Media Manager:** £30K-£33K

At the conclusion of the programme, CCoCT had invested an estimated total of c.£1M across both traditional and digital strands of the programme (estimated total of £300-400K+ invested in digital broadcast strand by CCoCT).

## Key outputs

### Social media content

- **Behind the scenes footage:** The digital broadcast team captured many of the behind the scenes/'the making of' moments during Coventry's City of Culture year. Most notably, the digital broadcast team captured behind the scenes footage of 'Haus of Kraff', a series of live events in Coventry highlighting the global impact of fast fashion and promoting sustainability.

### Live streamed content

- **The Walk - An artistic response to the global refugee crisis:** The digital broadcast team livestreamed many of the biggest and most impactful live events that occurred as part of Coventry's City of Culture year. Particularly popular was a livestream of 'The Walk', which showcased 'Little Amal', a 3.5 metre tall puppet of a young refugee girl, arriving in Coventry in November 2021. 'Little Amal' had walked from Turkey across Europe to her final destination in the UK, and the livestream received national and global attention.

### Commissioning programme

- **Ghost in the Ruins:** The digital content production team filmed the performance piece that marked the 60th anniversary of Coventry Cathedral. The film featured music and projections of archive imagery and poetry and was broadcast on BBC Four.
- **Seaview:** An original drama film series co-commissioned by CCoCT and created, directed and produced by Belgrade Theatre. Belgrade Theatre are currently in discussions with Netflix and Amazon about developing the proposition for their platforms.

### Podcasts

- **International Women's Day:** A CCoCT podcast to mark International Women's Day (IWD) 2022. Female leaders from organizations across Coventry discussed 2022's IWD theme, Breaking the Bias.
- **Made in the Midlands:** A podcast exploring regional identity by interviewing prominent public figures in the UK who come from the Midlands (e.g. Paralympian gold swimmer Ellie Simmonds, Labour MP Jess Phillips and award-winning film director Ken Loach).

## Content reach

### Social media data

**NB.** The below data is correct as of 05/09/22. Facebook and YouTube round four-digit+ views and likes to the nearest thousand, hence some figures are approximates.

#### YouTube

**Subscribers to channel:** 1.72K [vs. 2.55K for Hull City of Culture]

**# of videos:** 585 [vs. 248 for Hull City of Culture]

**Average duration:** 05:46 [vs. 02:37 for Hull City of Culture]

**Total views:** 869,438 [vs. 1,481,788 for Hull City of Culture]

**Average views:** c. 1476 [vs. c. 79866 for Hull City of Culture]

#### Facebook

**Likes:** 3,551 page likes

**Followers:** 37.7K

**# of videos:** 692

**Average duration:** 02:59

**Total views:** c. 6.8m+

**Average views:** c. 9850

**Total # video likes:** c. 42,715

**Average # video likes:** c. 62

#### Twitter

**Tweets:** 19.4K

**Followers:** 24.3K

## Instagram

**Posts:** 2,508

**Followers:** 18.8K

**Total social followers** (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter): 82.5K [vs. 157K for Hull City of Culture]

**Total video views** (YouTube, Facebook): 7.6m+ [vs. 6.7m+ for Hull City of Culture]

It is important to note that **Hull's City of Culture was more successful in amassing a following on social media than Coventry City of Culture**, although this is likely due to the late appointment of a Social Media Manager and Head of Broadcast and Digital Content in Coventry.

It is also interesting to note that **Hull City of Culture produced less YouTube videos than Coventry City of Culture, however these videos had more impact** (i.e. higher number of views). This is perhaps something for the next UKCOC to consider: producing less videos may increase the reach/engagement of videos produced, as key pieces of content are less likely to get lost amongst other videos, and audiences are less likely to be overwhelmed by the amount of video content available.

*"I believe that the number of views doesn't mean much. I think you start from a point of: who needs to hear this story? That audience might be 4 or 5, but if it's relevant to them, then it has intrinsic value."* – **Hayley Pepler, Head of Broadcast & Digital Content, CCoCT**

*"We haven't chased a big social media presence. We didn't have a social media [footprint] until November. That was another learning, we needed a digital and social person in from the start! The evidence is there on Facebook. We haven't had massive online engagement of people watching videos and then going to book tickets to live events."* **Hayley Pepler, Head of Broadcast & Digital Content**

*"Having a digital broadcast team is amazing. What Hayley, her team and our social media team have achieved through YouTube and TikTok in tandem with our live program is amazing, so valuable from a storytelling point of view, and adding new stories"* – **Chenine Bhatena, Creative Director, CCoCT**

## **Content coverage & quality**

Much of the content posted to Coventry City of Culture's YouTube channel and Facebook page **followed and documented cultural activities conducted across Coventry by a number of different groups** of all ages, genders and ethnicities (from various different religious groups to art groups, dance troupes etc).



Content posted to YouTube and Facebook also featured interviews with notable members of the community, as well as audiences participating in cultural activities across the city.

*“There has been a feeling that this City of Culture year is about focusing on co-creation. We are less interested in the high-end celebrity led art, and are more interested in documenting real people in in the city” – Hayley Pepler, Head of Broadcast & Digital Content, CCoCT*

*“A lot of the work we have done has been created by people in the city, stories they want to tell, which is really valuable” – Chenine Bhatena, Creative Director, CCoCT*

## Learnings

A dedicated digital broadcast strand proved to be **hugely valuable in its ability to reach and engage audiences (both in and outside of Coventry)**, and to spread the messages and stories of Coventry's UKCOC year. Future UKCOC recipients should take note, and should ensure that digital broadcast is **accounted for upfront**.

- This means developing a **holistic digital broadcast strategy** that is separate to, but married with, a wider broadcast strategy

*“My role was funded through a DCMS grant that came through to enable the use of live streaming when audiences couldn't congregate in numbers. What is interesting, in my view, is that there should have been a digital live stream plan much earlier on. The strategy has to be right from the start!” - Hayley Peper, Head of Broadcast & Digital Content, CCoCT*

## Resource

A dedicated Digital Broadcast Lead and Head of Social Content should be **appointed from the outset**, and these **roles should be separated**

- Digital Broadcast Lead should take on more of a creative role
- Head of Social Content should outline the marketing strategy and manage day to day execution

*“One of the pitfalls was not setting a clear digital strategy from the beginning. It felt as though there was no clear plan, and a lot of marketing and digital content created was on-the-fly ideas. A clear digital content and marketing strategy should be articulated at the very start of the programme...Managing the execution of the marketing strategy is pretty much a full time job that should be separate from the more creative production side” - Hayley Pepler, Head of Content & Digital Broadcast, CCoCT*

*“We didn't employ a Social Media Manager until later, which meant that Hayley was juggling a million different jobs at once” - Chenine Bhatena, Creative Director, CCoCT*

## Wider impact

Coventry City of Culture's coverage and programming has **contributed to increasing representation of the West Midlands on national broadcast platforms**. Broadcast investment in, and coverage of, the region has historically been very low, with West Midlands lowest of all regions in Ofcom, BBC and Channel 4 reviews.

*"We tried to make Coventry City of Culture the focus of the afternoon coverage on local BBC [radio] stations. That was a massive opportunity for anyone involved. Locals from small to large projects were invited to come on the radio and talk about them. The focus of the rest of the BBC, Arts and general coverage too, has allowed art in Coventry to have a spotlight that it couldn't have imagined before City of Culture" – Stuart Thomas, Head of the Midlands, BBC*

### Increasing opportunity

The broadcast programme had a **profound and positive impact** on local creative talent in Coventry

- The broadcast programme provided regular work for local creative talent, producers and directors
- Through the programme, local talent obtained their first broadcast commission/appearance, helping to raise their profile and providing them with a platform. This included:
  - **10 Coventry based artists** created short films under the theme of 'Unlocked – what does it mean to be free?' for Sky Arts
  - **Corey Campbell** made his national broadcast directorial debut with 'Hannah' and 'Regeneration' monologues for BBC's 'Skint'
  - **Full Fat TV, a small regional production company**, produced '2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry' for the BBC
  - **Amanda Dalton, a Coventry-based writer**, wrote a Middlemarch monologue (1 of 8) for BBC R3
  - **Emerging artists** were given the chance to showcase their work on Coventry Creates for BBC CWR
  - **Coventry-based actor Emma Fryer** appeared in 'Hannah' monologue for Skint
  - **Sayan Kent, a Coventry based musician and Musical Director**, obtained her first network commission for a musical score, as Musical Director/composer for 'Skint' monologues
  - **Coventry-based screenwriter, Alex Johnson's** film for Sky Arts' 'Unlocked' was put forward for an RTS Award
  - **Warwickshire-based songwriter Ellie Gowers** was commissioned to compose music for 'Middlemarch Monologues'

- **Dance groups from Warwickshire** were featured on 'Dance Passion' for BBC Four, including Konzept W (K-pop, based in Warwick), Celtic Feet (Irish dance) and Motionhouse (based in Leamington)

CCoCT prioritized working with regional independent filmmakers, aiming to invest locally to help grow the region's creative sector. **CCoCT's creative collaborations championed the region's creative sector** and gave local independent production houses and arts organizations the opportunity to be involved in broadcast projects. These included:

- **Full Fat TV** (based in Birmingham)
- **Naked Productions** (based in Manchester)
- **Warwick Arts Centre** (based in Coventry)
- **Unity House** (based in Manchester)
- **Compton Verney** (based in Warwickshire)

In addition, Coventry's broadcast **programme supported the organizational and individual development of arts leaders in Coventry through broadcast commissions and benefits** (i.e. gaining experience, understanding and boosting confidence). These organizations included:

- **Belgrade Theatre** – created 'Seaview', an original drama film series co-commissioned by CCoCT
- **Warwick Arts Centre** – co-commissioned 'Middlemarch Monologues' for BBC Radio 3, and collaborated with BBC on 'Dance Passion'
- **Shoot Festival** - co-produced 'Unlocked' for Sky Arts with CCoCT and The Space
- **Media Mania** – collaborated with Channel 4, the BBC, CCoCT, ScreenSkills and Rural Media on the Young People Broadcast and Media Skills Programme. Delivered training programme for people at the start of their broadcast career, alongside ScreenSkills

In addition, CCoCT's creative collaboration with local BBC and community radio stations enabled CCoCT to reach communities at a hyper-local level and **gave platforms to a different section of talent**.

- Local voices were amplified during **Sound of Cov**, an 8-hour simulcast of content jointly created by local radio producers and writers, broadcast across 8 different community radio stations.
- A member of a local community radio station has since successfully obtained a job with BBC CWR

*"[The broadcast programme] has had a huge impact. Some of the people we worked with now feel that they have the confidence and skills and credits on their CV so that they can go forward and forge creative careers...The impact on the local economy that will drive an ecosystem of creative industries in Coventry, that has had a big impact."* – **Hayley Pepler, Head of Broadcast & Digital Content, CCoCT**

*“For an emerging artist, the experience of participating in something that is of broadcast quality and delivers within a budget, that is invaluable. The experience of delivery is the most important thing that the artists will have taken away. It's on their CVs, they are now a broadcast artist. They've got the films and we have and will continue to encourage them to put them into festivals.” – Fiona Morris, Chief Executive & Creative Director, The Space*

### **Mentorship, training & development**

Broadcast mentorship and training sessions provided young people in Coventry an invaluable opportunity to **develop broadcast related skills, and to learn about careers in broadcast from experts in the industry.**

**Young People Broadcast and Media Skills Programme:** CCoCT secured investment from Channel 4 towards a skills programme for young adults. CCoCT, in collaboration with Channel 4, BBC Academy, Rural Media (Hereford based charity), Media Mania (not-for-profit music organization) and ScreenSkills (not-for-profit training organisation) delivered a multi-stranded in-person training programme run by participating partners. Training strands included:

- **Shoot and Score:** 12-week training course on production and music scoring in Coventry developed and delivered by Rural Media and Media Mania, and supported by Channel 4 and CCoCT
- **BBC Academy Schools Workshops:** Skills and career workshops conducted in 10 Coventry schools by the BBC, in partnership with CCoCT. Workshops included: storytelling, podcasting, filming with a smartphone, news and disinformation and creative careers panels.
- **Screen Skills Workshops on Broadcast Careers:** Practical training programme for people at the start of their broadcast career, conducted by ScreenSkills and Media Mania

**Radio 1 Masterclass:** Radio 1 presenter Jordan North hosted a 1-day masterclass in Coventry giving young people in the city a chance to learn about life at Radio 1, and working in the radio industry.

In addition, the broadcast programme **afforded young creatives in the city the opportunity, and platform, to create and showcase their own work.** This included:

**Coventry Creates:** A weekly hour-long BBC CWR radio programme dedicated to showcasing work from local creative talent (talent uploaded work to BBC CWR website to be selected for broadcast).

**Youthful Cities Programme:** A partnership between CCoCT, The British Council and Youthful Cities brought about the Youthful Cities Programme, a cultural and creative skill exchange between young people across the globe.

The programme connected a select group of young adults in Coventry (age 18-25) with young adults from four other cities around the world (Bogota, Beirut, Detroit, Nairobi) in a series of cultural and creative skills exchange labs and collaborative projects. Working with CCoCT, The Space, Media Mania and other local partners, these

young adults created collaborative works of art that responded to important, urgent and youth-focused issues in their respective cities.

Each international collaboration resulted in a separate work of art spanning music (collaboration with Detroit), poetry and spoken word (collaboration with Beirut), street art (collaboration with Bogota) and digital storytelling (collaboration with Nairobi). All works of art were showcased as part of Coventry City of Culture's 2021-2022 wider programme of cultural activities and events.

The programme culminated in a 3-day Global Youth Summit in Coventry, that brought together the ideas and innovations generated by the cultural and creative exchanges.

## Evaluation table [summary]

Evaluatory question	Objective achieved?	Explanation
Did the content created increase the reach, profile, and impact of the City of Culture programme?	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined reach of 100m+ for network TV BBC programmes featuring Coventry</li> <li>• Opening ceremony Coventry Moves gained international viewership from 88 countries</li> <li>• Total reach of 376K for Sky Arts content</li> <li>• Total video views on YouTube and Facebook in excess of 7.6m</li> </ul>
Did the content focus on showcasing Coventry talent and ideas?	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local and regional independent production houses created broadcast content</li> <li>• Emerging Coventry talent achieved their first broadcast commissions and appearances</li> </ul>
Did the content reflect and represent the citizens of Coventry?	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content produced centred on Coventry City of Culture's key themes including activism and social issues, female empowerment, hope and freedom</li> <li>• Much of the content posted to YouTube and Facebook followed cultural activities conducted across the city by a number of different groups from a broad intersection of backgrounds, races, ethnicities and religious sects</li> </ul>
Was the content judged to be of a high quality?	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anecdotally, CCoCT received highly positive feedback about broadcast content produced</li> <li>• 'Skint' received 4-star reviews and 'top-pick' selections from major news outlets: The Guardian, The Times, The Sunday Times and The Observer etc.</li> </ul>
Did the content produced improve perceptions of Coventry?	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unknown</li> </ul>

Did broadcast activities enable and broker new co-creation opportunities for Coventry talent to work with broadcasters and independent producers?	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local production houses and arts organizations partnered with the BBC to create broadcast projects</li> <li>Emerging Coventry talent had the opportunity to work with a range of partners including CCoCT, The Space, Sky and the BBC across broadcast projects</li> </ul>
Did the broadcast programme attract further in-kind and cash investment into the UK City of Culture programme?	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unknown</li> </ul>
Did the programme provide value for money for CCoCT and partners?	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All partners agreed that the programme provided value for money: CCoCT were provided with a huge platform to distribute and amplify their content. Sky and the BBC were provided with content and fresh ideas</li> </ul>
Did the broadcast programme have a positive impact on the local community?	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unknown</li> </ul>
Did the broadcast programme have a positive impact on the local economy?	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unknown</li> </ul>
Did the content produced have an impact on tourism and wider interest in the city?	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unknown</li> </ul>

## Appendix

### Exhaustive list of all activity with broadcasters

#### BBC

Coverage and original programming

#### BBC One

##### Coverage:

The One Show  
BBC Breakfast  
Midlands Today  
Sunday Morning Live  
BBC national news bulletins

##### Coventry location:

Antiques Roadshow  
Last Night of the Proms  
Songs of Praise  
MOBO Awards 2021: Access All Areas  
Christmas Morning from Coventry  
Radio 1's Big Weekend (Harry Styles Live & Saturday's Best Bits)

##### Original programming:

Curtain-Up on Coventry (West Midlands only)  
2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry (West Midlands only)

#### BBC Two

##### Coverage:

Newsnight

##### Original programming:

2 Tone: The Sound of Coventry

#### BBC Four

##### Coventry location:

Dance Passion

##### Original programming:

Classic British Cars Made In Coventry  
Delia Derbyshire: The Myths and  
Legendary Tapes  
Coventry Cathedral: Building For A New  
Britain  
Skint Monologues  
Ghosts In The Ruins

Arena: Everything is connected –  
George Eliot's life

#### BBC News

##### Coverage:

Monthly BBC News Channel updates  
with BBC CWR's Trish Adudu  
Stirling Prize special  
Turner Prize special  
Opening Ceremony: Coventry Moves

#### BBC CWR/Midlands Today/BBC Online

Coverage across the year

#### BBC Radio 1

##### Coverage:

One Big Weekend  
Newsbeat

#### BBC Radio 1 Xtra

##### Coverage:

1Xtra: Words First Showcase  
Content around MOBOs from Coventry

#### BBC Radio 2

Bulletins and mentions

#### BBC Radio 3

##### Coventry feature:

In Tune  
Music Matters  
The Verb  
Words and Music  
The Essay  
Free Thinking  
Slow Radio

##### Original programming:

Delia Derbyshire Mixes on Breakfast  
Sunday Feature: How To Rebuild A City  
Drama On 3: This Little Relic  
Middlemarch Monologues



**BBC Radio 4****Coverage:**

Front Row  
 Today  
 World This Weekend  
 Any Questions?  
 Ramblings  
 PM  
 Broadcasting House  
 Contains Strong Language Live

**Original programming:**

R4 Drama: Cov

**BBC Radio 5 Live****Coverage:**

Afternoon Show Live from Belgrade  
 Bulletins/general programming

**BBC Radio 6 Music****Coventry feature:**

Craig Charles Show (In Pursuit of Repetitive Beats)

**Coventry location:**

Radcliffe and Maconie Live from Coventry

**BBC Radio Asian Network****Original programming:**

Panjabi Hit Squad: Coventry City of Culture and Bally Sagoo

**BBC World Service****Original programming:**

"In The Studio" documentary about Nitin Sawhney/Ghost In The Ruins

**BBC World News****Coverage:**

Opening Ceremony: Coventry Moves Click

**BBC iPlayer****Coventry location:**

RIBA Stirling Prize  
 2021 Turner Prize  
 Dance Passion

NB. Many titles listed above were also made available on iPlayer

**Sky****Sky Arts****Original programming:**

Landmark  
 Inside Art  
 Landscape Artist of the Year  
 Unlocked Artist Films

## Coventry City of Culture Trust – People and structure for broadcast & digital broadcast work

CCoCT staff were **instrumental to the success** of both the broadcast and digital broadcast strands of the wider broadcast programme.

- Members of CCoCT's broadcast team facilitated and supported broadcast partners' engagement with Coventry
- Both broadcast and digital broadcast teams worked creatively to ensure the maximum legacy and impact of CCoCT content through the establishment of co-productions, and creating content that a) resonated with audiences and b) reflected the identity of the city

CCoCT ensured that their approach involved **close collaboration across teams** and the acquisition of **specialist broadcast knowledge** as needed.

- **Collaboration:** Close collaboration across teams (incl. contracts, programme, digital, production, marketing)
- **Specialist knowledge:** Recruitment of freelance specialist support across key areas

### People

Core members of CCoCT staff involved in the broadcast programme include:

#### Broadcast

**Chenine Bhatena** – Creative Director, led on overall broadcast strategy and partnerships

**Gill Johnson** – Freelance Broadcast Consultant to Creative Director, led on broadcast co-productions, Sky Arts collaboration and Channel 4 skills partnership

**Jamie Wright** – Contracts and Operations Manager, led on business/financial aspects of broadcast co-productions

**Frances Anderson** – Lawyer contracted to CCoCT, provided legal support to broadcast co-productions

**Jacqui Ibbotson** – Freelance Broadcast Consultant, produced 'Horrible Histories' and 'Made in the Midlands' podcast

#### Digital Broadcast

**Laura McMillan** – Director of Audience Strategy, oversaw all marketing activities

**Hayley Pepler** – Head of Content & Digital Broadcast, led digital strand, worked with producers, filmmakers and podcasters to build out digital content offering