



## **Broadcast 2040+ campaign welcomes Government commitment to preserving traditional TV**

Speaking at the Royal Television Society conference in Cambridge on Thursday, Secretary of State Lucy Frazer made an important commitment for the future of broadcast TV. Frazer said:

*“As we focus on the future, our attention must also be on making sure people are not left behind. Because new ways of consuming TV should not come at the expense of those who still enjoy terrestrial television.”*

*This government wants to encourage the sector to keep embracing innovation and technological development. But we’re not going to pull the rug from under the devoted audiences of Freeview channels. We want terrestrial television to remain accessible for the foreseeable future.”*

Frazer also announced a new research programme to inform the case on the value of broadcast tv & radio beyond its current switch off date of 2034. This is the strongest commitment the Government has made to-date about the future of broadcast and is a testament to the work of the Broadcast 2040+ campaign in recent months. We look forward to engaging with the Government on this new review to ensure these strong words are translated into policy decisions that preserve Broadcast TV & Radio to 2040 and beyond.

### **Comments from our partners on the announcement:**

#### **Kerry Booth, Chief Executive, Rural Services Network**

“We are delighted to hear that the Culture Secretary has listened to our concerns. There is a real danger that our rural communities will be left behind in the race to make everyone digital. Everyone deserves free high-quality broadcast TV, radio and online services. The reality is the infrastructure isn’t there yet in rural areas and many residents aren’t ready to make the change over. We hope this work will address this.”

#### **Dennis Reed, Director of Silver Voices**

"This announcement is a feather in the cap of the Broadcast 2040+ Campaign and shows that our detailed arguments about the importance of broadcast TV and radio are cutting through to the highest levels. We hope it will pause the mad rush of the BBC and other terrestrial channels to prioritise internet-based streaming services and persuade them to concentrate instead on their core products. We argue, however, that the research programme should look beyond 2034, because our work has found that there will be a need for traditional broadcasting for at least the next twenty years. A large majority of the UK population relies on traditional broadcasting and it would be rash and dangerous for society to rely solely on internet based services for public information and popular entertainment"



**David Powell, Chair, LTVN**

“Local TV can be found on Freeview channels 7 and 8 in more than 15 million households. We welcome the Culture Secretary’s commitment that our viewers will not be left behind and look forward to working with the Government on the future of TV in the UK.”

**Robin Hewings, programme director at the Campaign to End Loneliness**

“For millions of people, TV is a vital source of comfort, especially those who are older or vulnerable. Indeed, it is a shocking fact that hundreds of thousands of older people say it is their main source of companionship.

“It is good news that the government has acknowledged that for those living in isolation, access to broadcast TV and radio is vital, and a shift to online-only services would affect many people who do not have access to broadband services, potentially cutting them off from the rest of the world.”

**Elizabeth Anderson, Interim CEO, Digital Poverty Alliance**

"Millions of families across the UK have either no or limited access to digital services due to affordability pressures, the inability to access a reliable internet connection or a lack of digital skills. At the DPA, we see so many left behind in the rush to a digital world, and we are delighted to hear that the Culture Secretary recognises the need to protect these services, especially for the millions for whom traditional broadcast is essential to stay up to date, educated, informed and entertained. Until a solution can be found to provide universal access to internet-based television services without the high costs of equipping millions of people with devices, connectivity and skills , broadcast must not be switched off."