

## **ITV Nations and Regions News Statement of Programme Policy 2024**

### **2023 Overview:**

**Our news offer:** ITV News provides a gold standard of trusted, accurate and impartial national and regional journalism. Nations and Regions news continues to be an important public service strength of ITV. ITV's impartial, independent journalism makes an enormous contribution to public service broadcasting in the UK. ITV's regional news programmes are crucial to ITV and our viewers are at the heart of our programmes. ITV refocused its regional news service in 2014 and now provides 18 regional and sub-regional services covering the whole UK and the Channel Islands, except for those covered by STV in Scotland. We provide news 7 days a week with bulletins throughout the day on weekdays including a half hour flagship programme at 6pm.

**Innovation:** Innovation was at the core of our delivery for 2023 - a £30 million investment in new technology saw the nations and regions joined up with Network News like never before. It came at the same time as ITV regional news was launched on our new award-winning streaming platform, ITVX.

- The introduction of a unified story planning system now enables our journalists to get a single view of which stories are being covered across nations, regions and network news. Journalists can collaborate much more easily and resources can be deployed in smarter ways. The system is also available on mobile thus providing all our staff with instant access to information from any newsroom within ITV.
- A new news production platform, Avid MediaCentral, has also been introduced as part of this multi-million pound investment. This enables our journalists to upload news footage to a central system which can then be accessed from any newsroom. It gives every ITV News programme access to the latest picture that's been filed on any story, from any part of the country. This, together with our new planning system, has connected ITV News together in a way that wasn't thinkable just a few years ago.
- We've also made fresh investment in our fleet of mobile newsgathering production vehicles. The 12 new vehicles are all equipped with both satellite and 4G/5G technology to ensure we can 'go live' from any location.

**Nations and Regions news on ITVX:** Regional news is now a core service on our streaming platform ITVX. It means news from the nations and regions has prominence alongside our most recognisable national programmes.

- Since November 2023, each nation and region now has a 'rail' of content on a dedicated news category page. Each rail features 12 pieces of content ranging from the latest edition of the 6pm programme, a personal intro from presenters, exclusive to ITVX content about events or communities in the region, plus political programmes and individual programme packages.
- When ITVX customers are signed in they are offered the regional news specific to their postcode. They are also able to interchange between all regions meaning they can watch all regional news. This is a first in ITV's history.

## Regional updates:

### Anglia:

#### **Key stories in 2023:**

In 2023, ITV News Anglia covered impactful, important stories right across the East. We've led the way on coverage of the crisis in special educational needs, commissioning an exclusive survey at the start of the year that shone a light on the thousands of parents being failed by the system designed to help them. In September, we became the first regional news programme to dedicate a full half hour to the issue. We told stories of parents forced to pay to get their children into school, and put questions to politicians on behalf of our viewers. This was supported by digital coverage analysing our findings in depth, insight columns from parents, and a podcast exploring our work on the issue.

ITV News Anglia's "Cost of Learning" series delved into the growing financial crisis facing the institutions trusted with our children's education. Months of work gathering responses from 250 head teachers across the East highlighted the problems faced by schools in our region. Online, we allowed readers to delve into the individual responses, hearing from headteachers in their own words, supported by analysis from senior industry figures.

Our eroding coastline continued to put the lives, and livelihoods of people in danger as crumbling cliffs left homes in Hemsby on the edge of falling into the sea. Our coverage of the developing catastrophe on the Norfolk coast has highlighted the stories of people who feel left behind - forced to drag their homes away from the edge. We commissioned a special programme looking at our collapsing coastline, which exposed serious shortages in the funding promised to correct the degradation, and told stories of those who had lost everything, including through a special podcast episode.

We've covered breaking news events, including a huge fire at Luton Airport, which left thousands of cars burned to cinders, and people out of pocket. We were on the ground within hours speaking to people affected and ensuring our viewers had the latest information about their travel plans.

When an unexploded World War Two bomb was discovered on the shore at Great Yarmouth, we were the only news outlet to get pictures of the explosion on air within minutes of it happening, and we've continued to follow the lasting effects on businesses in the area dealing with ongoing reconstruction work.

In politics our correspondent Emma Hutchinson led our coverage of the Mid Bedfordshire by-election, which saw Nadine Dorries' former constituency taken by the Labour Party. In sport, alongside our daily coverage, we continue to cover important stories including the Essex Cricket racism scandal - securing exclusive interviews with players who had been victims, and we held the Chief Executive to account - securing an apology for those affected.

## Coverage of the 75th anniversaries of the NHS and Windrush in 2023:

As the NHS celebrated 75 years, we broadcast a special programme which explored the major issues facing our health service. We saw staff celebrating with patients in Cambridge, Milton Keynes and beyond, but we also told the story of mounting pressure, increasing waiting lists and staff shortages. GPs told us of the strain on front-line services, patients told us why they were thankful for the health service, and we saw the reunion of a group of nurses from the class of '83.

In our communities, people celebrated the 75th anniversary of the arrival of HMT Empire Windrush at Tilbury Docks in Essex. We focused on the descendants of those migrants, who told us that years of cutbacks to community services had left younger people from black backgrounds turning to gangs and crime. Another descendant told us they felt let down by the government. We also covered the cultural celebrations around the East.

## Content highlights produced for ITVX in 2023:

Through our exclusive ITVX reports, we've been able to explore the surprising, quirky and heart-warming stories behind some of our communities. We visited the Cambridgeshire village that turns into a film set once a year, welcoming the stars of the ITV hit *Grantchester*. Our reporter Matthew Hudson spent a day talking to the community in Grantchester about what it's like living under the spotlight.

Rockingham Castle was the focus of another exclusive ITVX report, giving the viewer a behind-the-scenes look at the former fortress which is now a popular visitor attraction in Northamptonshire.

We also spent an evening at Milton Keynes panto, looking at the magic of this Christmas tradition and what makes it so special for both the audience and cast.

Plus our reporter Sophie Wiggins met up with the Ugley Women's Institute for her look at one of our unusually named villages.

ITVX also offers us a chance to show off some of our best content, including extended interviews that aren't able to run in full on the 6pm programme. Rob Setchell had a fascinating chat with Norfolk legend Henry Blofeld, looking back at his illustrious career as a sports journalist and why he isn't ready to put his feet up just yet.

## Innovations and initiatives:

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Anglia East and Anglia West panels met six times in 2023 to bring together representatives from diverse communities across the region with staff in Norwich and Cambridge to feed back on ITV Anglia output, to build contacts and to discuss ideas for future coverage.
- As part of ITV News' Diversity and Communities Project, ITV News Anglia's production journalist Ann Yip made a film for wider ITV use to allow colleagues to hear from the Chinese community and their representation in the media.

**Public outreach:** ITV News' new Schools Outreach programme was a great success in 2023: Anglia colleagues spoke to nearly 1800 students at 18 schools in 2023 to raise awareness among young people from all backgrounds of the career opportunities within ITV.

- We have also put 20 new people through our new work experience programme, a number of whom were from underrepresented backgrounds. Of those, ten people have taken part in our Virtual Insight placements, with a range of sessions held online, and ten people have spent time in our Norwich newsroom. Our feedback both from the participants and Anglia team has been excellent - and we are keeping in touch with all of the students for possible opportunities in the future.

#### **Focus for 2024:**

- A series of reports shining a light on the human cost of gang culture in our region, and the number of children losing their lives in violent gang wars.
- A special programme broadcast from Royal Papworth in Cambridge marking 40 years since the first heart and lung transplant and five years since moving to a new state of the art building. We will look at how this specialist hospital has led the way in medical advances and continues to do so.
- An in-depth look at the significant challenges facing early years childcare in the Anglia region, including exclusive data on the number of nurseries facing funding shortfalls in the East.
- An ambitious year-long series from ITV Anglia Content Editor Neil Barbour following the lives of three people in the East who are fighting for a voice. We will follow Mike who has motor neurone disease and is losing his speech, Julie who has the language disorder Aphasia and six-year-old Teddy who is autistic and doesn't talk. We will follow their stories as they fight for support and look at the provision available for people like them.
- Continuing coverage of the crisis in our SEND system, focussing on the families still fighting for an education for their children.
- Comprehensive coverage in the run-up to the General Election, focussing on what voters really care about and what they want from their politicians. This will include profiles on key constituencies in the Anglia region, the views of younger voters and political issues such as the economy, NHS, housing, environment and immigration.

#### **Border:**

#### **Key stories in 2023:**

The unexpected resignation of Scotland's First Minister was a major story that we covered in both our news programme and Scotland politics show Representing Border. We extensively covered the subsequent contest to replace her, thoroughly interrogating all the candidates. We also followed the ongoing police investigation into SNP finances.

Bad weather dominated the start of the year with significant flooding in the Scottish Borders causing disruption and claiming one life.

In May, we reported on how the region was marking the King's Coronation and we were at Wembley for the promotion of Carlisle United FC.

We marked the 75th anniversary of the NHS by dedicating a whole programme to it - with live programming from Carlisle Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, where services of thanksgiving were taking place as well as a range of features about different aspects of the health service around the region.

### **Content highlights produced for ITVX in 2023:**

On ITVX, viewers were able to watch our Scottish current affairs programmes *Border Life* and *Representing Border* in addition to the daily news programme. Highlights included an extended report on the Jedburgh common riding festival which explained this culturally significant and unique tradition, an exclusive interview with Timmy Mallet, who was cycling around the country, and our Political Correspondent produced a lookahead to 2024 for the platform.

### **Focus for 2024:**

Looking ahead to 2024, we expect a General Election to be held. We are planning items explaining new and changed constituencies following the Boundary Review and constituency reports. There will also be an election for a new Cumbria Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. We'll also be looking ahead to the 80th anniversary of D-Day and hoping to interview a remaining survivor still living in the region.

### **Calendar:**

#### **Key stories in 2023:**

An investigation by ITV Calendar into teenage knife crime uncovered claims that austerity cuts in youth services were linked to a rise in violent crime. An initial report following the death of a 15 year old outside the gates of his Huddersfield school, sparked a year long investigation. A series of special reports focussed on rising knife crime, the closure of youth facilities, the impact austerity had on the youth work workforce and cuts to training courses, as well as the unusual ways in which youth support has been introduced into different settings. The series also looked at what the Government is doing to tackle the issues and an interview with Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper MP. The full investigation by reporter Jonathan Brown was also turned into a half-hour documentary for the region's rail on ITVX.

Since the start of the War in Ukraine, ITV Calendar has reflected the voices of Ukrainian communities here, along with the voices of the refugees from Ukraine who have recently moved to Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. To mark the first anniversary of the war, ITV Calendar produced a special programme which revealed common challenges for those who have fled their country. The stories were told through the eyes of a small group now living in Lincoln. We met and worked with a Ukrainian journalist who came to Lincoln as a refugee in 2022. This helped to build trust and enabled effective communication. A church which has proved a vital lifeline for new arrivals in Lincolnshire was the backdrop for the outside broadcast. We invited 70 Ukrainians living in the area to join us and translated content from the programme to Ukrainian on the Calendar website.

ITV Calendar has reported on government plans to hold asylum seekers at the former RAF base at Scampton in Lincolnshire. We have closely followed the legal action by West Lindsey District Council and the campaign by local people against the plans. In December, when a High Court judge dismissed the challenge, we presented a special programme from Scampton.

In May, the Coronation of King Charles was reflected through the eyes of communities across the region. ITV Calendar also spoke to a group of special guests, who've made a difference to their communities, and were rewarded for it with an invitation to Westminster Abbey. From road safety campaigners in Knaresborough and those fueling food banks in West Yorkshire to community leaders in Bradford.

Also in May there was coverage of the local council elections, and in July there was coverage of the Selby and Ainsty by-election, which was triggered by the resignation of the sitting MP.

### **Coverage of the 75th anniversaries of the NHS and Windrush in 2023:**

ITV Calendar covered many different aspects of NHS care to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the NHS. We filmed a midwife at Pinderfields Hospital who'd been there so long she'd delivered one of her now colleagues. We were with community nurses on their rounds in rural North Yorkshire, highlighting the vital service they provide. We filmed behind the scenes at Lincoln County Hospital, showing the vital work of the unsung heroes like porters and chefs, without whom the NHS couldn't survive. We also featured four members of the same family, who all worked in the NHS because they valued the service so much.

The 75th anniversary of Windrush was marked by us hearing from people in local communities across the region, including an interview with an extraordinary Windrush pioneer who was on board the first voyage from the Caribbean to England on the Empire Windrush in 1948.

### **Innovation and achievements:**

We enjoyed success at the Royal Television Society Awards in Yorkshire, winning the award for Best News Programme and Helen Steel, one of our On-Screen Journalists, won the award for News Reporter of the Year. Jonathan Brown's Knife Crime investigation was recognised by the RTS, when he won the award for Nations and Reporter of the Year.

### **Diversity & Inclusion initiatives:**

We continue to hold quarterly meetings with our Diversity and Inclusion panels. At the end of 2022 we offered a development opportunity to one of the successful candidates in an ITV News initiative which focussed on supporting people who had resettled here from another country, or who were seeking asylum. The colleague was offered bespoke training and experience of the ITV Calendar operation for just under 3 months.

### **Public input:**

ITV Calendar regularly invites contributions from the public via our social media feeds and we routinely get feedback from viewers by email and by phone. We often use this feedback to inform our newsgathering and find case studies for future stories.

In July we took a stand at the Great Yorkshire Show where visitors were able to meet our presenters and team members, allowing them to talk about our programmes and stories. We also offered members of the public the chance to have a go at reading the weather, in a small mock-up of our studio.

### **Focus for 2024:**

ITV Calendar will provide comprehensive coverage of the General Election. On our 1800 programmes we'll engage and inform our audiences across the region by challenging the politicians competing for power and by critically analysing their views on the issues that really matter to them. Constituency reports and pieces which examine the issues relevant to people and places in the region will be key to our flagship shows. We're also planning a series of feature reports on young voters, to highlight the things that will influence their votes. On our website there'll also be vital information and analysis from our Political Correspondent and team of reporters.

There'll be coverage of the MOBO Awards, a celebration of music of black origin, when the annual ceremony is held in Sheffield in February.

Through the year we'll reflect on the 40th anniversary of the miners' strike. In March we'll mark 40 years since the start of the strike with a special programme from the National Coal Mining Museum in Wakefield. The programme will look at how the action transformed the industrial landscape in the region.

### **Central:**

#### **Key stories in 2023:**

ITV News Central produced a special programme from the centre of Nottingham on the day two students and a school caretaker were fatally stabbed, and three others injured when a van was driven into them. The programme, which was live at four locations, later won the Regional Television Society's award for Regional News Programme of the Year.

The quality of maternity care in the Midlands was in the spotlight throughout the year, particularly how the Shropshire and Telford NHS Trust had implemented the changes recommended in the Ockenden Review. The programme also extensively reported on a second Review by Donna Ockenden set up to investigate maternity care at the Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.

Among the bigger court stories of the year was the conviction of the parents of 10-month-old Finley Boden, who died of "appalling" injuries less than two months after being handed back into the care of his parents in Chesterfield.

An arson attack that destroyed Britain's wonkiest pub, The Crooked House near Dudley, sparked a major local campaign to have it rebuilt. An ITV News Central drone camera captured the devastation just hours after the flames had been extinguished.

It was a terrible year for West Midlands rugby. Top clubs Worcester Warriors and Wasps went into administration and were unable to secure sufficient funding to keep them in the Premiership.

### **Coverage of the 75th anniversaries of the NHS and Windrush in 2023:**

The 75th anniversary of Windrush was marked with a series of special features in the both East and West Midlands, culminating in two special 6pm programmes on the day of the anniversary itself.

The 75th anniversary of the NHS was celebrated with a special OB from the soon to be opened Midland Metropolitan University Hospital. In two separately tailored programmes for the East and West Midlands the editorial team looked back over the 75 years, covered the state of the NHS today and looked forward to future innovations.

### **Content highlights produced for ITVX in 2023:**

To mark the 75th anniversary of Windrush, reporter Pablo Taylor combined two packages filmed separately for the East and West Midlands into one item for ITVX detailing the experiences of two Windrush victims who emigrated to Jamaica as a result of their treatment by the Home Office.

At Christmas the local Central "rail" featured a Gurdwara in Coventry which was working with inner city schools to provide food parcels to disadvantaged children. Members of the Sikh community were interviewed in their native language, Punjabi, with English subtitles.

### **Innovations/achievements:**

A number of reporters began filming with iPhone and gimbal kits, alongside their existing camera equipment. This added to the types of story they could cover and the range of filming techniques they could adopt.

Several colleagues across editorial and technical took part in an ITV-wide tester programme for Google Workspace's new AI features. They were offered AI capabilities to help compose emails, build documents and procedures as well as predict and auto-complete within sheets.

Among the awards won in 2023 were: Journalist Barnaby Papadopoulos, RTS Midlands *Breakthrough Offscreen*. Journalist Raheem Rashid, Asian Media Awards *Outstanding Young Journalist*. Social Affairs correspondent Lucy Kapasi, Social Work Journalism Awards, *News Reporting (Broadcast)*. The programme also had three nominations in the Society of Editors Media Freedom Awards.

### **Diversity & Inclusion initiatives:**



Lucy Kapasi was selected as one of 11 high potential colleagues for ITV's senior leadership programme, Amplify, which in 2023 focused on supercharging the leadership potential of outstanding Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent colleagues.

As part of South Asian Heritage month, a number of colleagues came to work in traditional dress to widen understanding of different cultures. Central also ran a series of features for Black History Month and South Asian Heritage Month.

Colleagues were offered a series of events for stress awareness month in April, organised by one of the Mental Health First Aiders. Two colleagues were trained to become Menopause Mentors.

As part of Central's commitment to reaching under-represented groups, colleagues made contacts in the gypsy community which provided an uplifting story on a man who was encouraging adult literacy after learning to read in his sixties. A similar initiative in the Polish community resulted in a detailed feature on how Polish people in the Midlands were voting in their country's elections.

### **Public input:**

Central continued to run its quarterly inclusion and diversity panel meetings in the East and West Midlands, where panel members gave feedback on coverage and suggested story ideas.

Some of the biggest issues of the year - maternity care and Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision - was centred on viewer experiences and feedback. For the SEN coverage the programme commissioned a poll of Midlanders to find out their experiences of the service.

### **Media literacy initiatives:**

Rajiv Popat took over from Tejinder Kaur to sit on the executive council of the Broadcast Journalism Training Council. Central made a number of school visits in 2023, with journalists, camera crews and technical colleagues volunteering to take part, encouraging pupils to consider a career in broadcast media.

### **Focus for 2024:**

- The major focus will be the General Election, and are big mayoral elections for the East and West Midlands.
- The Infected Blood Inquiry final report will be significant for victims throughout the Midlands.
- The state of maternity services across the region will be a major focus.
- The 80th anniversary of D-Day will have landmark commemorations at the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas.
- In November it is the 50th anniversary of the Birmingham pub bombings.

## Channel:

### **Key stories in 2023:**

2023 started and ended with extreme weather stories across the Channel Islands. At the start of the year Channel covered extensive flooding in Jersey and in November the island was hit by Storm Ciarán which brought with it a tornado that devastated homes and the landscape. Channel produced a regional 6pm news special on the aftermath of the storm with live reports from every Channel Island and provided lives into the national news programmes and *Good Morning Britain*.

In 2023 Channel also provided in-depth coverage and analysis of significant political change that was happening across the islands. In Guernsey a successful vote of no confidence led to the ousting of the Chief Minister and a new leader for Guernsey's States. In Jersey, Channel reported on growing political unrest and accusations of bullying at the very top of Government - something which led to Jersey also seeing the toppling of its own Chief Minister at the start of 2024.

Channel also devoted considerable resources to special coverage of the 2023 Island Games which was hosted by Guernsey. In addition to full coverage of the preparations in the run up to the Games, Channel produced a special 6pm news programme on the first day of the Games, full daily highlights both on-screen and online and daily additional half hour highlights programmes - '*Today at the Games*' each night of the week-long event.

### **On ITVX:**

Following the launch of the regional rail in November 2023 ITV Channel has really embraced everything this new platform has to offer. It has enabled us to celebrate regional news at its best by putting people at the heart of the story.

Some of the content that really stood out during the launch week was a behind the scenes look at how a pantomime is put together. It gave the viewer a real fly on the wall look into how a production is made and our very own reporter, Roisin Gauson, even took on the leading role as Aladdin.

Another highlight was our piece on the Channel Islands dolmens. The report took the viewer back in time and helped them understand more about our neolithic ancestors who strode these rocky outcrops, far before we all did. The piece was put together with lots of drone photography, illustrative graphics and night time filming, all of which created a very polished finish for the viewer to enjoy.

It was also really good to see some of our content shared on the 'All Around Britain' rail. One of the pieces that stood out was a report into the heroic hound who helped to save a fellow pooch by donating blood. This piece was a great example of how a Channel Island story can resonate with viewers across Britain and still have the same emotional impact.

### **Diversity and Inclusion initiatives:**

During 2023, ITV News Channel were recognised for the newsroom's work on Diversity and Inclusion with a DIFERA Award (Diversity, Inclusion, Fairness, Equality, Respect and Acceptance). The DIFERA awards recognise achievement across the Channel Islands and ITV Channel was voted Company of the Year after an anonymous nomination.

*The judges said: "ITV are meticulous in their approach to stories that involve people from minority groups in the island. Rather than using stories or commentary about those groups to stir up division as other local and national media outlets do, they take time to reassure the subject of their coverage of their approach and use their own diversity panel as a critical friend to help their telling of the story. The ITV diversity panel in the Channel Islands is encouraged to critique, input and feedback ITV's local output, and further into ITV's national output. Locally, the output is monitored every night for its balance of the backgrounds of contributors and pan-island stories. This comes as no surprise when you know how ITV treats their employees. Their policies and procedures are excellent and provide support to all employees regardless of personal characteristics. Their employees are permitted to attend Pride and encouraged to hold and discuss diverse views. This is not a company afraid of diversity, this is one that embraces it and sees the value in serving every member of the Islands' public every day at 6pm."*

#### **Focus for 2024:**

ITV News Channel will be producing two special live broadcasts from the Channel Islands Sports Awards at the start of the year.

A special 6pm programme is also planned for May when Jersey will be debating the second stage in its proposal to introduce legislation to allow Assisted Dying in the island. The programme will hear from those voices pushing for change alongside those who are opposed to the Assisted Dying legislation and we will be looking at existing practices in other jurisdictions which have already legalised assisting end of life.

#### **Granada:**

#### **Key stories in 2023:**

2023 started with a story that hit national headlines with the disappearance of Nicola Bulley, a young mother from Lancashire. Nicola vanished while out walking her dog. Her phone was found on a bench close to the river Wyre still connected to a work conference call. The story captured the nation's attention and prompted a huge reaction on social media especially TikTok with inaccurate reports and conspiracy theories. Lancashire police failed to explain the circumstances behind Nicola's disappearance, fuelling speculation. Sadly, her body was later recovered.

As the regional broadcaster we were acutely aware of ensuring responsible and accurate coverage. We kept our presence low key at all times in the small village of Michael St Wyre. Our team on the ground was mindful of local people and treated them with respect at all times. There was a subsequent report into Lancashire police's handling of the case and it was concluded that the relationship between the police and the mainstream media needs to be rebuilt. As the regional broadcaster we feel this is relevant to highlight as there are issues

with other police forces where information and the opportunity for non-reportable media briefings is not being taken.

We covered several high profile and long trials, including that of Lucy Letby, the nurse who after a 10 month trial was found guilty of murdering seven babies and the attempted murder of seven others. It was a huge investment for the team to have a dedicated reporter covering the court case and a producer and second reporter working on background pieces. This provided key intelligence for the network team, who only dipped in and out of the case. The Countess of Chester hospital where Letby was based employs over 9,000 people and serves just short of half a million people so the ripple effect of the verdicts was enormous and there will now be an inquiry into what went wrong at the hospital in 2024. The sentencing of Lucy Letby was filmed and used in our coverage.

Granada News has played a key role in establishing filming in regional crown courts with the team working with the steering group to ensure access to filming in the crown courts in the regions. We also covered the trial of Thomas Cashman for the murder of Elle Edwards and the trial of Eddie Ratcliffe and Scarlett Jenkinson for the murder of Brianna Ghey. Both of these trials were major national news stories and once again we were able to provide cover for the network news alongside our own outlets on TV and online.

We covered the death of Sir Bobby Charlton in October which was a huge story here in the North West and then his subsequent funeral which was a major public event. His coffin passed Old Trafford for fans to say farewell before a service at Manchester Cathedral.

Elsewhere, we had an opportunity to celebrate in March when Eurovision came to Liverpool. The city hosted the competition on behalf of Ukraine. We produced a special programme ensuring that we showcased the best of Liverpoolian hospitality and entertainment. It was a big sporting year with history being made with the first all Manchester FA cup final at Wembley. We also had animal rights protestors interrupt the Grand National at Aintree.

### **Coverage of the 75th anniversaries of the NHS and Windrush in 2023:**

We marked the 75th anniversary of the NHS with two pieces looking at the strikes and hearing from staff working as both nurses and doctors about their reasons for taking action. We felt it was important to reflect that these strikes were unprecedented. The second piece we did was one based on access to Whiston hospital for 12 hours. We spoke to staff, both nursing, medical and support services as well as patients. Within this piece we captured the pride that people feel working for the NHS and the care they give - the reporter was more able to capture a sense of celebration of the 75th anniversary.

The Windrush anniversary was covered in two pieces both on TV and online. The first covered a weekend festival held in the name of Windrush in Preston celebrating the town's connections to the Windrush generation. The other was transmitted on the day of the 75th anniversary speaking to a man who'd come over on the ship and his reflections on what greeted him, the cold, and hearing from his daughter who wrote a play about her Dad's life. This piece details how the fortunes of his family here in the North West and how two of his grandchildren are representing sport at the highest level for the country he arrived in 75 years ago.

## **Content highlights produced for ITVX in 2023:**

The highlight of our coverage for ITVX was on the 50th Anniversary of the Summerland fire on the Isle of Man. We produced a documentary that was featured within the factual content and was included in the 'fresh in' category. We featured a series of reports on the fire, 50 people were killed and it's known as the 'forgotten disaster' as so few people know about it. Our content featured a woman, Jackie Hallam, who lost her mum and best friend in the fire, the verdict on their inquest is death by misadventure. Jackie is now campaigning to have the inquest verdicts overturned. Other highlights from 2023 include a feature on the famous Iron Men of Crosby coming of age - the statues by Sir Antony Gormley which form his installation 'Another Place' have been on the beach for 18 years.

## **Innovation and outreach:**

We live streamed the funeral of Sir Bobby Charlton online. The funeral cortege was going to pass Old Trafford to allow fans to say their farewell followed by a service at Manchester Cathedral. We created a temporary studio to take in live feeds of the cameras on the ground and have live commentary from one of our sports teams. This meant we could compete with the 24 hour news channels and achieved an online audience of over 50,000.

We also took part in four virtual insight days where media students from across the North West were able to hear from our teams and take part in our morning meeting and debrief. We had five school outreach visits and three in-person work placements in 2023.

## **Focus for 2024:**

As a general election year, a lot of our planning will be based on four areas: key issues affecting the Granada region, e.g. Levelling Up, constituency profiles to explain the main battlegrounds in the North West, interviews with the main party leaders as they visit the North West, and feature reports on young voters to highlight what will influence their vote. We also have the local, mayoral and police and crime commissioner elections in May. We will be covering Lucy Letby's appeal, and retrial on one count in June, the ongoing police investigation into Letby's activities and the Thirlwell inquiry that will start in September 2024.

## **London:**

### **Key stories in 2023:**

Politics played a key part of the ITV News London agenda in 2023, with the Mayor of London's controversial Ultra Low Emission Zone extension making headlines regularly on bulletins and online. ITV News London reported on the backlash with cameras vandalised, and a by-election result in Uxbridge which pointed to the lack of support for the extension.

The Metropolitan police was a focus throughout the year with extensive reports on disgraced officers Wayne Couzens and David Carrick. The Baroness Casey review resulted in a special ITV News London programme, with an exclusive sit down with two serving officers who spoke to ITV News London anonymously about the 'toxic' culture within the force.

2023 was a bumper year for the capital's sports teams – and a West Ham Europa Conference league win in June saw ITV News London not only travel to Prague for the match, but broadcast a special outside broadcast for the open top victory parade bus tour.

We were out broadcasting with our presenters on location through much of 2023 in fact – including the King's Coronation special from outside Buckingham Palace.

### **Coverage of the 75th anniversaries of the NHS and Windrush:**

ITV News London celebrated NHS 75 almost every day in the week of the milestone birthday. Whether it was an in-depth look at the staff making the service tick, or a nod to the birthday in a live or marker, we kept it in the headlines.

We conducted an NHS photo competition, with guest GP Ellie Cannon as a judge. ITV News London also looked back at some of the ground-breaking treatments, operations and facilities that took place in the capital - namely the first successful bone marrow transplant from an unrelated donor at Westminster Children's hospital as well as the first purpose-built AIDS ward at Middlesex hospital, opened by Princess Diana.

ITV News London marked the anniversary of Windrush, celebrating the generation who came to the UK, but also meeting those who'd been affected by the ensuing scandal. We were live in Windrush square in Brixton on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023 with Vernon Vanriel - who was denied permission to re-enter Britain after leaving for a short time. Vernon was given an official apology by the Home Office.

### **Content highlights produced for ITVX in 2023:**

Thanks to ITVX, ITV News London was able to broadcast lengthy interviews with several newsworthy guests in 2023, including with Mike Freer MP, who spoke honestly and frankly with our political correspondent, Simon Harris, about fears for his safety. Several beautiful features were broadcast on the platform in December, including a sneak peek behind the scenes look at Windsor castle's Christmas decorations.

### **Focus for 2024:**

Politically it's another big year for the capital in 2024 - with a Mayoral Election scheduled for early May. Will Sadiq Khan make it a record three terms in office? We'll be reporting on the upkeep, or lack of, of London's underground and next Spring will begin profiling and meeting our London Olympic hopefuls for Paris 2024.

### **Meridian:**

### **Key stories in 2023:**

*The King's Coronation:* Leading up to the Coronation of King Charles III and on the day itself, ITV News Meridian marked the historic moment on air and online. From the guests living in our region invited to attend the ceremony, to the hundreds of events and street parties taking

place in communities, our producers and journalists told this important story through a local lens.

*Post Office Scandal:* Across the three ITV News Meridian opted regions we reported the story of the Post Office Scandal. This has been a story we have followed for more than 15 years but coverage increased when the ITV drama *Mr Bates Vs The Post Office* threw the spotlight on the story once again. We re-interviewed victims in our patch we have spoken to over the years, including Jo Hamilton from South Warnborough whose story featured heavily in the television drama.

*Strikes:* ITV News Meridian covered ongoing strikes by NHS staff including junior doctors and consultants. Our journalists spoke to health workers on the picket lines and viewers heard from health bosses about the impact of the strikes on patients and services. There were other strikes to report on too, including by train drivers and teachers.

### **ITV News Meridian (East)**

*SEN provision:* In 2023 the Government threatened to take away the control of some children's services from Kent County Council after they were accused of failing children with special educational needs. ITV Meridian produced a series of reports on SEN provision in the county and we spoke to parents struggling to find a school for their children.

*The funeral of Paul O'Grady:* On the day of the funeral of ITV presenter Paul O'Grady thousands of local people and fans (some with their dogs) lined the streets of his home town of Aldington in Kent where Paul's cortege passed by. A big story nationally but one that also felt very local because of Paul's connection with his community.

*Sewage protests:* ITV Meridian reported on the ongoing issue of sewage pollution being released into rivers and the sea. In August more than a thousand campaigners gathered in Whitstable and called for the water company to 'clean up its act'. Southern Water told us it was investing more than 20 million pounds into cutting pollution in the area.

*Margate's Banksy:* The arrival of a Banksy in Margate on the 14th of February led to much excitement in the town. Visitors and media outlets arrived to view 'Valentine's Day Massacre', which depicted a 1950's housewife with a swollen eye to highlight domestic violence. The story gained even more coverage after the local council removed a key element of the artwork, a freezer and a broken chair after declaring them a safety hazard.

### **ITV News Meridian (West)**

*Missing couple:* At the beginning of the year we reported on the search for a couple who were thought to be sleeping rough while on the run with a newborn baby. When Constance Martin and her partner Mark Gordeon were finally arrested without any sign of the child, dozens of officers combed an area of Brighton looking for clues of the baby's whereabouts. Sadly the infant's body was later discovered.

*Isle of Wight landslide and floods:* 20 homes had to be evacuated on the Isle of Wight after a huge landslide in Bonchurch near Ventnor. Gardens collapsed and some properties were left

precariously close to the edge of a ravine. Businesses were also impacted including a tearoom deemed too dangerous to reopen. Staying on the Isle of Wight and a few months earlier, heavy rainfall left homes and businesses flooded. We spoke to families left clearing up the mess.

*Disabled Abuse:* In May ITV News Meridian spoke exclusively to a man who for more than four years, was kept indoors in squalor by his wife and carer. Tom Somerset, who has cerebral palsy and needs round the clock care, was eventually rescued from his home in Chichester. We reported the trial of Sarah Somerset-How and George Webb, who were convicted under slavery laws in the first ever case of its kind.

### **ITV News Meridian (Thames Valley)**

*The death of Ruth Perry:* At the beginning of January we reported on the death of Caversham Headteacher Ruth Perry who took her own life after her school was downgraded following an Ofsted Inspection. The story gained national coverage and led to a review of inspections. Later in the year we also reported on Mrs Perry's Inquest where the coroner ruled that the inspection "likely contributed" to her death.

*Reading fire:* There were dramatic scenes in Reading in November when a tower block being built caught alight trapping a construction worker on the roof. As flames surrounded the man a crane driver sprung into action to attempt to rescue him. As crowds watched on, a cage was lowered and the worker managed to get inside before being winched to safety.

*Oxford Mini:* Workers at Mini in Oxfordshire learned that 600 million pounds was being invested into the factory in Cowley, securing jobs. There had been some uncertainty over the plant's future after it was announced in 2022 that most of Mini's electric cars production would be moving to China.

### **Coverage of the 75th anniversaries of the NHS and Windrush in 2023:**

**NHS 75:** To mark this milestone ITV News Meridian planned a week of in depth coverage across our programmes. We looked back at the history of the NHS and spoke to former staff including 94 year old former nurse Ursilla Sullivan. Ursilla was recruited to work in the NHS from the West Indies and settled in Gravesend, Kent.

We reported on the many challenges facing our health service from patients who have had a bad experience with care, to the demand on GP services. Our reporter followed a day in the life of a GP at a surgery in the South.

On the birthday itself our reporters spent the day at hospitals in the region where they spoke to medics and patients about their experience of the NHS. We had a crew at Basingstoke Hospital in Hampshire and in the South East of our region at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital. Celebratory events were taking place at both locations.

To end the week of reports we also looked ahead to the future of the NHS and showed viewers some of the cutting edge treatments that are transforming lives. We told the story of 2-year-old Harry Hughes who was given life saving treatment for a rare muscle wasting



disease. Harry's family can't thank the NHS enough for the £1.8 million pound drug he received. We also looked at the pioneering technology being used in our region to treat blood clots, blocked arteries and tumours and the 3D printed implants being developed that could transform orthopaedics.

***Who cares for the Carers? An ITV News Meridian Special:*** ITV Meridian produced a half hour special programme on unpaid carers. The programme took months to come together as the team worked to build up trusted relationships with key contributors. The stories we told were hard hitting, moving and struck a chord with many viewers. We introduced viewers to Ann Coyle who talked about how lonely she feels as the carer of her husband Roy, who has dementia. Despite 63 years of marriage Roy no longer remembers Ann. We also spent time with the Das family and followed a typical day for young carer 11 year old Aadhya. Aadhya looks after her mother overnight while her father is working.

***Windrush 75:*** In the lead up to the anniversary ITV News Meridian told a range of stories connected to Windrush. Some were about the passengers who arrived in the UK, others were about events taking place to mark the occasion like art exhibitions and performances.

We told viewers about the ship, *Almanzora* that arrived in Southampton in 1947. *Almanzora* had 200 people from the West Indies aboard. One of them was the father of Sonia Forbes, who started a new life in Southampton. She talked to us about how her dad worked in the oil industry for 48 years and about the Steel band he set up called Harbour Lights.

We heard from other Southampton residents from the Windrush generation, like Christolina Ddungu who arrived when she was 15. Christolina showed us the suitcase she brought with her from Trinidad carrying everything she owned. Another interviewee, Stevell Weir, came to England from Jamaica in 1962. Stevell talked about how it took him 6 months to find a job in a foundry in Ringwood.

Over in the South East of the Meridian patch reporter Tony Green interviewed the Bishop of Dover, Rose Hudson-Wilkin. Bishop Rose considers herself a 'product of the Windrush generation.' Her mother travelled here in the 1960's. Tony Green also joined members of the Medway Caribbean community in Kent. Back in the 1940's members of the local Caribbean community were forced to set up their own social space in a basement because they found they were unwelcome elsewhere. Today the group has evolved and is a hive of activity and events for people of all ages and backgrounds. In the news feature viewers heard first hand experiences from the Windrush Generation at the day centre and heard about an art installation that has been created at Tilbury docks where the ship *Windrush* docked.

### **Content highlights produced for ITVX in 2023:**

ITV News Meridian is now producing a series of longform interviews and news features specifically for our regional news section on ITVX. These pieces can be much longer in length than for the television news programme, enabling us to explore a story or conduct an interview in more depth.

In 2023 our presenter interviewed former postmistress Jo Hamilton about the Post Office Scandal for ITVX. Jo Hamilton talked about how she felt watching herself portrayed in the ITV drama *Mr Bates vs The Post Office* (broadcast Jan 2024).

We interviewed farmer and Oxfordshire resident Kaleb Cooper. Although famous for appearing in the Amazon Prime reality show *Clarkson's Farm*, the interview was about the farming industry and his decision to become a farmer.

ITV Meridian produced a feature about Winchester Cathedral's Choristers, showing viewers how much training the choir boys have to do per day. We spoke to parents, children and teachers about how achieving 'perfection' comes with certain sacrifices.

At Christmas we produced a feature about the festive decorations and displays at Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire. Inspired by fairy tales the country house was transformed into a magical wonderland.

### **Innovations and outreach:**

*Schools outreach:* Throughout 2023 colleagues from ITV News Meridian took part in our School's Outreach programme. We visited 8 schools in the region - particularly those in diverse communities. Members of the team spoke to groups of students, hosted assemblies and took part in careers evenings to talk about working in broadcast news and the different roles people do. Across the year more than 200 children saw the careers presentation and film and got to ask questions about the industry.

*Virtual Work experience:* ITV Meridian colleagues took part in running and hosting the ITV News virtual work experience days. These all day online meetings take place four times a year and in 2023 across all of the regions 120 members of the public, including many students joined these days, although anyone interested in exploring a career in news is welcome. All invitees join a series of video calls and hear from people doing technical and editorial jobs. The guests get an overview of ITV News and hear about what makes a good story. There is lots of time for questions and answers, we play a series of films that showcase our television and online content and we offer advice when it comes to preparing a CV and getting a job at ITV News.

### **Focus for 2024:**

*General Election 2024:* Election coverage will feature in our programmes in 2024, not only are there some local council elections in the Meridian region and Police and Crime Commissioner elections, a general election is also expected. Compared to 2019 when only one seat changed hands in the Meridian region we expect the next general election to be more lively in terms of results.

*Illegal migration - small boat Channel crossings:* A topic we will look at as part of our election coverage and one we will continue to cover in 2024. Many unaccompanied children continue to arrive in small dinghies off the Kent Coast and Kent County Council has spoken out about the challenges and cost of finding suitable accommodation for minors.

*Education:* We will continue to follow Special Educational Needs provision in schools across the region, particularly in Kent where the issue has been in the spotlight for the past 12 months.

*Infected Blood inquiry:* In May 2024, the long-awaited report is expected into how patients were given infected blood in the UK in the 1970's and 1980's. The public inquiry got underway in 2018. Many of those who received infected blood and who have subsequently passed away as a result, were students at Treloars school in Alton in Hampshire where they received regular blood transfusions for haemophilia.

*Constance Martin and Mark Gordon Trial:* Having covered the search for a couple who were on the run with their newborn baby before she was found dead, we will report on this high profile case when it comes to court in 2024.

*Reading attacks Inquest:* The Inquest begins into the deaths of three men - James Furlong, Dr David Wails and Joseph Ritchie-Bennett who were stabbed to death in a park in Reading by a man known to police - Khairi Saadallah.

*D-Day 80th Anniversary:* We will report on the 80th anniversary of the Second World War operation known as D-Day. We are already gathering interviews ahead of the event in June 2024, with remaining veterans who ran up the beaches in Normandy or who were connected to the operation in some way. We will report from Portsmouth and France where high profile events will be taking place.

## Tyne Tees:

### **Key Stories in 2023:**

After a spate of deaths with teenagers being killed by other teenagers, we produced a special programme on knife crime. We showed how easy it was for children to order knives on the internet without any identity checks, something that led to calls for the laws around bladed instruments to be tightened up. We also heard why teenagers felt they had to carry knives and gave voice to the families and friends of those killed.

We mounted investigations on Teesside revealing that drug gangs branded children who worked as their drug mules, and that they openly spray painted the numbers of houses where drugs were for sale on walls and fences. We reported too on the special unit formed by police to tackle some of the area's most persistent offenders.

Amongst our highest profile stories was the conviction of the man who brutally murdered 7-year-old Nikki Allan in 1992. The case had helped change the rules over police interview tactics after an initial suspect's trial was thrown out because of how police obtained a confession from him. It remained unsolved for three decades, until advances in forensic science were made and the real killer could be caught.

Other key stories included reaction to the King's Coronation and the cost of living. We also travelled to Milan for Newcastle United's return to the European Championship and to Cyprus to see a Northumberland man released from prison after his trial for killing his wife.

## Content highlights for ITVX in 2023:

ITV News Tyne Tees contributes to the national news page for all the major news stories breaking in the region. We also produce features about the people and places in the area for more general viewing. Amongst the latter have been pieces looking at the history of the Angel of the North statue, following an Aurora hunter as he filmed the Northern Lights in the region and we reported on why Bamburgh is consistently chosen as the country's favourite seaside town.

## Innovations/Initiatives:

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** We have a diversity panel which meets regularly to review and advise on D&I issues and we actively pursue stories to ensure we engage with all sectors of our community.
- **Public Input:** We invite public contributions via email, Facebook and X and regularly find case studies for stories through our interaction with viewers on social media.
- **Media literacy:** Members of our team give talks to schools and universities about working in journalism and television, mentor people who want to join the industry and we welcome young people into our newsroom for work experience and take part in a wider online ITV work experience scheme.

## Focus for 2024:

We will fulfil our remit as a public service broadcaster by giving full coverage of the campaigns for the general election, local, mayoral and council elections in 2024. Our aim will be to help inform the public about party policies so that they can make informed choices about their votes.

2024 marks the 40th anniversary of the Miners' Strike, an event which was of huge significance in the North East. We will produce a special programme to hear from miners' and their families and to understand the impact it had on the region and its legacy.

## West Country:

### Key stories in 2023:

*Knife crime:* The tragic consequences of knife crime dominated our East programme during the year. In May 18-year-old Ben Moncrieff died of his injuries after being stabbed in Bath. The following month another teenager, Mikey Roynon, was killed with a zombie knife at a house party in Bath, while in July Eddie King Muthemba Kinuthia was fatally stabbed in the St Pauls area of Bristol. For the family's of Ben and Mikey there have been court cases while Eddie's death remains unsolved. Every major town and city in our region has been impacted. We also covered the conviction of two teenagers for the murder of Owen Dunn in Swindon, and the sentencing of four teenagers in connection with the death of Ramarni Crosby in Gloucester. In all of these cases we have spoken to the grieving families, and talked widely to campaigners about their ongoing work to dissuade young men from leaving home armed with a knife.

Another tragic case involved the stabbing of Barnaby Webber, one of three people killed in Nottingham in June 2023. Barnaby, who grew up in Taunton, was attacked as he walked home with his friend Grace O'Malley Kumar. We've subsequently spoken regularly to Barnaby's parents - initially about their devastating loss, and more recently about the outcome of the court case which saw his killer convicted of manslaughter.

*Asylum accommodation:* The Government's decision to provide accommodation for asylum seekers on a barge off the Dorset coast came under intense scrutiny on our programmes after it was announced in April 2023. Protests greeted the Bibby Stockholm's arrival in Falmouth, and these continued after the barge's arrival in Portland.

*Keyham shootings:* In February the inquests concluded into the five people who were shot dead in Keyham in August 2021. Throughout the five-week inquest we provided comprehensive daily coverage, both on screen and online, of the evidence, much of which focussed on the shortcomings in Devon and Cornwall Police's firearms licensing department. On the day the inquest finished we devoted a half-hour to the story, securing exclusive interviews with the last police officer to talk to the gunman, and hearing from those impacted right across the community in Keyham. We also held Devon and Cornwall Police to account in an interview with their chief constable.

*Planning:* Plymouth City Council's decision to fell more than 100 trees in the city centre as part of a controversial renovation project provoked outrage in March. We were there within minutes of work starting and returned to the scene repeatedly over the coming months to hear from local businesses and the people of Plymouth. In May, the Conservative administration who had voted through the decision, lost control of the council to Labour.

*Space travel:* At the start of 2023 there was huge public interest in the effort to make history in Cornwall, and launch a satellite into space from Newquay Airport. Thousands of people braved awful weather to witness the launch of the Virgin Orbit mission, and our presenter Seb Choudhury anchored an OB from Newquay Airport. While the launch didn't go according to plan, it showed the fascination there is in space travel.

*Housing:* More than 400 people were given just a few hours notice to leave their homes in Bristol in November, when a tower block in Barton Hill was declared unsafe. It was thought the structural issues could put the building at risk of collapse in the event of a fire. We kept in constant contact with those impacted, as they waited for news of their homes.

The housing crisis is a recurring issue in both our programmes. In Cornwall, there is an acute shortage of affordable homes, leaving thousands of families in temporary accommodation. We've highlighted the great work of charities like Disc in Newquay, who are supporting many people across the Duchy. We've also looked at the evolution of so-called "ghost towns", caused by the increasing number of second homes.

*Legal precedent:* Our reporter Robert Murphy established a legal precedent in 2023 after successfully arguing in court for the release of covert recordings of a suspect confessing to a murder. Darren Osment was filmed by an undercover police officer who befriended him in the hope of finding out what had happened to Osment's partner Claire Holland, who vanished from Bristol in 2012. Rob argued the recordings should be in the public domain and

they were released. Osment was subsequently convicted of murder by a jury at Bristol Crown Court.

### **Coverage of the 75th anniversaries of the NHS and Windrush in 2023:**

*NHS:* We were given special access to Taunton's Musgrove Park Hospital, where we followed staff and spoke to patients over the course of a day. This was broadcast on both our West and East programmes, with our reporter Max Walsh linking into his piece live from the hospital's helipad.

*Windrush:* More than 100,000 people came out onto the streets of Bristol in July for the St Paul's Carnival, where a series of events were held to mark the 75th anniversary of Windrush. We previewed the carnival, hearing the stories of those who arrived on Windrush, and extensively covered the event. Later in the year we celebrated the pioneering work of Guy Bailey (from Bristol) after he was honoured at the Pride of Britain awards for his 'outstanding contribution' to civil rights. He was one of a generation of Caribbean workers who arrived on the Windrush and went on to lead the Bristol bus boycott in the 1960s. On our West programme we heard from families who'd settled in Cornwall after Windrush, and celebrated a new exhibition that focussed on memories of those who arrived in the UK.

### **Content highlights produced for ITVX in 2023:**

- We celebrated the achievement of Andrew 'Able' Lawrence who has walked every street in Bath.
- From landing ashore, to landing on your plate - we produced a ten minute report on a day in the life of Plymouth's fish market.
- Every week we looked back through our extensive archive to show a particularly memorable item, such as the cheddar cheese tester who insured his nose, and the night Coldplay gigged at a village pub.

### **Innovation and achievements:**

- We invested in two 360 degree cameras at the start of the year, and these have both been widely used by the team, bringing a different perspective to a variety of pieces.
- We have also rolled out new mobile phone kits across the team, giving us greater flexibility and freedom when we need to walk long distances on shoots. We've also successfully used iPhones to film lives, without a reduction in camera quality.
- The use of a gimbal with an iPhone has also yielded positive results, allowing reporters to do pieces to camera where their movement is tracked remotely.
- We have also invested in two new drones for our camera operators. Four of them are now qualified to fly.
- Robert Murphy, one of our On Screen Journalists, won an RTS West of England Award for his Digital documentary Decoy, which looked at the police operation to catch a serial rapist in Bristol in the 1970s.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives:**

- Over the course of seven days in November we produced a series of pieces on our East programme about The Seven Saints of St Pauls - a mural project that took four years to complete and highlights the role of Black Bristolians fighting for equality who were all instrumental in founding the St Pauls Carnival.
- We ran a series of features during Black History Month and South Asian Heritage Month.
- Syd Lawrence, the first British-born black cricketer to play for England, spoke to us several times during the year about his efforts to tackle racism in the game. 2023 saw the fast bowler appointed as president of Gloucestershire County Cricket Club, a position he used to urge a radical rethink of the way the sport is run.
- We ran a number of pieces on the 60th anniversary of the Bristol Bus Boycott, hearing from campaigners, including Roy Hackett and Guy Bailey.
- A report from the Bristol Somali Forum found that minority ethnic communities had been disproportionately impacted by the cost of living crisis with dozens of people skipping meals to save money.
- We heard from a wide variety of people discussing the challenges and opportunities they faced as a result of a disability, including ADHD, autism and Tourettes.
- We also highlighted the discrimination some partially sighted people continue to experience with restaurants and pubs refusing them access with their guide dogs.
- Offscreen, two members of the team qualified as Menopause Mentors after carrying out an extensive training programme.
- Two of our On Screen Journalists, Max Walsh and Charlotte Gay, were part of our group-wide Diversity and Communities Project. They both delivered pieces based on the contacts they've developed as part of the project.

#### **Public input:**

- Our East and West diversity and inclusion panels continue to meet on a quarterly basis, both in Bristol and Plymouth.
- Our presenters are regularly asking for viewer feedback on our live shows and then reading out comments on air.

#### **Media literacy initiatives:**

- We continue to offer work experience with regular weekly placements for students who are studying journalism.
- A number of colleagues used their volunteering days to visit colleges, and work alongside students interested in a career in broadcasting.
- Our Assistant Content Editor Sam Mangat supported colleagues across the team to deliver the Schools Outreach Programme. They visited primary and secondary schools across the region, and then delivered presentations about ITV to students.

#### **Focus for 2024:**

- The ongoing impact of knife crime will continue to be a focus, with special reports on the pioneering work being carried out in schools, colleges and boxing clubs to make young people aware of the danger.
- We are planning a special strand on dementia, talking to those affected, along with carers, and highlighting efforts to make Bristol Britain's first dementia friendly city.

- May's council elections will be an important barometer, ahead of the General Election.
  - The impact of climate change on our region, particularly in the West, will be a huge focus, with coastal erosion and flooding becoming even more common.
-