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## 2018 / 19 Programmes Policy Review

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### S4C

S4C is a unique public service that provides audio-visual content in the Welsh language on television and via the most popular digital services.

As the only public service of its kind in the Welsh language, we aim to ensure that we offer content that meets the demands of a wide range of different audiences - in terms of age, taste and genre.

### Content strategy and prominent themes 18/19

18/19 was a year of creative experimentation and venture in order to realise the objective of reviving and modernising the old provision across all platforms. The risk with any change in provision is to lose some of the loyalty of traditional viewers, and the lesson learned is that we must try to win over the younger audience without losing hold of the core viewers. By implementing the content strategy with timely adjustments we succeeded in slowing down and stopping the reduction that had taken place in linear viewing at the beginning of the year to the extent that the signs from Christmas onwards in terms of maintaining, and even increasing the audience, were heartening and promising for the future.

In 2018/19, the channel's content budget was £63.5 million and again, the vast majority of programmes commissioned by S4C included original content about Wales from Wales.

### News and Current Affairs

It was a year of exceptional political turmoil as the United Kingdom prepared to leave the European Union. Regular attention was given to the wrangling on **Newyddion 9** and there was an opportunity to hear the opinions of the people on the discussion programme **Pawb a'i Farn**.

A deliberate attempt was made this year to give the current affairs provision some freshness with Guto Harri interviewing political and controversial figures in **Y Byd Yn Ei Le**, and **Ein Byd** with Siôn Jenkins revealing some quite uncomfortable elements of modern life in Wales and of the Welsh people. There were incisive investigations into varied topics by **Y Byd ar Bedwar** and, in a new partnership with ITV Wales, a training programme for journalists was developed, with current affairs and digital content being published under the banner of **Hansh** aimed at a specific audience under the age of 34.

### Factual

From magazine programmes to observational documentaries, from rig series to entertainment formats, factual content was a cornerstone of our broadcasting timetable in 18/19. The daily series **Heno** and **Prynhawn Da** presented interesting stories from all corners of Wales whilst the popularity of the new series **Helo Syrjeri** from a surgery in Blaenau Ffestiniog proved how much the Welsh people like to see themselves being portrayed on screen.

Another series that was warmly welcomed was **Gwesty Aduniad**, a new rig format, full of heart-rending stories, and the series **Ffit Cymru** that attracted a substantial and diverse audience. The strand **Drych** was the main vehicle for the year's observational documentary programmes offering a variety of titles that reflected subjects of current interests. In **Chdi, Fi ac IVF**, the honesty of Elin Fflur in allowing the camera access to follow her through her IVF treatment, was excruciating - so much so that it won an award in the Celtic Festival for the best documentary series.

### Entertainment/Comedy

During 18/19, the task of evolving the channel's entertainment and comedy continued. This competitive field saw the greatest experimentation in trying to find new and potential stories to appeal to a wider audience. Emphasis was placed on entertainment formats with heart-warming series such as **Priodas Pum Mil** which returned and a number of new series and characters were

introduced, with **Bwyd Epic Chris** and **Bois y Pizza** discussing food in different and interesting ways.

The field of comedy saw **Elis James**, **Maggi Noggi** and the series **Stand Yp Cymru** all presenting contemporary Welsh humour. There was a feast of family entertainment over the Christmas period, including **Nadolig Hafod Lon**, **Anfonaf Angel: Côr Rhys Meirion** and **Sioe Nadolig Hen Blant Bach**, each one, in its own way, touching the heart.

Awards were also won, with the series **Y Salon** winning a BAFTA Wales and Celtic Award for the best entertainment series of the year.

## Music

In the field of events, the **Cân i Gymru** contest celebrated its 50th anniversary and advantage was taken of the opportunity to trace the history of the competition and the classic songs. There was a transformation for the old favourite **Noson Lawen** on Saturday evenings offering something unique and different to all the competition that is on the other channels.

There was comprehensive provision including live broadcasts and highlights from **Eisteddfod yr Urdd**, **Llangollen International Music Eisteddfod**, **the Royal Welsh Show**, **the National Eisteddfod**, **Yr Wyl Gerdd Dant**, **the Winter Fair** and the **Young Farmers' Eisteddfod** - all this proving that there is no other broadcaster that can offer such a provision from national events to the audience.

Broadcasting the **Junior Eurovision** contest was a new highlight in the musical calendar and **Cyngerdd Heddwch** from Berlin with Karl Jenkins was an appropriate and heart-rending way of marking the centenary of the end of the First World War.

## Sport

Again this year, our sports programmes succeeded in capturing the imagination and touched the hearts of the audience, proving how important the genre is to the mission of S4C.

The amazing success of Welshman Geraint Thomas in the **Tour de France** was followed live and also **Sgorio Byw** succeeded in giving special attention to clubs in the Football League of Wales. Following changes to the broadcast rights of the Pro14, S4C succeeded in ensuring that a considerable percentage of the Pro14 championship games continued to be available on public service television through **Clwb Rygbi**. This was greatly welcomed by the supporters of the teams in Wales.

In thinking about expanding the appeal of the sports provision, an important contribution was made by broadcasts from national youth and women's teams - on television and on-line.

## Educational and Children

In the area of children's programmes, it was a successful year with original S4C series being nominated and winning national awards.

As it turned ten years old during the year, **Cyw** had a number of birthday parties across Wales. Also under the Cyw brand, original programmes such as **Deian a Loli** entertained and excited children across the country. This series received worthy recognition by being nominated for a Broadcast award and by winning BAFTA Wales.

For older children (7 – 14) the **Stwnsh** crew again had a lot of fun presenting games and antics in **Stwnsh Sadwrn** live from Cardiff Bay, and it was the source of great pride that **Prosiect Z** won a BAFTA Children's award and the RTS British award for the best children's programme of the year.

In the area of programmes for learners, efforts were made to strengthen our partnership with establishments in the area of Welsh for Adults, including the National Welsh Learners' Centre and the Welsh Government. A number of specific series for learners were introduced such as **Dan Do**, **Adre** and **Codi Pac** into the main timetable, and a positive response was received from both learners and viewers of all kinds.

## Viewers aged 16-34

In 18/19, **Hansh** was the cornerstone of our strategy to attract viewers aged 16-34. Again this year, characters such as Bry, Ameer and others presented very popular and witty items, but also the Hansh provision was extended to deal with political topics by means of **Hansh yn Holi** and it is good to note that the new provision has hit a strong chord with the target audience.

The provision also evolved in the direction of medium form documentary programmes, 10-15 minutes, with short films such as **Arctig: Môr o Blastig?** and **Hansh: Ketnipz** proving the value and appeal of the new direction. As well as being published as a completed film, clips were streamed of **Arctig: Môr o Blastig?** live from Svalbard by holding a question and answer session with politicians in the Senedd in Cardiff Bay.

Some pieces of content including **Tisio Grêp?** attracted a huge following, with the sharing, liking and discussion of it on social networks setting a record for Hansh.

As well as attracting 6.9 million on-line viewing sessions (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) during the year, Hansh helped to revive the S4C brand in its entirety and secured growth in the linear channel's appeal to younger viewers. Although a fall was seen in the viewing figure of those aged 16-34 across almost all the other public service broadcasters, S4C succeeded in maintaining the figures throughout the year and increased the number of viewers during the last quarter of the 18/19 financial year.

## Drama

This year, dramas with the objective of exciting, challenging and fulfilling the audience's desire for strong Welsh stories were broadcast. By means of series such as **35 Awr, Byw Celwydd, Parch** and **Enid a Lucy** this objective was achieved in many varied ways.

There was success in evolving not only the kind of content we want to commission but also our method of conveying it as the audience's viewing trends migrated towards watching on-line as well as on television. A *box sets* provision was launched before Christmas, and the drama series that are available, such as **35 Awr, Y Gwyll** and **Con Passionate** were responsible for 67% of all viewings of the *box sets*.

Our soap operas **Rownd a Rownd** and **Pobol y Cwm** succeeded in continuing to be cornerstones of fictional viewing on S4C attracting substantial audiences on television and on-line.

## Religion

Again this year, **Dechrau Canu Dechrau Canmol** and **Oedfa** and **Cymanfa Ganu'r Eisteddfod Genedlaethol** anchored S4C's religious provision, with additional treatment of religious and moral topics in other programmes within the factual provision during the year.