



## **Alexandra Park and Palace Charitable Trust Board Meeting**

**30<sup>th</sup> July 2026**

**Report Title:** BBC Television Service Broadcast 90<sup>th</sup> Celebration Programme Report

**Report of:** Kirsten Forrest, Interpretation and Curatorial Manager

**Purpose:** To inform the Trustee Board of the plans to celebrate 90 years since the first Television Service Broadcast took place from Alexandra Palace

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 – NA

### **1. Recommendations**

1.1 To note the contents of this report.

### **2. Executive Summary**

*“If being in at the birth of television isn’t exciting, I don’t know what is.”* Grace Wyndham Goldie one of the most influential of television’s pioneers

Celebrating 90 years since the launch of the BBC television service from Alexandra Palace and marking the significance of the site of the first television station with a programme of talks, screenings and performance leading up to the 2 November anniversary. To capitalise on the opportunity and engage a broader audience with a relatively unknown part of the Palace’s history in line with our Strategic Plan and goal to share our stories.

### **3. Television Heritage Season**

- 3.1 In September/ October 2026, Ally Pally plans to host a television heritage season for public engagement with interested groups and individuals, focusing on the important roles AP played in television history. Areas of the Palace including the East Court, Creativity Pavilion, Theatre and former BBC wing will be used to celebrate the 90th anniversary of public service broadcasting.

Under an overarching theme of **Innovation**, topics such as Children's TV, BBC News, LGBTQIA+, Black representation and education media in broadcasting will be explored. Talks, Screenings, Displays, Tours and Learning Activities will make up a broad range of visitor experiences aimed at family and inter-generational audiences. A list of proposed speakers and partners can be found under **Appendix One**.

- 3.2 This season creates an ideal opportunity to raise the profile of AP in terms of TV history, with academics, broadcasters and with the various organisations and societies that support television history and archives. By ticketing these events we can gather data on audiences and engagement levels. We already know that tours of the South-East wing and former studios are very popular, but we need to learn more about the appetite for different types of heritage engagement for the future.
- 3.3 An exciting addition to the programme will bring audiences closer to the Palace's television heritage through tours of the historic BBC studios, a new virtual tour of the spaces and a behind-the-scenes look into the BBC at Ally Pally and APTS archive collections. New dedicated website pages will also extend the reach of the programme, helping to share the story of BBC heritage at Alexandra Palace with wider audiences before, during and after the anniversary season.

#### 4. Collaboration with Creative Learning

- 4.1 Collaborating with the Creative Learning dept., two new pieces will be created for performance by **AP Young Actors Company (16–28)** and the **Ally Pally Ensemble (50+)**, offering intergenerational perspectives on media, memory and the changing nature of public discourse.
- 4.2 Shareable content encouraging reminiscence across social media channels will focus on BBC heritage at Ally Pally as the UK's first television station as well as the site of many other global media firsts. Looking to future technological advances, **BBC FWD** are to partner with the **Trust's Young Creative Network**, exploring new technologies for the creative industries.

#### 5. World Origin Site Plaque

- 5.1 Unveiling of a World Origin Site plaque on 2nd November with an invited audience of television personalities, supporters, academics and organisations creates a “moment” which can be shared with the press and social media, raising the profile of AP as a cultural heritage site. (See **Appendix Two** for a mockup of what the plaque will look like.
- 5.2 A World Origin Site is somewhere unique. It marks the place, people and when something truly groundbreaking was invented, discovered or first used.

This includes where and when some of the world's most significant cultural events, brands and companies originated. Only one place on the planet can ever lay claim to these landmark moments in the development of the modern world.

**World Origin Site .Org** sets out to record, recognise and celebrate these sites whether they are marked by a monument, museum or are just a humble house, shed or street corner. Every World Origin Site matters.

- 5.3 This type of recognition is important to Alexandra Palace as a site of global historic significance. The positioning of the plaque in a public place where visitors can easily access and engage with it, is crucial in raising the profile and awareness of the story. Similar prominence has been achieved in other locations e.g at Bar Italia in Frith Street, London where the first demonstration of John Logie Baird's experimental tv system took place in January 1926.
- 5.4 The opportunity to attract new audiences and to have this history on social media for a more diverse and younger public is part of the planned engagement strategy as outlined in our recent audience survey.

## **6. Legal Implications**

The Council's Director of Legal and Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no comment

## **7. Financial Implications**

The Council's Chief Financial Officer has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no comment

## **8. Use of Appendices**

Appendix One : Speakers and Partners for the 90<sup>th</sup> BBC Television anniversary  
Appendix Two: World Origin Site Plaque

## **9. Background Papers**

None

**Appendix One: Speakers and partners for the 90<sup>th</sup> BBC television anniversary:**  
(below represents examples of speakers and is not a definitive list)

John Wyver – (author of “Magic Rays of Light”), Ian Christie – (historian and author), Kate Murphy - (Pioneering women of the BBC), Stephen Bourne – (author), Iain Baird – (John Logie Baird’s grandson), Simon Vaughan – (Archivist of APTS), Sue Maldon/Justin Smith/John Franklin (the “Film is Fabulous” team)

- National Media Museum & Science Museum Group – (EMI archive)
- APTS – (vintage footage/photographs/exhibits)
- History of the BBC (website and Veterans magazine)
- BFI - (vintage programming)
- BBC R+D (new technology/ future of broadcasting)
- Kaleidoscope - (vintage programming)
- British Vintage Wireless and Television Society
- British Heritage Television – (broadcasting on 405-line)
- Broadcasting Engineering Conservation Group – (vintage BBC OB unit)
- Talking Pictures TV – (vintage programming e.g. “Television Comes to London” & monthly magazine *Intermission*)
- Film is Fabulous (based at De Montfort University in Leicester)
- Tech-Ops – retired BBC employees.
- Google Arts and Culture

**Appendix Two: Mock Up World Origin Site Plaque**

World Origin Site  
Plaques for TV 90  
at Alexandra Palace  
2nd Nov 2026

