

Question 1: Which of the three options do consultees favour, and why?:

Option 2 because audio description for myself is essential for the enjoyment and information that programmes give. Other forms of access, for hearing impaired people for example, are also essential. Hearing impaired people are excluded in many ways from sources of information, so the television is vital to them.

Question 2: Do consultees have any further suggestions for future access service provision? If so please provide the rationale for these suggestions:

Audio description makes television so much more pleasurable, fulfilling and enjoyable. Television is a major communication tool, which myself and my husband have missed out on in many ways. We are still losing out on a lot of programmes, nevertheless. An example would be if you have a programme, a documentary or drama for example, when there is just music and long shots of visuals there is absolutely no way we can follow the programme easily. We have given up trying to watch a programme on a number of occasions for this reason. A verbal narrative is often not enough and does need audio description as back up.

Comments:

Generally speaking the describers are very good, however, sometimes (especially for documentaries) the timing is wrong so the describer is talking over the narration. There is often not enough of a pause. Another issue is programmes being advertised as being audio described and then for some reason they are not. What I can't understand is that it appears that audio description is a live broadcast, which makes me wonder if the equipment is not working for certain broadcasts. The providers of audio description should look at the skills of BBC radio broadcasters who provide live commentary of big events, because this is so much more vivid and absorbing.

Audio description is a major means of providing equality. For many visually disabled people the television is a major medium for keeping people connected with society. Having audio description can mean that someone who goes blind isn't so cut off and likely to sink into negativity about their situation.

When a lot of sighted people see audio description they can be so surprised about the added dimension of detail that it can bring. This applies to so many other aspects of life such as art galleries, theatre performances and weddings as well.