

NMA Response to Ofcom's Consultation on its [Proposed Plan of Work for 2024-2025](#).

The News Media Association (the “NMA”) is the voice of UK national, regional and local news media in all their print and digital forms - a £4 billion sector read by more than 46.1 million adults every month. Our members publish around 900 news media titles - from The Times, The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph and the Daily Mirror to the Manchester Evening News, Kent Messenger, and the Monmouthshire Beacon.

We welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on Ofcom's proposed plan of work. Ofcom's purview extends across several key interests within the news media industries.

In particular, we are pleased Ofcom will continue its work into media plurality, and we look forward to the findings it gathered as part of its discussion paper. As we highlighted in our response, only a small handful of platforms are involved in the news supply chain, but they are the gatekeepers who determine what news is surfaced and to whom. They are at the very centre of the conversation about media plurality, increasingly so, as more people trend towards sourcing their news through online intermediaries over traditional means. As such, we commend Ofcom for placing the impact of intermediaries at the forefront of the media plurality conversation.

We note that Ofcom will continue to monitor the impact of the BBC's public service and commercial activities on the market, to ensure it does not have an undue impact on competition. Considering the BBC's privileged position and its expansion into vulnerable local markets, it is reasonable for the public to anticipate that the BBC would act as a responsible neighbour to local independent titles. Harming local competitors is not conducive to a positive outcome for the UK taxpayer. However, the tactics employed by the BBC suggest a lack of intention to improve its conduct. We urge Ofcom to adopt a more proactive stance in holding the BBC accountable for abusing its position and encroaching into local markets, now and into the future.

We also look forward to contributing towards the Local Media Review, Ofcom's work on advertising regulation and the Online Safety Act, amongst other areas. In all instances, we urge Ofcom to continue its stakeholder engagement with the NMA and our membership as soon as the opportunity arises.

9 February 2024

News Media Association