Archived BBC public responses to complaints
2022

politicians of all parties, we proportionately and fairly detailed the nature of Ms Lee’s association
with Labour MP Barry Gardiner, as the MP who received the most funding from Ms Lee, and that her
son worked in Mr Gardiner’s office. Our coverage included Mr Gardiner’s response to this.
We believe our reporting of this story has accurately and impartially explained the circumstances

Summary of complaint
We received complaints from people who feel there has been too much coverage of the May 2020
Downing Street party allegations and/or that coverage has been biased against the Conservative
Party.
Our response
We take our responsibility to report accurately and with due impartiality very seriously and we don’t
agree our coverage of the Downing Street parties story has been biased or disproportionate.
The leaking of an email inviting Downing Street staff to a drinks party in the garden of Number 10 in
May 2020 and a Downing Street apology to Buckingham Palace for two staff parties held in Number
10 on the night before Prince Philip's funeral have come as the Prime Minister faced mounting
pressure over several events that are alleged to have taken place during lockdowns in 2020 and
2021.
We believe our coverage has reflected the seriousness of these allegations and how much national
interest there is in the story.
Our coverage has included perspectives from across the political spectrum, including different views
from within the Conservative Party, and has adhered to editorial guidelines on impartiality
throughout.
We have made clear that Boris Johnson has apologised for attending the event in the Downing
Street garden in May 2020 and has said he understands the public's ‘rage’ over it. We have also
reported that the Prime Minister has said he believed that this was a work event, that Mr Johnson
has denied he was warned the event risked breaking lockdown rules, and has said that Sue Gray’s
investigation into alleged Covid-19 rule breaking in Downing Street and government departments is
allowed to run its course.
BBC News has also reported in detail on other stories during this period, such as the latest
developments in the Covid-19 pandemic, the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, the US civil suit
brought against Prince Andrew, the anticipated increase in UK energy bills and the Novak Djokovic
Australian visa row.

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2022
Summary of complaint
We received complaints from people who think we’ve given too much coverage to allegations of
parties in Downing Street and to Sue Gray’s initial findings into this matter.
Our response
Our coverage of gatherings in Downing Street, allegedly in breach of Covid restrictions, and Sue
Gray’s initial findings into this, has offered fair and impartial analysis of the political implicati

Police having now launched an investigation into the matter; our coverage has been proportionate,
reflecting the significance and seriousness of these allegations.
We have scrutinised these claims in detail, reporting the known facts, and m

Summary of complaint
We have received complaints from people who feel there has been a lack of coverage of the
truckers' 'Freedom Convoy' in Canada.
Our response
We have reported on the ‘Freedom Convoy’ and events in Ottawa across BBC News. The following is
not exhaustive, but coverage has included BBC Breakfast, BBC News Channel, News at One/Six/Ten,
The World at One, PM and online:
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-60202050
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-60164561
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-60190452
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-60218354
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-60293708
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-us-canada-60296862
Also, BBC Americast looked at what the protest means for the US -
https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0blm3jv

The Graham Norton Show, Ukraine, BBC One, 4 February 2022
Summary of complaint
We rece

judging?seriesId=m001441q

BBC News, Line of questioning to the Prime Minister during the NATO press conference in
Brussels, 10 February 2022
Summary of complaint
We received complaints from viewers who felt that it was not appropriate for Laura Kuenssberg to
question the Prime Minister about the Met Police investigation during a NATO press conference.
Our response
We believe it was legitimate for Laura to use this opportunity to question Boris Johnson about the
latest domestic developments. Laura’s other questions to Mr Johnson and Mr Stoltenberg focused
on the immediate situation in Ukraine.
At a time of international concern, any issue which could affect the UK’s leadership remains

BBC One, Match of the Day - Luton Town v Chelsea, March 2022
Summary of complaint
We received some complaints about our coverage of Luton Town v Chelsea on 2 March, from people
who felt our team showed bias against Roman Abramovich/Chelsea F.C.
Our response
Prior to the match, news broke of Roman Abramovich’s decision to sell Chelsea F.C., which naturally
became a talking point on the programme.
Abramovich’s statement was read out in full at the start of the programme and again at half-time,
and Chelsea Head Coach Thomas Tuchel was given the opportunity to answer questions after the
match.
Our team talked about the huge impact the sale could have on the team, based on their own
experience in the field, and brought the sale into the wider context of the situation in Ukraine.
Henry Winter of The Times also provided analysis of the statement and the possible ramifications for
the team.
We feel that this subject

S umm ary of complai nt

We received complaints about a comment Sara made regarding fairground rides.

Our r esponse

Sara m ade an off the cuff co mment in response to a liste ner text about ro llercoaster rides and w as

referring to her own childho od memo ries o f fairgro und rides and not prese nt day st andards.

She did not mean to offend any of her listeners and the comment was in no way intended to be

derogatory to local fairs.

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The Bri tis h Ac ademy Tel evisi on Awar ds , BB C One, 202 2

S umm ary of complai nt

We received complaints about o ur coverage of The British Academy Telev ision Awards 2022 .

Our response

Comedy is o ne o f the mo st subjective areas o f pro gramm ing and v iews will always differ o n what's

acce ptable, and what's appropriate atȊᗐဨ〘⠑ 뼹匰ᢐriate atȊᗐဨɅ䡙Е㊄�焅锲萙⺿ᄐ伐ŲɅ蕘M㌐

Decisions about stories are based on a range of editorial considerations, including legal advice. We
conduct our own checks on stories in order to be sure we can stand by our journalism.
Since the start of the pandemic we have reported extensively on the government’s efforts to secure
PPE and problems with the procurement process. This is a developing story and we will continue to
follow it closely.

BBC News, Allegations Sir Keir Starmer breached Covid rules, April and May 2022
Summary of complaint
We received complaints from people who feel we’ve given insufficient coverage to allegations Sir
Keir Starmer breached lockdown rules while attending an event in the constituency office of a
Durham MP, in the run-up to the Hartlepool by-election last year.
Our response

almost fell as Israeli police, some using batons, waded into a crowd of Palestinians gathered around
it” and that “Israeli police have hit mourners”, while also including the footage at the top of the
article so readers could see this for themselves.
The headline also completely moved away from describing the incident as “clashes”.
We then added a report from Tom Bateman at the scene in which he described an “extraordinary”
push by heavily armed Israeli police towards the mourners and referred to the emergence of videos
showing “Israeli police beating and kicking the pallbearers who were in retreat carrying Shireen Abu
Aqla's coffin”.
We acknowledge that readers had concerns with how we initially described the actions of the Israeli
police.
While we consider these updates to have addressed those concerns, we have discussed these points
with senior news editors and they acknowledge we should have been quicker to make these
changes.

EastEnders, Ben's Storyline, BBC One, 23 May 2022
Summary of complaint
We received complaints from viewers unhappy with some of the content in this episode.
Our response
EastEnders has been a pre-watershed BBC One staple for over 37 years and has a rich history of
dealing with challenging and difficult issues and Ben’s story is one of these.
We have worked closely with organisations and experts in the field to tell this story which we hope
will raise awareness of sexual assaults and the issues surrounding them.
We are always mindful of the timeslot in which EastEnders is shown and we took great care to
signpost this storyline prior to transmission, through on-air continuity and publicity as well as
providing a BBC Action Line at the end of the episode which offers advice and support to those
affected by the issue.

BBC digital-first announcement, May 2022
Summary of complaint
We received complaints from people who are unhappy with the plans to change the way the BBC
distribute some of the smaller linear channels.
Our response
The Director-General Tim Davie has outlined that the BBC must reform to stay relevant to audiences
and continue to provide great value for all. This will include changes to current content and services.

The proposed changes to the way we distribute our content on some of the smaller linear channels,
such as BBC Four, CBBC and BBC Radio 4 Extra, will not be made for at least another three years.
Detailed information about the plan to deliver a digital-first BBC can be found on the following

Summary of complaint
We’ve received complaints about the BBC’s plans for television coverage of the Orange Order’s 12
July demonstrations.
Our response
We have decided not to resume live BBC television coverage of the Orange Order’s Belfast
demonstration on 12 July.
Our ambition is to better/more fully reflect Orange Order events across the region through a late
evening programme of stories and events from eight regional locations, including Belfast. This
coverage will be complemented by reports on the BBC’s news services across radio, television and
online.
Our late evening programme involves significant logistical effort and resource. And its scheduling
and availability on iPlayer gives us the ability to reach a larger audience than an equivalent morning
time slot. The format of the programme will also allow us to do much more than we can with live
coverage of a single event.
We know that our decision not to reinstate live television coverage of the Belfast demonstration
may be disappointing for some people and have made this decision after careful reflection and
based on all usual editorial considerations.
We will want to explore how we can make audiences aware of other BBC programmes about the
Orange tradition, coinciding with this year’s 12 July programming, and will confirm these and other
broadcast details shortly.
We recognise the importance of 12 July events for those taking part and many others within our
local community. This is something that we will properly reflect within our output, seeking to
describe and explain the significance of what’s happening and to make it more generally accessible,
including to those with other backgrounds and beliefs.
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Summary of complaint
We received complaints from some audience members who were unhappy with a reference to the
Irish Guards.
Our response
In the ‘Trooping the Colour’ segment of our Jubilee coverage, we heard from a former Irish Guard
who referred to the Regiment by their nickname, ‘The Micks’.
The full context was given on air at the time with presenter Huw Edwards pointing out that, as it says
on the Irish Guards website, this is how they are affectionately known. Nevertheless, Huw still

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Chelsea Bridge: Man Tasered in critical condition after River Thames fall, 5 June 2022
Summary of complaint
We received complaints that the original headline Man Tasered by police falls into River Thames for
our article Chelsea Bridge: Man Tasered in critical condition after River Thames fall attributed blame
to the police. Some readers also feel that the updated article continues to do so.
Our response
At the time of publication this incident was the subject of both IOPC and Met Police investigations
and so it was important that our reporting was careful not to pre-empt any findings, including those
concerning how and why the man got into the water.

Summary of complaint
We received complaints from people who felt our coverage of the confidence vote in Boris Johnson
was excessive and biased against him.
Our response
Our coverage of the confidence vote in Boris Johnson reflected the circumstances which had led to
this, the context in which it occurred, and offered detailed analysis of the political implications of the
result. We followed developments closely throughout the day, which, given the potential
consequences of the result, was proportionate.
Our reporting both leading up to and following the vote included the response of Conservative MPs,
both critical and supportive of Mr Johnson, the views of the Prime Minister’s political opponents
from other parties, and the reaction of Mr Johnson himself. We believe our coverage was fair and
duly impartial, reflecting the political significance of this story.

Wimbledon 2022, Scheduling, BBC One and BBC Two
Summary of complaint
We’ve received some complaints about our Wimbledon coverage and the impact it has had on our
TV schedules.
Our response
We understand scheduling changes can be frustrating, and we don’t take these decisions lightly. We
always try to minimise disruption, but during times of live tournament sport like Wimbledon, also
popular with large sections of our audience, sometimes difficult decisions have to be made,
particularly over what to air on our flagship channel.
This is a balancing act, and while catering to audiences with such a wide range of tastes and
interests, we recognise that not everyone will agree with certain changes made.

the events occurred. Insiders from the Royal Military Police told Panorama they were subsequently
stopped from carrying out thorough and fully independent investigations. Senior RMP investigators
told Panorama they were repeatedly prevented from following fundamental lines of enquiry, and
that the cases were dropped prematurely. They said they were ordered to drop suspects, blocked
from interviewing key senior UKSF officers and prevented from viewing footage of UK Special Forces
operations.

The programme did not seek to impugn or criticise British troops in general. Colonel Oliver Lee made
the point that the vast majority served with great distinction and courage on a really difficult mission
in Afghanistan. This point was repeated by the Ministry of Defence later in the programme and then
reiterated by reporter Richard Bilton.

However, Panorama felt the allegations against the SAS were so serious that they clearly merited
reporting. It is a view that has been supported, among others, by the man who was in charge of
British armed forces at the time the killings took place. General Sir David Richards, former Chief of
the Defence Staff, said that "worrying events of the type captured by Panorama are very rare in the
British armed forces", but that "given the compelling nature" of the evidence, he would order an
investigation if he were still in charge.

Women's Euro 2022, Diversity Report, BBC One, July 2022
Summary of complaint
We've received some complaints about a report by Alex Scott, shown during half-time of Denmark vs
Finland on 12 July, discussing the diversity of the women's game.

Our response
During our coverage, presenter Eilidh Barbour introduced a report by Alex Scott, who’d been
investigating the lack of diversity within elite women’s football, including the England Women’s
team. This is a topic that has been highlighted and discussed recently, including by the Football
Association (FA) and Professional Footballers' Association (PFA), who’ve both recently announced
plans to increase diversity and accessibility in the women’s game:

https://www.englandfootball.com/articles/2022/May/05/england-football-plan-to-double-female-talent-pool-20220505 (The BBC is not responsible for the content of external sites)

https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/football/62009679

During the report we heard from a range of former players and those involved in the game, including
Kelly Simmons, FA director of the women’s professional game, who shared her view that with many
academies being run in rural areas, perhaps accessibility is a factor.

We feel these were legitimate questions to explore, but we understand some may feel differently.

BBC News Special: Our Next Prime Minister, BBC One, 25 July 2022

Summary of complaint
We received complaints from people who felt the debate wasn’t fairly moderated.
Our response
The debate we hosted was designed to give our viewers the opportunity to make their own
judgements on both Rishi Sunak and Liz Truss, when their policy platforms, characters and track

constraining the range of sport we could cover.

We’d like to assure our listeners that results from across the football leagues will still be shared
during the programme and through the afternoon. Results are also available in full on the BBC Sport
website and during Final Score on BBC One. Having a live match at 5.30 is a great addition to the 5
Live schedule.

Twitter, 18 November 2021 & various dates
Summary of complaint
We received a complaint that a BBC video journalist had retweeted praise for one of our interviews
that described it as “an absolutely glorious masterclass in how a journalist should hold a
Government accountable for its lies & broken promises.”

Our response
We consider the retweet ran the risk of endorsing the phrase ‘lies and broken promises’ and was a
breach of our social media guidelines in relation to impartiality.

There were also a number of examples of ‘liking’ tweets on one side of the debate over transgender
issues that we consider similarly breached our guidelines.

We are unable to edit these tweets as it is a private social media account and the journalist
concerned no longer works for the BBC.

BBC News Website, 28 August 2022
Summary of complaint
We’ve received some complaints from people unhappy with the way we updated our report on the
protest held at the Pride Cymru march in Cardiff, (No place for hate, says Pride Cymru after Cardiff
protest).

Our response
We take our responsibility to report accurately and with due impartiality very seriously. As with the
coverage of any developing news event and its aftermath, the content of the story was updated as
the story evolved, which is standard practice.

Have I Got News for You, BBC One, 2 September 2022
Summary of complaint
We've received complaints from people who felt the programme unfairly ridiculed Prime Minister,
Boris Johnson.

Our response
HIGNFY has always covered the biggest news stories each week and this special episode looked back

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BBC One and BBC News Channel, Office staff in the bac kgr ound, 8 September 20 22

S umm ary of complai nt

We've received complaints from people who felt it was inappropriate to see office staff during an

anno uncement o f the death of the Queen.

BBC Sport Website Live Page, 26 October 2022
Summary of complaint
We've received complaints about a phrase used in a post on one of our live football pages in
reference to Cristiano Ronaldo, after he left Old Trafford before the conclusion of a match.

Our response
We realise that not everybody will share or support Ms Hartley-Brewer’s views on climate change, or
the rights of the Just Stop Oil group to protest. However Fiona Bruce interjected and challenged Ms
Hartley-Brewer on a number of the points she made. For example Fiona made it clear that extreme
weather events are happening more frequently, as well as the finding published in a UN report that
current global policy could lead to an eventual rise in global temperature of 2.8 degrees.
Other panellists and members of the audience also challenged Ms Hartley-Brewer on her views
directly during the programme.
Presenters do have to judge when to intervene and when to move the discussion on and in this case
we are confident that Ms Hartley-Brewer’s climate scepticism was robustly challenged on key points
and viewers were given sufficient information to put her remarks in context.

The World at One, Radio 4, 31 October 2022
Summary of complaint
We received complaints from listeners who were unhappy that Nigel Farage was a guest on the
programme.
Our response
Nigel Farage has been a prominent and vocal campaigner for immigration control for quite some
time, and it was within this capacity he was invited onto the programme. The programme also
featured other guests discussing the same issue, including Daniel Sohege from Stand For All, who
specialises in international refugee law.
Our presenter challenged Mr Farage on his points, for instance his claim that all hotels are ‘full’ of
immigrants. We appreciate not all listeners will agree with everything every guest might say, but as a
programme that serves a broad audience with differing perspectives, allowing guests to voice their
opinions is key. As with all our guests, assertions made by Mr Farage were challenged and
scrutinised by the presenter.

BBC News Channel, 3rd November 2022
Summary of complaint
We have received complaints about a reporter's language on air while reporting about issues of
overcrowding at an asylum processing centre in Manston, Kent, and the Home Secretary's visit.
Our response
The reporter acknowledges that during a live insert for BBC News his choice of language was poor.

World Cup 2022, BBC One, 20 November 2022

S umm ary of complai nt

We've received complaints about the World Cup opening ceremony not being shown on BBC One.

Some also took issue with a discussion during o ur coverage on human rights in Qatar.

Our r esponse

Just like prev ious World Cup and Euro pean Cham pio nship tournaments, we didn’t show the o pening

ceremo ny on BBC One. Full build up and coverage of the World Cup has been available across the

BBC, with the opening ceremony shown on iPlayer, the BBC Sport website, and the Red Button.

With regards to concerns about a discussio n on the tournament being held in Qata r, while we have a

long history o f bringing majo r inte rnational foo tball tournaments to audiences, including o f course,

all t he action on the pitch, we also hav e a prov en record of addressing topical issues as part of o ur

co verage, and this Wo rld Cup is no different.

Q uestio ns and co ncerns about human rights in Qatar hav e been widely discussed, including by

players themselves, gov ernment m inisters and representatives, as well as the general public, and so

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response this has provoked. We have reported on the formal apology issued by Buckingham Palace
and the statement from the Prince of Wales.
For context, we have detailed the content of the exchange between the two women, but have made
clear this is Ms Fulani’s account of the conversation; we have also heard from someone else present
at this event who witnessed what was said. We have included Ms Fulani’s views on what took place