

85% of Together TV viewers have done something good as a result of watching the channel e.g. recycling, spending time in nature and visiting heritage sites.

togetherTV

Annual report summary

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Message from our Executive Chair

Back in 2004 I found myself on stage with other media leaders, wearing a Community Channel football top, announcing a new joint declaration of support for the channel we now know as Together TV. I have encouraged and supported the channel for nearly twenty years and so was delighted to succeed Caroline Diehl as Executive Chair.

Despite what has been a challenging year financially, our impact is stronger than ever and our role as the social purpose channel bridging the sofa to society is as vital as it ever has been. By connecting the worlds of the media industry and community groups, we help connect older and digitally-disconnected viewers, improving the wellbeing and participation of those most at-risk of social isolation.

Together TV occupies a unique position in the UK public service broadcast landscape, inspiring positive change, motivating viewers to take action and help others. It builds personal connections nationally - directly reaching, teaching and engaging viewers with a mix of targeted activities, links to local charities and direct personal communications.

As Opinium's research consistently reports, our viewers learn more and participate more fully in their community thanks to Together TV - with a

whopping 85% of taking action in the last year as a result of watching the channel - recycling, visiting heritage sites and joining community groups.

I would like to thank our wonderful partners across the media industry which enable Together TV to broadcast on Freeview, Sky, Virgin Media and Freesat, and our wider network who support us through content, creative and marketing support. Your role is absolutely vital in helping us deliver our public good - connecting communities directly and bringing the power of local to a national audience.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Opie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa Opie
Executive Chair



A BAFTA for Best Short Programme for Our Land, May 2022



The Diverse Film Fund returned in March 2022 with a focus on LGBTQ+ stories. 30 partners promoted it and it launched at BFI Flare festival.

Our LGBTQ+ judging panel selected the films from 90 applicants. The filmmakers were paired with mentors and went into our production bootcamp. Goldcrest Post Production kindly provided free grading and the films were premiered in the BFI London Film Festival.

Press coverage included *Always, Asifa* on BBC Asian Network, *Love, Dad and Daddy* in Closer's Top TV Picks, *Mermaids Really Do Exist* on Greatest Hits Radio and an article in DIVA magazine. The films broadcast in November and were then taken by ITVX, Virgin Media and Sky. *Always, Asifa* was nominated for the TV BAFTA for Best Short Programme.

Rainbow Daddies - Following a painful personal journey, a soap actor explores the highs and lows of the adoption process in a quest to discover how it can be improved for LGBTQ parents.



Mermaids Really Do Exist - A fun and touching film following two queer mermaids as they compete in mermaid relay races and attend mercons, all to find their own pods.



Come out Fighting - A queer boxer from Britain's first LGBTQ+ boxing club squares up to gruelling training before stepping out to fight under the bright lights of the ring.



Always, Asifa - disabled trans activist Asifa Lahore, Britain's first out Muslim drag queen, prepares to undergo gender affirmation surgery.





Shiva Raichandani, *Always, Asifa*

Together TV has been absolutely incredible. It's so rare that you get to collaborate with people in such a wholesome way because they've literally brought us through this entire journey holding our hands. They gave us training sessions and educators to teach us. They provided us with mentors and a wonderful producer. They ensured that we were looked after and that isn't often the case in the filmmaking world.

It can be such an isolating experience as a filmmaker where you feel like you're on your own. And knowing that there were people you could run to with your joys and worries and stresses and they would just approach it in such a calm and comforting way was great because we had that kind of support. I don't think this would have happened without the resources they equipped us with.



Tom Gaisford, *Come Out Fighting*

This Fund for me represents an opportunity that's really difficult to get in the normal line of work I do - it's sort of a big budget broadcast telly because quite understandably, people can be conservative about their hiring practices or giving you opportunities. terms of making the step into directing, it's the only way I could do it.

But also just on a personal level, I've been thinking about this film for so long. And it was a golden opportunity in terms of both the funding and also the theme and all the support that they give you. That was a burning intention of mine beforehand. I'd actually quit my previous job to try and make this film anyway on my own. And then the Diverse Film Fund actually made it possible.



Anna Mouzouri, *Mermaids Really Do Exist*

I found working with Together TV really, really good. I thought it was really useful because again, this was my first documentary out of uni. I've got more confidence. Having other people around you that you can refer to and ask questions is great.

With the John Yorke webinars, we got to tell him our exact storylines and what our films were about and make loglines with him, which is just so cool. Then you have advice from Together TV, the other filmmakers who are in the same boat as you, and your crew. So it was great. It was really nice getting to know them all



Ross Adams, *Love, Dad & Daddy*

Without the support from Together TV this film would not have happened. I found a real passion for telling stories. I was given a fantastic mentor in David Clews - I sent him rough cuts and he provided notes which really made me think. You also have the notes from the webinars and the packs Together TV made for us. It's all there.

My advice to anybody who wants to apply for the Diverse Film Fund is: do it. Because if I can do it, anybody can. You will get a lot of support and you'll get a lot of help from Together TV. One of the brilliant things about the Diverse Film Fund is that it supports people who might feel like they aren't able to tell their stories. If you've got a story to share, then you should share that story.

Hundreds of **free** on demand titles to choose from

New streaming service launched in May

Watch anytime
Anywhere. For Free.

Watch now



What you'll love about Together TV, live and on demand:

- > **Catch up** and never miss a show again. You can watch what you want and when you want with on-demand
- > Tune in **live** and watch in real-time
- > Pick up where you left off with the **continue watching** playlist
- > Get personalised **recommendations** for the shows you'll love and discover your next favourite show.
- > **Browse** your favourite genres including Cooking, Gardening, Homes, History, Sexuality, Documentary and more!
- > Use the star tags to **build your playlists** based on your favourite presenters, genres and themes



Watch for free

Watch now

On your PC or Laptop



PLUS

Watch shows like **Garden Rescue** and channel your inner grower with our free Sunflower Challenge, with exclusive videos to boost your wellbeing and connect to others.

Channel your
inner ...



Grower



Baker



Maker



Designer

Whatever your **passion** is we've got loads of options to inspire positive change. All you need to do is channel your inner gardener, baker, explorer, maker, and everything in between!

Watch now

On your PC or Laptop



TV Platforms

When the multiplex Com7 closed in June and we moved to some overnight hours on another mux. Despite launching a simulcast, we had a 95%+ reduction in Freeview viewers. We received hundreds of calls and emails from upset viewers. We have spent the last year improving the simulcast technology - TV compatibility by make, year and chipset is a huge issue - but it still accounts for under 10% of the audience Freeview DTT would deliver.

In 2022 our total audience reach declined (-19%) along with average audience (-39%) and share (-32%).

Most of our viewers use the EPG to find out what to watch (56%), followed by newspaper listings (24%), trailers (23%), TV listings magazines (19%), friends (word of mouth) (16%), online (16%) and social media (5%). 82% have broadband, below the national average. 50% use iPlayer monthly and only 20% use SVODs. 43% use Facebook daily but 90% have never used Tik Tok, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter.

A selection of Freeview viewer comments

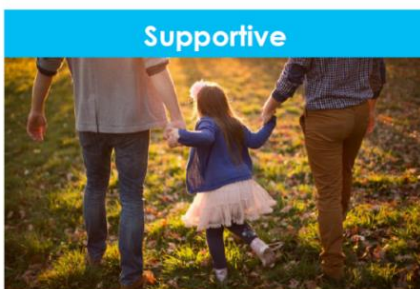
Mark M	Yesterday afternoon I turned to Together TV and imagine my disappointment to discover that you have taken your channel away from the general public and the only way we could receive it is via a computer. Yet another example of Computer Apartheid. Please can you explain this course of action as you have now lost two viewers, I wonder how many more you have lost?
Dennis W	I have today retuned my elderly mother-in-law's TV. She can no longer get your programs. She doesn't have broadband or indeed cannot afford it. She always liked watching Garden Rescue and now can't. It is not fair to treat people like this. Can you explain why you have taken this decision.
D H	Why cant i access together tv on my Freeview TV? I don't want to stream it, I want to watch your channel on Freeview. The channel is still on the menu but cant access the content. Pretty poor state of affairs if you ask me. Modern technology.... What a joke. A very disappointed ex-viewer.
Toria H	You have some great programmes I really enjoyed watching on my very old bog standard TV. It looks like your recent changes mean I can no longer get Together TV on my television. This is a real shame. Why have you made it more difficult to access your channel?
Richard D	I did an update re-tune and on Together TV get nothing other than a screen saying two hours of early morning viewing. My favourite channels are disappearing one by one from Freeview. Freeview in the end will not be worth watching, no new channels and my favourites no longer broadcasting.
Steve B, Swansea	Together TV still cannot be received on Freeview. A few emails have been sent to you about this but it is just the same. A lot of people in Swansea, which transmits Kilvey Hill are having the same issue.
Neil R, York	I tried to get your channel today. My TV, through Freeview, was having none of it despite rebooting as suggested. Just a blank screen. Suffice to say that unless you improve performance, my watching of your channel will be nil.

Our website continued to see increased traffic year on year, with 544k users and Facebook reach was 4m-6m users per quarter (and 80% organic reach) and engagements in the hundreds of thousands. Our private Facebook group continues to be healthy, stable and very positive.

The Sunflower Challenge returned in 2022 with new videos, new seed kits, county-level localisation, improved address lookups and new journeys for community groups.

The Challenge reached 50k registrants in nine days (vs. three weeks in 2021). 50k seed kits were sent out and 9k were sent in bulk to community groups for people who aren't online. Participants engaged through SMS/emails, social media, the Facebook community group, sunflower selfies, competitions and gardening-themed jokes!

Reaction to the Sunflower Challenge was very positive – taking part with others was a key appeal.



Many enjoyed that the task was cooperative instead of competitive.

A lot of value was placed on the support and questions members of the community shared with one another.



The challenge was considered to have broad appeal (across different life stages and experience with gardening).

Participants enjoyed sharing developments on social media and others liked seeing their success. One person worried that some may be excluded due to not being comfortable with social media.



Members of the challenge shared results with friends and encouraged others to take part.

A few mentioned that they grew new sunflowers using their seeds from last year.

Jane's Story, Hampshire

I always liked sunflowers. They are bright, cheery and symbolize hope.

My daughter-in-law is from Kiev. When the war began, her mother, two brothers and a cousin came to live in my house. It was quite a stretch - nine people plus a cat! We all started to grow sunflowers on the Sunflower Challenge - it's the flower from Ukraine which ties in lovely. They went back to Kiev last September, because they missed their dad and grandad.

My daughter-in-law gave birth to a baby girl six weeks ago. Her mum and brothers came to visit and stayed with my son for five weeks. This year we did the Sunflower Challenge in his back garden. I'm also getting involved locally in a very old graveyard that is maintained by volunteers. We keep it tidy, plant flowers and have plant sales.

Although our Kiev family has now gone back home, our sunflowers here will always feel a part of Ukraine.



Obie's Story, South London

After a life-changing surgery changed the trajectory of Obie's life, she decided to focus on the things that brought her joy. She found Together TV by following influencers in the black horticulture community - specifically Danny Clarke (host of The Instant Gardener and Sunflower Challenge) - who inspired her to join the Sunflower Challenge.

Obie fell in love with horticulture gardening with her gran when she was younger. The Sunflower Challenge allowed Obie to spread her love of horticulture by sharing sunflower seeds with her friends and the community garden. Since then she has started running her own challenges on a local community farm.

Obie says: "Don't overthink it. You can garden on a budget. You don't need to have a whole set up". If you want to see updates on Obie's garden be sure to give her a follow @obiepearl on Instagram.



The DIY Challenge launched in November, fronted by Dave Wellman and geared around improving mental health through DIY and engaged participants in three simple home-based projects, in partnership with the 1,100 Men's Sheds across the UK.

The Challenge was promoted on Together TV, via Facebook explainer videos, Instagram, Men's Sheds and through our wider partner network. It concluded in January with hundreds of participants taking part, many sending pictures to the gallery. UK Men's Sheds were happy with the results and targeted the challenge to get more female 'Shedders'.

DIY Challenge – taking part improves lives

<p>Clive B, Hampshire</p>	<p>I have joined my local Men's Shed but we don't have a shed yet!!! We still need a place and funding but I have met some kindred spirits and getting involved in a community project.</p>
<p>Samantha M, Ayrshire</p>	<p>I was inspired to take part in all the activities and am already considering what to do next!</p>
<p>Kelvin W, Devon</p>	<p>I`ve started to design and make my own planters and garden furniture, as well as bird tables and nesting boxes. I`ve found that all I need is a saw, a screwdriver and a bit of imagination. I can do things I`ve never tried before</p>
<p>Colin S, West Yorkshire</p>	<p>It has been very interesting and invigorating doing the challenges and thinking things out, Also learning new things. It has been very good a breath of fresh air.</p>



Janet's Story, Durham

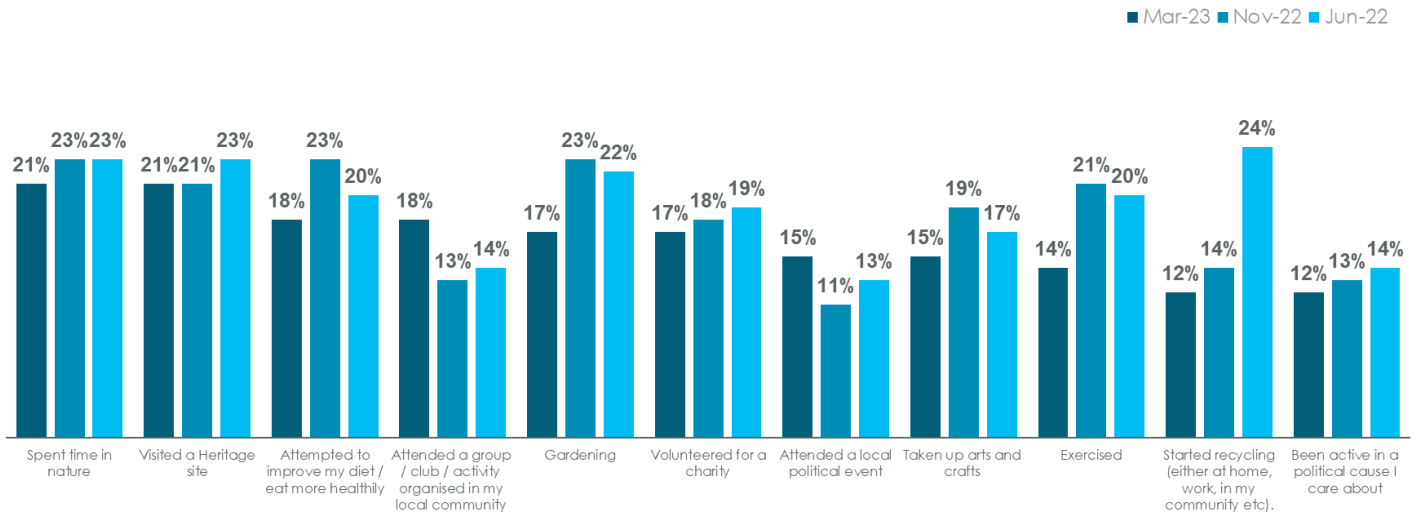
Janet and her husband are full-time carers to her two disabled brothers (one is Down's syndrome and the other is autistic and Down's syndrome). They are always looking for new activities and during the covid lockdown discovered the Sunflower & DIY Challenges on Together TV.

They began with the Sunflower Challenge as Janet thought sunflowers would be an easy way to start gardening. As the sunflowers started growing, so did her relationships with her neighbours, who started commenting on their growth. They started receiving different flowers and vegetables from neighbours to grow in her garden. One neighbour - who she has never really spoken to before - gave her cucumbers in return for a homemade wooden Christmas tree that her brothers made inspired by the DIY Challenge.

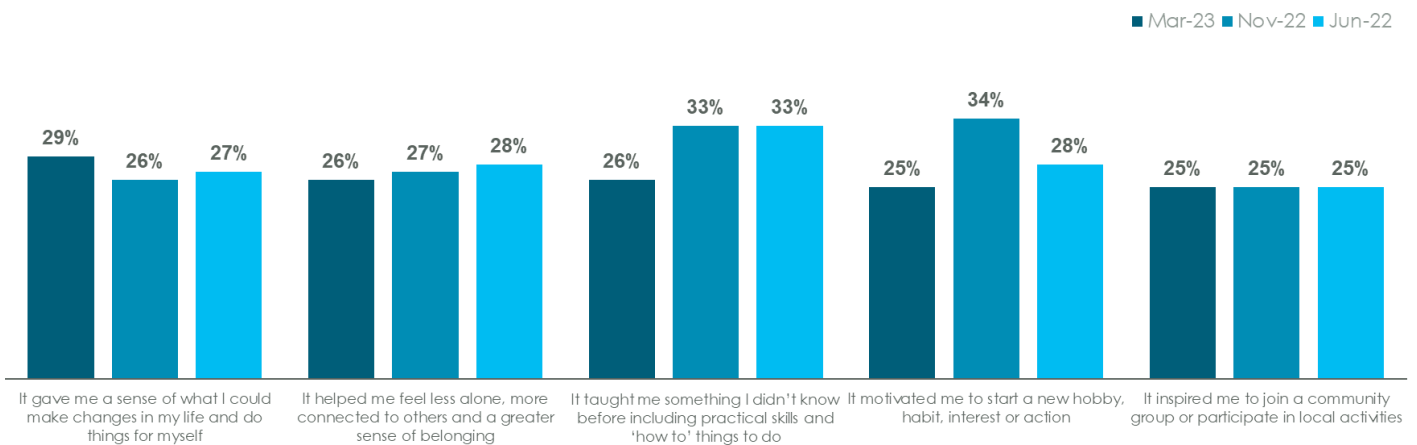
Janet was so impressed that her two brothers loved doing the DIY Challenge - the tutorials and resources were ideal as it allowed them to participate at their own pace - and they have continued to garden and make DIY projects. "I am very proud that the boys were able to enjoy the project and finish it... the Challenges have made a definite impact. We are normally very shy people but the amount of people that want to talk about them and give us advice has been very helpful".

Watching Together TV has a **positive impact** on viewer's lives, with giving a sense of what viewers could to do make changes in their life and do things for themselves particularly strong. Viewers are also taking specific actions such as **spending more time in nature, visiting heritage sites and attempting to improve their diet and eat healthily**

Activities resulting from watching Together TV



Impact of Together TV in the last month amongst viewers and those online/social media



Viewer associations with Together TV



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inner cook

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