



From the Director-General

3 April 2018

Selina Lavender
Motorcycle Action Group
Unit C13 Holly Farm Business Park
Honiley
Kenilworth CV8 1NP

Dear Selina,

Thank you for your letter of 26 March concerning the BBC's coverage of antisocial use of motorcycles and scooters.

You make some important points, which I have asked the teams responsible for the programmes you mention to respond to. I am enclosing their reply which I hope you will find useful.

I would like to reassure you that balanced reporting is at the heart of everything we do at the BBC, and I will let our News and programme teams know of the work that you and the Motorcycle Action Group are doing.

Thank you for taking the time to get in touch.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tony Hall'.

Tony Hall
Director-General

enc.



We raised your points about *Inside Britain's Moped Crime Gangs* with senior staff, including the programme editor. They explain that our coverage of crime and anti-social behaviour is part of the BBC's public purpose and is aimed at giving audiences the facts in their context. The approach here was judged to be editorially justified and proportionate to the wrongdoing being exposed. In cases like this, we would naturally assist the authorities should they request our help in prosecuting individuals or obtaining evidence.

The programme sought to increase awareness of moped gang tactics by showing first hand testimony by gang members.

We feel there's a clear public interest in highlighting these crimes, and informing the public how to avoid them. That informs the decision to meet and interview criminals in cases like this. We included telephone calls from frightened motorcycle delivery drivers who have been under attack, talking about the physical and the long lasting mental scars. We did not glorify or glamorise any of the events – we followed our strict editorial guidelines on reporting and investigating crime.

We were careful to ensure that each thief was interviewed in the public interest by making sure we extensively covered ways in which the crimes they commit can be avoided. They were also challenged repeatedly about their crimes – we made it clear that we did not condone their actions – in fact we criticised them repeatedly. Furthermore, one of the thieves was shown trying to find a way to quit crime.

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