

Dear friends of Reef

Having made many announcements about staff over the last few years, it's now time for one of my own.

Since 2003 Reef's programmes have been urging our audiences to get out and about and make the most of their lives. We've enticed viewers to visit wonderful museums, country houses and galleries, dip into the magical world of opera and classical music, discover more about significant moments in history, remodel their homes and gardens, travel to far flung bakeries, buy property in remote parts of the world, haggle for bargains at antiques markets across Europe and even spend some time in the best villages that Britain has to offer.

Fifteen years after we started in a small attic space in Carnaby Street and three years after our successful integration in to Zinc Media, this feels like the right time for me to move on and so I will be leaving Reef at the end of April, and will be taking the summer and autumn off. That means I have a good few months to pursue some of the fun things that Reef has showcased so admirably since we started making programmes. Then, next year I will be back in the world of work to pursue the next, unknown, adventure.

I'm immensely proud of everything that we have achieved as a company: the quality of our programme making has always been paramount, whatever the budget and whatever the time slot; contributors have always attested to the fact that we have endeavoured to treat people to the highest standards; the needs of the viewers have always been uppermost in our minds; and I've been constantly delighted to see so many Reefers develop their careers and their portfolios of work, many of whom I am sure will become leading lights of the industry. We've managed to win awards and plaudits on the way and even when we have made mistakes, I believe we have behaved with decency.

Although I am leaving, things will continue at Reef much as before along with some greater integration in to the Zinc Media family. Rob Dersley as Managing Director still leads our business affairs and Rachel Platt and Ben Weston continue to run our creative output alongside Head of Development Ann Walsh. I wish them all luck, although they are all so good, I'm not sure they need it. They have an outstanding range of programmes that have just aired and some new ones that are about to be on screen. There are new commissions landing, funded developments underway and a superb development slate in place.

On another personal note I'm immensely grateful to the many people who have supported me in the rollercoaster ride of starting, building and selling a company. There are too many people to mention by name, other than my wife Lucy, who many of you know, who has been an immense support throughout it all.

You will see plenty of me in the office and around broadcasters for the next couple of months, but you might find me popping out to buy a new cricket bat, peeking online at new lawnmowers, carrying a pot of Farrow & Ball or asking you for a Californian sourdough recipe.

Thank you for everything you have done to make Reef Television such an amazing place and long may it continue.

Best wishes

Richard