

Mr Bates vs the Post Office is 2024's most watched programme

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The first episode of ITV's *Mr Bates vs the Post Office* has been watched by 9.2m viewers, making it ITV's best new drama for three years since the *Pembrokeshire Murders* in January 2021 when the country was in lockdown.

The four episodes are the most watched programmes on any channel so far this year. The series, including the documentary, has reached 14.8m.

On ITVX, the ITV Studios and Little Gem Media series has been streamed 12.3m times in just eight days.

For the year to date (1st-8th January 2024), ITVX has had 70.1m streams, its best ever start to the year and up on last year by more than a third (39%).

ITV1 has also had its best start to the year for more than a decade with an all time share of 18.4% for the first eight days of the year.

For linear launch alone, *Mr Bates vs the Post Office* was the most watched programme across all channels with 3.9m, beating *The Tourist* on BBC1 (2.2m), and retaining its live audience for four consecutive nights.

Kevin Lygo, Managing Director, Media & Entertainment ITV said: “The unwavering success of *Mr Bates vs the Post Office* demonstrates the undeniable power of TV, particularly public service broadcasting.

“Aside from it being a ratings hit, dramatising the story with such a high calibre of British actors has reignited the campaign for justice nearly 25 years on, for a group of ordinary people - and the entire nation is behind them.”

Polly Hill, Head of Drama ITV said: “We commissioned this drama because it was a story that demanded to be told. Like everyone watching the show, I couldn’t believe what had happened. We all just wanted the drama to help get that story heard by as many people as we could.

“We are all proud and overwhelmed by the power our drama has had. Alan, Jo, Lee, Jess and every sub-postmaster and sub-postmistress are being heard now, and it looks like they will finally get the justice they deserve. ITV is proud to have told this story and to support the subpostmasters.”

ITV Studios handles distribution of the series internationally.

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