

Quarterly Report of Appeals, Complaints and Advice

The BBFC is the regulator of commercial and internet content delivered via the mobile networks of EE, O2, Three and Vodafone.

In the interest of transparency, the BBFC publishes all of its adjudications in relation to cases reported to it of purported underblocking or overblocking, along with requests for advice on whether particular content should go behind parental controls or adult filters.

We keep this list updated as and when new cases are reported to us and publish updates every three months.

In all cases, the BBFC conveys its adjudication to (i) the complainant, appellant or person or body seeking advice; (ii) Mobile UK; and (iii) the relevant mobile network operator(s).

The adjudication that a website contains no material that we would classify 18 does not necessarily mean that we believe it is suitable for younger children.

In the following cases, the adjudications represent an assessment of the content according to the dates listed below. Any subsequent changes to content have therefore not been viewed by the BBFC, although we reserve the right to change our adjudication should altered content be brought to our attention subsequently.

January 2019

18 January 2019

Website

kegel8.co.uk

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website was an online retailer of a range of products, including pelvic floor toners and trainers, as well as accessories such as vaginal and anal probes, intended to improve pelvic health. The website also featured a range of articles about pelvic health, which offered support and advice for those suffering from conditions such as prolapses, incontinence and pelvic pain. The website included strong references to sex, including to orgasms and sexual positions, but these all occurred within the context of sexual health and did not feature any very strong sex references. Based on our sampling of the site, we did not find any material which we would classify 18.

24 January 2019

Website

durex.co.uk

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website retailed a range of sexual health products, as well as products which aid sexual stimulation, including lubricants and sex toys. The website also featured a range of articles which provided sex and relationship advice, including those which focused on sexual health. A proportion of the articles available on the website offered couples tips and advice on ways in which to improve their sex life, making reference to sexual positions, oral sex and sex toys. Although the text included strong sex references, we found no evidence of any very strong sex references. As such, we do not recommend that the website be restricted to adults only.

February 2019

6 February 2019

Website

hashtagorganics.co.uk

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18, following a complaint from a member of the public that it had been placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website retailed a range of products containing CBD. We found no content that we would classify 18 or refuse to classify.

11 February 2019

Website

synervacbd oils.co.uk

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18, following a complaint from a member of the public that it had been placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website retailed a range of products containing CBD. We found no content that we would classify 18 or refuse to classify.

March 2019

4 March 2019

Website

sextherapylancashire.co.uk

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website provided information about the services of Sex Therapy Lancashire, an organisation which offers individuals and couples a range of support services relating to sex and relationship wellbeing. The website contained various references to sex, including to pornography and porn addiction, as well as to issues such as erectile dysfunction, premature ejaculation and to difficulties relating to orgasm and arousal. The references to sex and sexual dysfunctions were factually presented, lacked strong and/or graphic detail and occurred within a health based context designed to support and aide individuals and couples. The references to sexual trauma and sexual abuse were similarly undetailed. Accordingly, we found no material which we would classify 18.

4 March 2019

Website

hentastic.co.uk

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website was an event planning website which specialised in organising hen parties. The company offered hen parties the chance to attend a club

night featuring drag acts and male strippers. Images and videos of partially nude men were present across the website, but there was no strong nudity and none of the images were strongly sexualised or presented in a manner that was intended to arouse. Text on the website, including that found in reviews, described male striptease performers as being, for example, 'extremely sexy and hot!', but these references occurred within the context of a generally playful and tongue in cheek tone that was evident across the website. As such, we found no material that the BBFC would classify 18.

5 March 2019

Website

hg-hydroponics.co.uk

Issue

The BBFC originally adjudicated on the website in September 2014 and April 2018. Further to the BBFC's previous adjudications, the site owner contacted the BBFC to complain that the website remained behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

The BBFC provided a further adjudication when we viewed a revised version of the website on 5 March 2019.

As in September 2014 and April 2019, we noted that the site sold various products related to hydroponics, including lighting equipment, feed and grow cabinets. However, there was no longer any evidence which strongly suggested that the hydroponic items were being sold primarily with the intention of growing illegal drugs. The content on the website did not overtly encourage, glamorise or promote drug misuse or other related illegal activities. Accordingly, we found no content which we would classify 18.

Further information relating to the original adjudications are available in the June 2018 and December 2014 Quarterly Reports on the BBFC website.

6 March 2019

Website

nordvpn.com

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website offered a paid-for VPN service. While the BBFC is aware that VPNs can be used to enable illegal activity the website contained no overt references to illegal activity, nor did it actively include instructions on how to use a VPN to commit an offence, or promote the use of the service in order to avoid detection when committing an offence. As such, we found no content which we would classify 18.

6 March 2019

Website

wonderproxy.com

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website offered a paid for proxy service. The website contained no overt references to illegal activity, nor did it actively include instructions on how to use its service to commit an offence, or to avoid detection when committing an offence. As such, we found no content which we would classify 18.

8 March 2019

Website

hackthissite.org

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website was an online community focused on white hat hacking. The site included a number of missions encouraging users to hack the website, in order to enable users to learn about security testing and vulnerabilities. The site did not encourage users to participate in illegal activities, and it is made clear across the website that any suggestion of such activity in the site's forum is removed by internal moderators. Accordingly, we did not find any material that the BBFC would classify 18.

8 March 2019

Website

gunsamerica.com

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website was principally an online exchange allowing individuals to buy and sell firearms and other weapons, such as knives. The website also included a range of other content such as reviews, classifieds and industry news.

While the Classification Framework does not cover sites which supply age restricted goods, such as knives, we found material on the site that infringed on Part B of the Classification Framework. For example, a video included instructional detail regarding the concealment of knives and effective techniques on how to inflict injuries. Accordingly, we found content on the website which the BBFC would classify at least 18.

18 March 2019

Website

touchsauna.com

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that this was a website advertising an adults-only sauna and spa. The website strongly suggested that the venue facilitated individuals to participate in sexual activity. We therefore found material on the site that we would classify 18.

18 March 2019

Website

8ch.net

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18.

Adjudication

We noted that the website was an online forum. We found pornographic images occurring in both animated and non-animated contexts across the website. We also found frequent use of racist language, as well as racist threads such as 'We hate n*ggers' and 'White Cucks Raise Over 6 million for Dead Mudslimes [sic]', both of which have the potential to encourage and reinforce discriminatory and other harmful views. There was also frequent use of very strong language. As such, we found material which we would classify at least 18 or R18.

18 March 2019

Website

4chan.org

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18.

Adjudication

We noted that the website is an online forum. We found pornographic images occurring in both animated and non-animated contexts across the website. There was also frequent uses of aggressive racist and very strong language evident across the site. Accordingly, we found material which we would classify at least 18 or R18.

20 March 2019

Website

surfshark.com

Issue

A member of the public contacted the BBFC directly to complain that a website was placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website offered a paid-for VPN service. While the BBFC is aware that VPNs can be used to enable illegal activity the website contained no overt references to illegal activity, nor did it actively include instructions on how to use a VPN to commit an offence, or promote the use of the service in order to avoid detection when committing an offence. As such, we found no content which we would classify 18.

25 March 2019

Website

gaymen.co.uk

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18, following a complaint from a member of the public that it had been placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website was an adult dating service offering those over the age of 18 the opportunity to meet people online. The home page of the website included prominent links to adult online shops which retailed sex toys, including those used for fetish sex, as well as hardcore pornographic DVDs. Advertising on these pages feature explicit hardcore images. Accordingly, we found material that the BBFC would classify 18 or R18.

25 March 2019

Website

paradisecbd.co.uk

Issue

A mobile network operator contacted the BBFC for advice about the suitability of the website for people under 18, following a complaint from a member of the public that it had been placed behind adult filters despite containing no material that in the complainant's opinion would cause access to be restricted to adults only.

Adjudication

We noted that the website retailed a range of products containing CBD. We found no content that we would classify 18 or refuse to classify.

BBFC

31 March 2019