



PRESS AND PUBLICITY

HOW TO USE THE LOCAL MEDIA

Publicity can make a big difference to the success of your event. A press release for example, is an important way of letting the local media know about it. Releases should be sent to local newspapers. Don't forget the free papers. We are happy to provide advice on press releases.

How to write a press release

★ **Headline** - Use a snappy headline. Be creative and keep it to one sentence. Capitalise the first letter of all words but try not use all caps all the way through.

★ **First paragraph** - Begin with a strong introductory paragraph that grabs the reader's attention and contains the information most relevant to your message such as the five W's - who, what, when, where, and why. This paragraph should summarise the press release and include a 'hook' to get your audience interested in reading more.

★ **Paragraphs 2, 3...** - These paragraphs should contain further details, and make up the body of the release. Pick up with the information provided in your first paragraph, including quotes from key spokespeople on the event. Effective releases usually utilise a strategy known as the inverted pyramid, which is written with the most important information and quotes first. The body of your release should be more than one paragraph. The final paragraph should restate and summarise the key points of your release.

★ **The End** - Write "ENDS" at the foot of the press release with the name and contact telephone number for journalists to contact for further information

Additional Information

★ Try to keep the press release to fewer than 400 words total and it should be factual and well-written. Avoid jargon - Succinct and to the point works best.

★ Use short paragraphs and simple sentences.

★ Use a quote by an identified person.

★ Ensure that there is a reliable contact with phone number on the release. i.e.: For further details about St Raphael's Hospice or to make a donation, please call 020 8335 4576 or visit www.straphaels.org.uk

★ If your press release is for an event, press conference or photo opportunity, include a map or directions.

★ Try to follow the press release up with a phone call to make sure that it was received.

★ Keep a record of all contact and coverage.

- Keep a record of all media contacts in your group - Tracking media coverage is important to show them that you are familiar with their previous coverage of your events.
- Collect or record all coverage and remember to let Mike or Vernon know where coverage has been achieved so we can get a copy!

Never guess at anything when dealing with the media. Never pass on hearsay or rumour. If you are unsure of a question, it's ok to say so and you can always call and check the answer.