



T3SC Factsheet 12

dealing with the press

If you have a major campaign or event coming up, then you shouldn't forget to use the local radio, newspapers and even television if you can. If you are doing something that's a bit different, or has a good story behind it, then you'll get yourself a lot of free publicity.

Don't be scared of working with journalists, but always remember their job is to find a story and anything you say may be used! Try to work with the press and think about what they need.

What makes a good story?

Try and include one or more of the three p's

People People make the best stories so please think about human interest, characters, achievements, the personal impact of policies and the work you do etc. Also try to personalise facts and include named quotes in your press release.

Pictures Always try and think about a photo to illustrate your story. Be creative and think of an interesting visual if possible

Pegs This is something to 'hang' a story on such as a local angle on a national story, a significant milestone such as the 100th volunteer or an anniversary. They can always be created!

Other points to consider

Contact Who is the best point of contact for journalists? Please ensure they are able to take calls and answer questions. Everyone in your group should understand who is responsible for dealing with the press so that your message is clear.

Facts Please, please double check any facts before passing them on, especially details of forthcoming events

Timing and format When do you need the information to appear in the paper? They have strict deadlines. Also, notice is needed to produce a press release. Also ask what format they prefer information in. Many publications prefer press releases by email contact now.

Target Check with the TV and radio listings, so you are targeting the most appropriate programmes for your message.

Interviews

Doing radio or television interviews can be quite daunting, but just remember some basics:

- Check the purpose of the interview and prepare some of the essential details, but don't rehearse a speech as it won't sound natural.
- Talk slowly and don't be afraid to pause. Try to let your sentences flow and avoid um, er and well as much as possible!
- Keep your answers brief and to the point. Avoid jargon and focus on key points you want to make
- If it's a phone interview, make sure you won't be interrupted by ringing phones.
- Turn negative questions into positive answers and don't be defensive
- If you're giving out a phone number for people to get in touch make sure you've got people ready to answer the phone immediately after the programme has aired.

T3SC Press Release Pro Forma

- A press release is the easiest and most professional looking way of contacting the press.
- Try to address your press release to a named contact; if you can't find one then send it to The News Editor.
- Don't forget to check your deadlines because even the best written press release will end up in the bin if it arrives too late.
- Make sure your press releases is typed and double check all facts, grammar and spelling.
- Use headed paper if your group has it; if not make sure it's name is at the top of the page in large print.
- Then simply follow the template below. If you need any help or support T3SC would be happy to help and to have a look at what you've done before you send it.

**For Immediate Release OR
Embargoed until the date your information can be released on**

News Release (it sounds obvious but it goes at the top of the page in large type)

Heading

A short, snappy and to the point headline (don't worry about being too clever or funny her)

First paragraph

Start with a bang, and get the 5W's in straight away - What, Why, Who, Where and When! This is your big chance to sell your story and may be all the editor reads

Following Paragraphs

Make your points in order of importance and in a logical order. Don't waffle; keep everything short and sweet. Use positive and dynamic language

Quotes

Try and include a direct quote from a relevant person to humanise your story

Ends Make it clear where your story ends; try to stick to one side of A4; if you can't then number your pages. Even if its being sent by email try to keep to a pages worth of writing at most

Contact

Give a name and telephone number for someone a journalist can contact for further details

Notes to Editors

After the press release this is a chance to give any necessary background information, eg how to get copies of a report, the history of your group or directions to an event. As with everything else, keep it brief and relevant

**for more info please contact T3SC
tel 0161 339 4985 email info@t3sc.org**