**About the Press**

Journalists are usually very busy and they are swamped with press releases every day. You can make it easy for them to take notice of you by trying to fit in with their priorities, and it is worth following a few guidelines to avoid wasting their time and yours.

1. **Know your media**
Read your local paper or trade magazine so you know how they report stories and what type of stories they like. Ring them up and check which journalists cover your issue and when their deadlines are. Introduce yourself.
2. **Keep your press release short** and to the point, preferably on one page.
3. **Send your press release in the body of an email**; attachments often cause emails to bounce back
4. **Follow up**: ring the news desk to check they received your release, whether they will be covering the story, and if they have all the information they need. If they are not interested, find out why.
5. **If you do not succeed at first, try again** - there could be a reason at the time (a bigger news story for example) which may not cause a problem the next time you try.

**About Press Releases**

A press release is a standard way of communicating with journalists. If written well it will tell them what the story is at a glance – making their job easier and making it more likely that they will cover your issue. Journalists get lots of press releases every day so you need to make sure yours stands out from the crowd.

**What's New?**

It might seem obvious, but the most important aspect of the press release is its **newsworthiness**. You need to talk about what’s happening now or what’s about to happen. This might be the launch of a new service, it might be new product information, it might be an event or activity.

**Human interest/local angle stories** are very popular, especially in the local media. People are more interested in reading about how the family down the road coped with damage to their home, than wading through statistics.

**Unexpected events/humorous photos** also provide newsworthiness.

**What the Release Should Contain**

A good press release should be short, but complete, and include the following points:

**A Heading For Journalists:**

**For immediate release**: [date] - If you want the media to use the story as soon as they receive it
*or*
**Embargoed for**: [time/date] - This is a good way of giving journalists time to prepare and to ensure they don’t use it until a specified time)

**Your Story:**

**Headline** - Start with a snappy headline, but not too clever

**Photo opportunity**: (What it is, where it is, when it is and contact details)

**Paragraph 1**: Summarise the story - who, what, where, when and why. All key information needs to be in this first paragraph

**Paragraph 2**: Put in more details to flesh out the story you have outlined in the first paragraph

**Paragraph 3**: “Quotes” from you or someone relevant to the story. Don’t try to cram too many points into one quote – each quote should make one point

**Paragraph 4**: Extra relevant information

**Note For Editors:**

Provide background information in case they run a longer story

Outline what you have to offer: pictures, interviewees

Outline any additional relevant information or facts and figures, but keep it short.

**Contact Details**

Make sure you supply numbers where you can be reached. This can make the difference between your story being covered or not

**Name**: type name Tel: type telephone no. **Business address**: type address **Email and Website**: type email and www.web address