

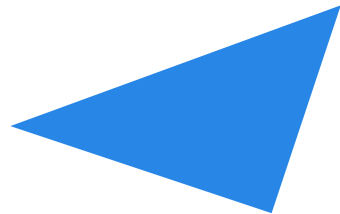


London Region of U3As

PR Peer Group Meeting

Writing effective press releases for maximum impact

Rodney Fox
London Region PR Adviser



A guest.....

**Welcome to
Ray Hardisty.....
PR Adviser for
East of England**



Outline Agenda

- Introduction to London Region
- Brief Look at a Press Release
- Investigating what media is out there
- Producing a Press / News Release
- Considering a 40th Anniversary Press Release
- Wrap-up

REGIONAL PEER GROUPS

- A London Region Peer Group is planned to engage in mutual support by solving shared problems, describing best practice, exchanging ideas for new developments, etc.
- The Peer Group is planned to be self managing and responsible for its own management style, frequency of meetings, methods of communication and subject content.

**One of the set of marketing tools and facilities,
including**

- **Publicity materials, posters, brochures, etc**
 - **Word of mouth – family, friends, acquaintances**
 - **Promotional stalls at events**
 - **Social media**
 - **Outreach partnerships**
 - **etc**
-



**We are not covering
Press adverts!**

- **Press Releases enable organisations to announce news to their target audiences in the public space.**
- **Historically via printed media publications.**

Messages on a range of themes

- **u3a 40th Anniversary and u3a Day**
- **Local u3a events**
- **u3a national campaigns in a local context**
- **u3a national / local partnerships, e.g. with AgeUK**
- **Inclusivity in the u3a**

So.....

(Ray to provide)

Let's look at a u3a Press Release





Release: Immediate

Growing the future

GROWING the future - an ambitious plan to help generations to come – is being launched.

A mass tree planting project celebrates 40 years of u3a – nearly half a million people of today with a legacy for the children of tomorrow.

The project, called u3a Woodland, begins in September this year with the planting of more than 5,000 trees between October and March next year.

Growing the future

It starts across ten hectares in the Brecon National Park. It is then hoped the scheme will extend across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

“Each tree planted in the u3a Woodland will help benefit the environment, wildlife and climate”, said Michaela Moody, head of u3a 40th anniversary celebrations and u3a vice chair.

“This gives us an opportunity to buy trees in a sustainable way and contribute to celebrating the movement’s 40th anniversary in 2022.”

Growing the future

Founded in 1982, u3a – originally University of the Third Age – is a UK-wide movement. There are 1,057 u3as with more than 450,000 members – it is open to everyone no longer in full-time work.

There is a wide range of groups catering for every interest – from Art to Yoga – giving members the chance to explore new ideas, skills and activities together.

The trees will be bought by individual members and u3a groups. Each sapling will have 12 years' maintenance to ensure they become fully established.

Details can be found on the u3a website:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/>

You can contribute the Anniversary Woodland at

www.u3abrand.org.uk

Our own press releases should go to:

- Local Newspapers, printed and electronic
- London wide printed and electronic
- Glossy magazines
- Radio Stations
- TV Stations

Evening  Standard

Islington
Gazette EALING **TIMES**

CamdenNewJournal

HENDON & FINCHLEY
BARNET & POTTERS BAR
EDGWARE & MILL HILL

TIMES

The same principles apply to...

- Community magazines and Newsletters such as Churches, Residents Associations, etc.

Ickenham Calling

The Newsletter of the *Ickenham Residents' Association* Spring 2021

Affiliated to the Hillingdon Alliance of Residents' Associations.
Member of London, Herts. & Middx. Wildlife Trust, and London Green Belt Council.

Ickenham Residents' Association:



E-Mail Address

WebSite

Twitter Acc.

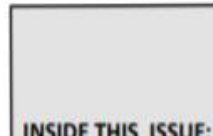
ickenhamresidents@hotmail.com

www.ickenhamresidents.co.uk

www.twitter.com/ickenhamRA

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The committee continue to meet each month on Zoom and are in regular contact by telephone on all other business matters.



Ickenham United Reformed
Church Magazine

Finding out about local media



Gather contact details, such as.....

- Specific names and contact details of reporters, writers, broadcasters, etc who produce material that might appeal to our target audience, especially local community reporters.
- Avoid generic email addresses if possible
- Any online help to identify contacts?



To help you investigate local media

media.info

Search titles, places or pe

Radio

> Television

> Newspapers

> Magazines

British media contacts, information and analysis

Media contacts, news and analysis for the British media industry. [Go worldwide](#)

Media contacts

Latest updates



THC Radio

Changed 1 day, 10 hours ago



1 Brighton FM

Changed 1 day, 14 hours ago

Media news

Latest updates



People

Latest updates

David Ellison

THC Radio



Alastair Stewart

GB News

- <https://media.info/uk/newspapers/titles/starting-with/aNewspapers>

To help you investigate local media



Home

About

Services

Research & Insight

A-Z Newsbrands

You searched for entries beginning with: D

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

<http://www.localmediauk.org/A-Z-Newsbrands?letter=D>

Gather information about local media

- National office has recently acquired a licence for **Vuelio (www.vuelio.com)** which can be used to gather useful background information about potential media organisations and contacts

vuelio make
your story
matter



South London Press



You can get this media pack at <https://londonnewsonline.co.uk/media-pack/>

South London Press



Handling Media Groups.....



**across u3a
boundaries**

Collaboration required

By u3as And London Region

Doing t!



Over to Ray Hardisty!

Work with our contacts:

-
- Understand the kind of news stories this publication / journalist covers
 - Be aware of how their content varies from day by day and section by section
 - They can be busy people, so make their job as easy as possible
 - Understand their deadlines
-

So.....

Let's look again at a u3a Press Release





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Basic thought



Basics

If you want your article / event to shine and be well publicised, and noticed by your target audience, you should aim to **create a buzz** with a press release.

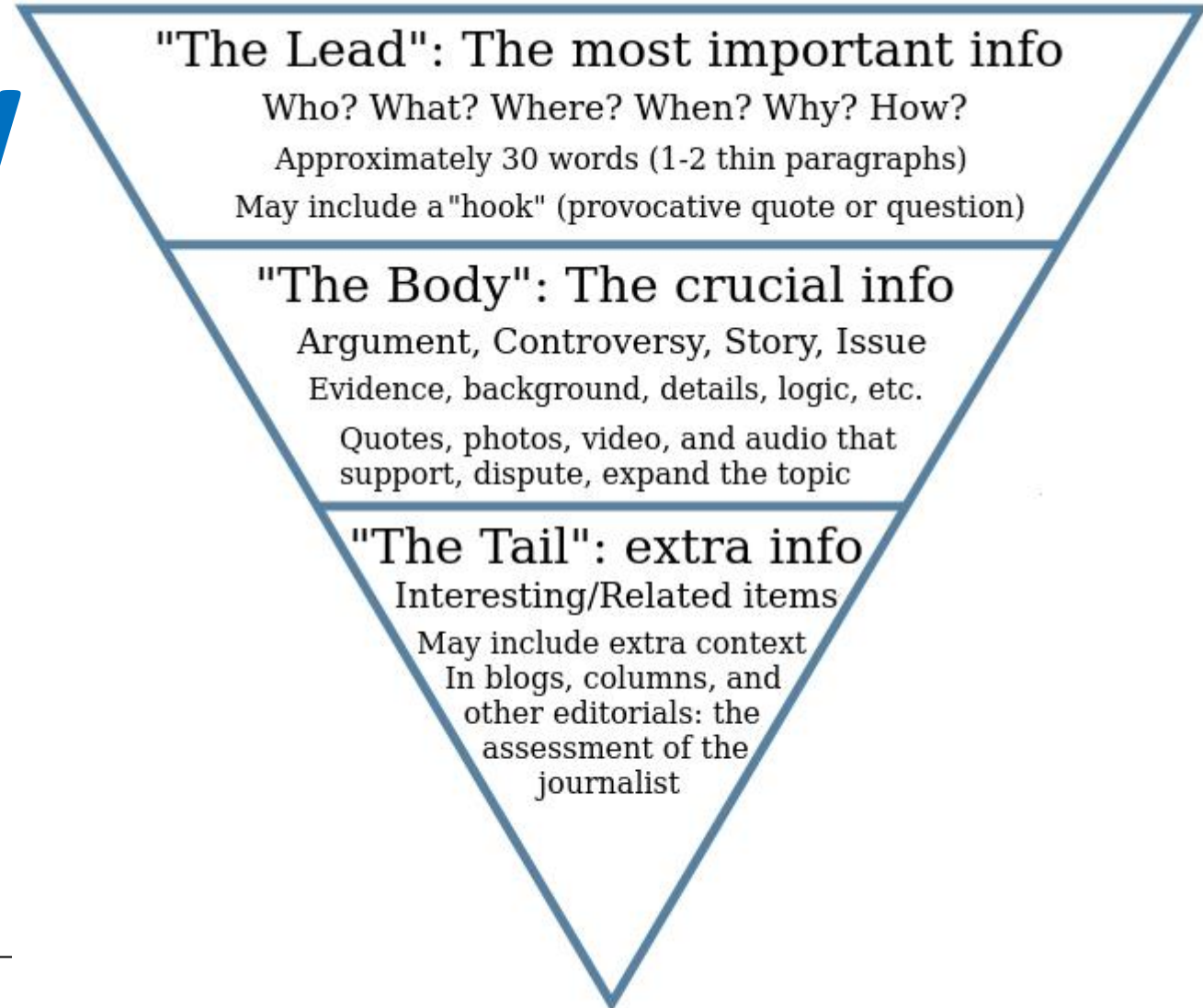
*** Courtesy of Barnsley u3a**

Inverted Pyramid

Need to Know



Nice to Know



Branding

Set up a **branded template** with

- u3a banner as the heading
- contact details: name tel no, email
- u3a's name
- website address
- Charity number



Headline

Grab the reader's attention with a **STRONG, CATCHY** headline with **KEY WORDS** that people will respond to. This is your opener and "hook" to make your reader want



Summary

Write a summary of **one to four sentences**. It may be a good idea to **write this section last**. It will be easier to summarise after you have the rest of your points done.



Body of the Release

This is where **you tell your story**. Use the first paragraph to give details of your message: what it's all about. This is more descriptive.



Dateline / Lead Paragraph

These elements range from **25–30 words** and answer the **“Who, What, Where, Why, When and How”** questions of your message.

Keep the text **concise** and **stick to critical points of information**.



The Boilerplate statement:

This is a chunk of text just like an “About” page on a website.

This is **where explanatory details of your u3a are listed**, including the opportunities provided.



Photos and Images

- Enrich your press release with publicity images (photos) – active, attractive, stimulating, remember D & I
- Make them interesting!



Dos:



- Start out **strong and succinct** – you need to grab your reader within the first few words
- Use **active voice** – **vibrant** verbs create interesting and fresh copy and draw the reader in
- Use a “**hook**”. Tying your theme / event into national and local news, trends, and social issues can add excitement and urgency to a press release.

Dos:



- Use a **professional tone** with jargon.

Using slang, hype and too many exclamation points

may come across as more of a sales pitch, turning people off your event.

- Tell an **interesting story** with your press release.

Remember, you want people to be drawn to your publicity. People are busy and have many

Dos:

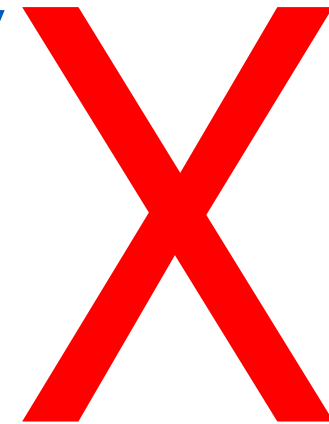
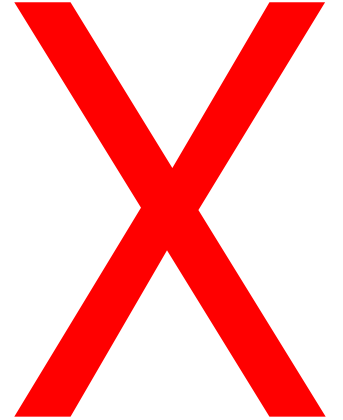


- Keep the press release to **one page of A4**, if possible
- **Spell Check!!**
- Send the press release out in a **timely** fashion. Sent too early, people won't remember it; send too late, they may already be committed to something else

Do Nots:



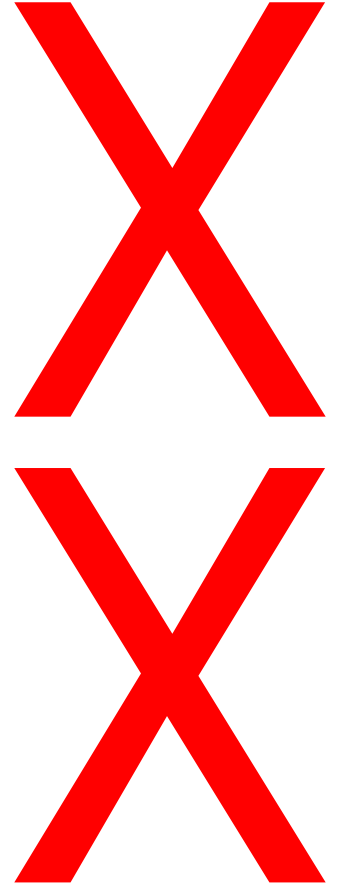
- Use clichés and common phrases that sound like a sales pitch. Fresh words keep your reader reading to the end
- Address your readers directly by “you”
- Refer to the u3a as “we” or “I”



Do Nots:



- Create emphasis by using **multiple exclamation points or ALL CAPS**
- Use **bullet points or long lists**
- Use **dashes, asterisks** and other odd symbols to create breaks between paragraphs.



Just a **simple line space** will suffice

**We hope you are now well
armed to produce your own
press releases!**





London Region of U3As

PR Peer Group Meeting

Writing effective press releases for maximum impact

Rodney Fox
London Region PR Adviser

