Advice for Page Editors

Always keep in mind that web editing is an opportunity to be creative and have fun, not just another chore, and that your readers will appreciate the time and effort you put into creating and maintaining your pages.

Style

1. For clarity, always leave a blank line between paragraphs and keep them short and snappy.
2. Use pictures wherever possible, to break up the text and make your pages visually appealing (but see the Copyright section below).
3. Many people won't bother to scroll down your pages, so try to put the most important items at the top (or at least tell your readers what goodies await them off the bottom of their screens).
4. Use tables and bulleted lists to present information in an easy-to-read format.
5. Use centred headings to break up longer pages into bite-sized chunks and bold and/or italic fonts to emphasise key points..
6. Use sub-pages for the less important information rather than burying it near the bottom of an over-long page.
7. Keep in mind that your pages won't always be viewed on a laptop or desktop computer and, if accessed from a tablet or smart-phone, may look quite different (especially in portrait orientation, where the sidebar material is relegated to the foot of the page).

Content

1. Although your web pages are your group's shop window for the world, many readers will already be members so you should provide them with current information and encourage them to use the site regularly to find out what's going on.
2. Rather than just repeat whatever appeared in the last newsletter, try to take advantage of the site's dynamic nature and provide more up-to-the-minute information and news, illustrated with photos where possible.
3. If your group writes, versifies, paints, draws, throws pots or is otherwise creative, consider including members' work in your pages (with their permission, of course)
4. Look at other pages on the site for ideas, and use the SiteBuilder Oversights! pages to see what similar groups elsewhere are doing.
5. Where appropriate, supplement your pages with links to further information, like maps, book reviews and related material. Your members will find this useful and it will of great interest to those who happen upon your pages and are unable to join/attend your meetings.
6. Use the built-in Events capability for your meetings, outings and other happenings. These expire automatically, keeping your page up-to-date with no effort on your part, and are aggregated into the main diary on the Events page.
7. As we're a charity, and the website is hosted by the U3A, it isn't appropriate to advertise commercial organisations or services, or include anything that may offend others.

Data Protection

1. Always refer to group members by their first names or initials, rather than identifying them. These are public pages and are regularly scanned and indexed by search engines such as Google and Bing, so a degree of anonymity is appropriate.
2. If necessary, use an initial to distinguish between similarly-named people (e.g. John A. and John H.)
3. Use the built-in Contact system rather than put private telephone numbers and email addresses or home addresses into your pages, as these may attract spammers, phishers and cold-callers. Even then, ask permission before making anyone a Contact for your pages and don't switch on the mailto option as this exposes the email address to anyone who knows how to find it. The Contact page is completely anonymous.

Copyright

1. Although millions of images can be downloaded from the web, you must make sure that you aren't infringing copyright when using them. Wikipedia has many images that are either public domain or free to use as long as the copyright owner is clearly attributed and Microsoft Word allows searches for public domain clip images, which can then be saved to disk and uploaded to your web pages.
2. Pictures taken by you or your members can be used more freely (but always ask their permission before showing their faces or identifying them in the caption). The Digital Photography Group is another source of non-copyright images.
3. Commercial music and video files are mostly copyrighted and their owners often enforce this aggressively, so only put them on your pages if you're certain that you have permission to do so.
4. If you want to reference something that is copyright, make a link to the page containing the original and include that instead. That way you are only directing readers to the source rather than offering pirated copies of the material.
5. Even when material isn't copyright, it's often better to include a link to the source rather than embed it directly in your pages. That way, you don't have to worry about keeping it up to date, as the owner will do that for you. This is especially true of statistical information, which is almost guaranteed to change frequently. So, rather than claiming that, say, the U3A has XXX members across the country, provide a link to their pages and leave it to them to keep the their membership information up to date.

And Finally

1. Although SiteBuilder make regular back-ups of the site, they recommend that we keep copies of any pictures and files uploaded, in case of disaster.
2. If you wish, you can get an idea of the popularity of your pages, and those of other groups, by signing up to receive the monthly page counts, which record all visits to the site, whether by humans or robots, each month.

John Attwood, Webmaster