

## 2012 – Telling your story to the press

The local press like to know what's going on in their localities, so they can fill their columns with news that local people want to read. But with a very limited number of reporting staff, they can't be everywhere, especially around community festivals, and that's where you come in!

If you are organising an event to celebrate the **Queen's Diamond Jubilee** or the **London 2012 Games**, let your local newspaper and radio station know about it well in advance. Here's some advice, if you need it, to get you going.

**Press release templates:** In this toolkit you'll find two press release templates – one for each event. You can use them to let the local press know what you're planning. They're meant to be guides, to help you include all the vital information, and there are also one or two ideas for additional detail.

Of course, you can include more detail, or rewrite the release template to suit your circumstances, and even include a photograph of the organisers making preparations if you wish. **The important thing to remember is brevity** – by all means get all of your information into the press release, but remember to keep it brief: **around 250 words** is a good guide.

Don't forget to give the press **contact details** for more information, or to enable them to check the information they have. It's not a bad idea to include the names, phone numbers and email addresses of two organisers who are authorised to give information – just in case one isn't available.

**When to announce your event:** Send the release about **two weeks before your event**, to give the newsdesk time to take it into account in the planning of their coverage. At Jubilee time, and also at Games time, there will be a lot going on, and you may like to phone the newsdesk a few days before the event, just to check whether they're planning to send a reporter or photographer. Even if they're not, it's good to remind them you're planning something.

You'll find the postal address, phone number and email address of your local newspaper and radio station on the internet by keying the title into a search engine, or we have included a list of 2012 Media Contacts for your information.

Email is always the best way to contact the media. Often newsdesks are busy, and if you phone, your call may get lost in the rush - resulting in no action!

**When it's all over:** Be ready to send a second **press release after the event**. You can modify the press release template for this purpose.

**No guarantee of publication:** Please be aware that nothing guarantees publication in the local newspaper or broadcast on local radio or television. But don't forget that your **parish or community magazine or newsletter** might also be interested in your story.