



Tips on working with the media

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Here are our tips for writing press releases and getting in touch with your local media.

Press releases

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The template press release we've written is intended to help you use your social enterprise as a case study to demonstrate why MPs and the public should back legislation to make it easier for social enterprises to deliver public services.

The template is only a guide – if you already have a case study telling the story of your business or the story of an individual employee or service user you can incorporate that. The most important thing is to explain that the positive impact you deliver in your local area could be replicated in communities across the UK if this legislation were successful.

Also, if you're adding in extra information, be careful not to make your press release too long – be concise to give it the best chance of being read, but provide contact details at your organisation for the journalist to find out more.

How to contact your local media

The media is interested in knowing about local organisations that are making a difference to their communities, or that have an interesting story to tell. Local and regional media include:

- Local newspapers
- Local radio stations
- Local magazines and websites
- Regional TV news programmes (BBC and ITV)

You may already have journalist contacts, but if not you can find their details online by visiting the websites of your local media.

How to make the approach

Journalists need time to plan and prepare a story, so it would be best to approach them two weeks before the first reading of the bill (on 19th November). Most local newspapers are either weekly or bi-weekly so find out when their deadlines are. If you miss the deadlines, journalists won't be able to do anything with your story.

Broadcasters have much shorter deadlines, so it's worth contacting your local radio and TV stations right up until the day before, and perhaps even on the day of, your story. Don't forget how many regional websites there are that focus on news and events in your local area – they're news outlets too.

Making the approach

1. Have your press release ready to go. Include the headline of the release in the title of the email and label it "local news release". Insert your contact details so that the journalist can find out more about you and your business should they need to. This information can be added to the 'Notes to editors' at the bottom of your press release.
2. Research your local media before you approach them. Call to find out if there is a particular reporter/news editor to email your press release to, and if not, send the release to the news desk.
3. Include your press release in the body of an email and not as an attachment, because this is quicker for the journalist to read. Journalists often work to extraordinarily tight timelines, so saving them a few seconds and making sure they don't have to go through extra steps to find out what your story is really can make all the difference.
4. When you have emailed the press release, follow-up with a phone call a day or two afterwards to make sure they have received it, and to tell them more if they have any questions. Generally, it is better to call in the morning (around 11am) and always ask if it's a good time to talk. Afternoons are normally a bad time to call because journalists are on deadline, filing their stories.
5. Remember to say thank you. If a journalist covers your story, follow it up. This will go a long way and will help you build relationships with your local media.

