

RSPB media advice – working with your local media

If you are under 16, please ask an adult to help you.

Using the media

Local media like to feature local stories. The local press, radio and TV are a great way of promoting your fundraising activity, informing and attracting local people and raising awareness of the work of the RSPB.

Here are some useful tips to help you generate media coverage for any fundraising activity you organise, or take part in.

Writing a press release

THE HEADLINE SHOULD BE EYE-CATCHING AND DESCRIBE THE STORY

- The key to writing a good press release lies in the first paragraph. If it grabs the news editor's attention and makes him want to read on, then you are over the first hurdle
- Once you have an introduction, the succeeding paragraphs should contain the detail, providing the answers to the following questions: who?, what?, when?, where? Why? and how?
- If you find yourself unsure of how to start, imagine you are telling the story to a friend
- Include a quote from yourself or from someone involved in the activity to personalise the press release
- If possible, try to fit all the information on to one page
- Mark NEWS RELEASE at the top of the page and include the date of issue
- Always give the name and telephone number of a contact for further information

Sending out your press release

Notify the media as early as possible. Call your local paper, TV or radio station and ask for their newsdesk or the Forward Planning Desk contact details.

You can then:

- Email the release to the news editor or newsdesk

- Fax the release to the newsdesk

Make sure you follow up your press release with a call to the newsdesk. Journalists receive hundreds of press releases a day. It is always useful to remind them that the event is happening.

Photo opportunities

Most newspapers like eye-catching pictures.

- Invite your local paper to send a reporter and photographer to your event
- Alternatively, take pictures yourself - sometimes journalists can be too busy to send someone out
- It's always worth sending in details afterwards, along with a good photo, for they might just feature it!

Responding to the media

The media might want to send a reporter or photographer to your activity. Be contactable.

If you are going to be interviewed, plan the key messages you want to get across (2 or 3 only). Don't be afraid to enquire about the questions they are going to ask you. Always check if the interview is live or pre-recorded.

Good luck

Don't forget to send any pictures with your sponsor money to RSPB Wildlife Explorers, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL