How to produce a newsletter

A newsletter is a regular publication that can be used to keep people informed about a project, campaign or service. To produce a newsletter you will need a software package like Microsoft Word or Publisher, which are widely available on many computers. To distribute your newsletter you can print it and post it through doors, leave it in your local shops and businesses, hand them out at events or send an electronic version via email.

Step 1 Think about your audience

Wwho are the people you want to read your newsletter with? Where are they, what would they be interested to know and how best do you communicate with them – for example email or print.

Step 2 Decide how often will your newsletter be produced

Think about how much time you have to produce the newsletter and let your readers know how often they can expect to receive your newsletter and stick to this.

Step 3 Confirm your budget

How much money do you have for design, print and distribution? To keep costs down you can design a newsletter in Word or Publisher. Creating a PDF newsletter and emailing this to your readers won't cost.

Step 4 Think about your format

You can either produce a printed or electronic newsletter. Printed newsletters are typically two or up to eight pages long. Electronic newsletters should be kept short and snappy and where possible link to web pages for more information.

Step 5 Producing the newsletter

Decide who will coordinate the production of the newsletter, who will write the articles, take the photos, edit copy, design, proofread, print it and arrange distribution..

Step 7 Writing articles

The best way to make sure as many people as possible can understand what you are saying in your newsletter is to use plain English and keep it jargon free. Use clear headings and lists where relevant to break up the text.

Step 4 Design your newsletter

You can design the newsletter yourself (see above) or you could get a professional designer to do the work. You would work with them to make sure everything is correct and the newsletter looks how you want it to.

Step 8 Distribution of your newsletter

Decide in advance who you are sending your newsletter to and put together a mailing list (either postal or email) so once your newsletter is designed and printed it can be distributed straight away.

Do's and don't's

Do

- **Use an online service such as Mailchimp (www.mailchimp.com) if you want to produce an electronic newsletter**

- **Produce a timetable with deadlines to make sure you leave enough time to create each newsletter**

- **Vary the content – you could include upcoming events, features, news etc, to make it more interesting for your reader.**

Don't

- **Be afraid to refresh the layout and structure of your newsletter from time to time so that it doesn't get stale.**

- **Forget to ask for feedback, it will help to improve your newsletter.**