

## *How to write a press release*

### *Who are your local newspapers and radio stations?*

You should carefully identify the publications you are targeting. Pick up the phone and talk to the local journalists. They're not that scary - all they want is a good story. Find out what how much and what sort of information they will be interested in receiving and how they want to receive it.

### *Know your facts*

Do your background research or planning on the story/news. A good news story is properly researched with key facts reinforcing your central message. Remember, you are the local experts on homelessness and how it impacts on your service users. You should use it.

### *Keep it simple*

A press release should be simple and punchy. Imagine it in the local newspaper, any story they print is likely to be short and sweet - not a great tome. Even if the paper prints your story if you write too much then the journalist will cut it down and there is always the danger that they will cut out the bit you think is most important.

Come up with a working headline and three or four or five key points you wish to convey. Start writing the most important news/information first - and keep it brief and punchy. You should include one or two quotes from a spokesperson. These should be short, a sentence or two at most. Don't write a big paragraph because only a quick sound-bite will actually get quoted.

### *Tidy up the loose ends*

Once you've finished writing the release read it over (a number of times) and reduce the word count further! Then get someone else to proof read the media release, and make sure the headline is punchy and draws you in.

Make sure that you provide further detail further down the press release, including contact details and how to get more information

Make your final edits - and you're done!

Here are drafts on key issues raised in the manifesto:

- Move-on
- Supporting people
- Day Centres
- Alcohol services

## XX% of local homeless hostel spaces blocked

Growing concern as local homeless hostel, XXXXXXXX (insert hostel name), calls for election candidates to support increase in accommodation for people waiting to move-on.

XXXXXXX(insert hostel name), a local homeless hostel is warning of a growing crisis facing local homeless people. The hostel has XX beds, however XX are now occupied by homeless people who are ready to be moved into new permanent accommodation but have nowhere to go.

The hostel is raising the concern ahead of the general election that with hostels increasingly full more and more rough sleepers will be left on the streets.

Hostel Manager **Jo Bloggs** said: *" This crisis must be an election issue. There's been real success in reducing numbers of rough sleepers over the last few years but that's increased pressure for places in hostels. "*

The root cause of this problem is a lack of permanent accommodation for those who are ready to move on, out of hostels. Much more accommodation, including council housing, housing association properties and private rented accommodation needs to be allocated to solving this crisis.

**Bloggs** said: *"The lack of local move-on accommodation leaves people living in what is meant to be temporary, emergency accommodation frustrated that they cannot move onto something more permanent. It also increases the risk of leaving homeless people on the streets, unable to find a hostel bed. "* S/he added: *" We're calling on all the local candidates in the election to make a pledge to support the campaign to increase the amount of move-on accommodation"*

XXXXXXX (insert hostel name) is signing up to the national campaign by Homeless Link, the national body representing homelessness charities, which is calling for:

- the introduction regional rent deposit scheme to allow hostel occupants with little or no support needs to move straight into the private sector;
- local authorities to tackle housing benefit delays;
- local authorities and major housing associations to ring-fence housing units per year for use as move-on accommodation;
- tenancy sustainment support for formerly homeless people to ensure they retain their new homes
- a long-term increase in the level of investment in new supported accommodation.

ENDS

For more information, please contact:

XXXXXXXXXX, Hostel Manager, on XXXXXXXXXX, [XXXXXXXX@XXXXXXXXXX.com](mailto:XXXXXXXX@XXXXXXXXXX.com)

Homeless Link's Manifesto - Do you want to end homelessness? can be found at [www.endhomelessness.org.uk](http://www.endhomelessness.org.uk)

Model Press Release - Supporting People

## Funding for local homelessness support projects to be cut

Homelessness charity speaks out about threatened XX% cuts to its funding

Local services to homeless and vulnerable people are facing major cutbacks due to a XX% cut in government grants. With the election pending the local homeless charity, XXXXXX, is warning that the cut in the Supporting People budget will mean that it is no longer able to give the same level of support to local homeless people.

Hostel manager **Jo Bloggs** said: *"We've written to the election candidates asking them to oppose cuts in local homeless services. We need to know - will our next MP stand up for homeless people?"*

**Bloggs** added: *"If our funding is cut then we may have to lose staff. That will mean that we can't offer the intensive support that the most vulnerable homeless people need."*

The hostel provides a place to stay for XX people. The Supporting People funding, which is administered by the local authority, pays for support and advice that help homeless people prepare to move into their own accommodation. Services offered include help with tackling long-term issues such as drug, alcohol and mental health problems as well help with handling money and running a household.

**Bloggs** said: *"Combating homelessness isn't just about more houses, it's also about ensuring people have the life skills to cope once they have a home. If these services are cut homeless people will once again be left out in the cold."*

The hostel was able to increase the support provided when the Supporting People programme came in but now those services are threatened.

ENDS

For more information, please contact:  
XXXXXXXXXX, Hostel Manager, on XXXXXXXXXXXX, [XXXXXXXX@XXXXXXXXXX.com](mailto:XXXXXXXX@XXXXXXXXXX.com)

<http://www.endhomelessness.org.uk>

Model Press Release -Day Centres

## Candidate backs local homeless day centre's work

Parliamentary candidate XXXXXXXX (Insert name & Party) visited local daycentre for homeless people XXXXXXXX (Insert name)

The election came to Homeless day centre XXXXXXXX this week, as local XXXXXXXX (insert party) candidate XXXXXXXXX (insert name) visited the centre to see their work first hand.

The day centre works with up to XX mainly single homeless people each day. They use the drop-in service during the day, where the centre's key workers help them access services such as housing and health. The day centre also provides advisers, help with benefits and work closely the local jobcentre plus to help equip the centre users for work.

Day Centre Manager **Jo Bloggs** said: *" The Centre is a bridge back into the wider community, but we really live hand to mouth. We don't get basic funding for the centre."*

Although the centre gets funding on a project by project basis it has no secure core funding and, as a result, can never plan effectively for long-term service delivery.

**Bloggs** added: *" We've asked all the election candidates to support basic funding for the centre so that we can continue to work with some of the most vulnerable people in our community."*

Ask the candidate for a quote supporting the centre - or write your own like the one below and ask them to approve it.

XXXXXXXXXXXX (insert election candidate's name) said *" XXXXXXXX (insert day centre name) is doing a great job. The centre provides much needed support to homeless people and makes a real difference their lives."*

ENDS

For more information, please contact:

XXXXXXXXXXXX, Day Centre Manager, on XXXXXXX, [XXXXXXXXXX@XXXXXXXXXXXX.com](mailto:XXXXXXXXXX@XXXXXXXXXXXX.com)

Model Press Release - Alcohol Services

## Local hostel warns of alcohol crisis among homeless people.

Hostel warns that alcohol is a greater problem than drugs as election campaigns get underway

Despite the election war of words on drugs policy an alcohol crisis is being ignored by politicians, with homeless people being turned down for alcohol treatment because there aren't enough places to treat them, warns **Jo Bloggs**, Manager of XXXXXXX, a local homeless hostel. Upwards of two-thirds of the hostel residents have a serious drink problem, but many can't get access to the local treatment centre to tackle their addiction.

**Bloggs** said: *"The problem isn't just getting treatment. Once someone is tackling their drink problem it is vital that they be moved to somewhere 'dry' where they won't be sucked back into dependency."*

S/he added: *"Too often the chance to help someone is lost because the resources just aren't there."*

Twice as many people are dependent on alcohol as on all other drugs combined however the Government spends £500m a year on drugs programmes but only £95m on alcohol services. The hostel is joining with national membership body Homeless Link in calling for a major increase in funding from the new government to help deliver a reduction in alcohol dependency among homeless people.

**Bloggs** said: *"The next government must take alcohol services seriously. We're asking all the election candidates to support an increase in funding that will give homeless people the rapid access to assessment and treatment that they need."*

ENDS

For more information, please contact:  
XXXXXXXXXX, Hostel Manager, on XXXXXX, [XXXXXXXXXX@XXXXXXXXXX.com](mailto:XXXXXXXXXX@XXXXXXXXXX.com)