

**South of Scotland Network  
of  
Councils of Voluntary Service  
(SoSNet)**

**COMMUNICATION  
TOOLKIT**

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**A B C D E F G H I J K L M**

**N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z**

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# Abbreviations, Conventions and Glossary

*This section is under development.*

*Suggestions are welcomed for abbreviations, conventions and glossary items to be included.*

## **Abbreviations**

These are the standard forms of abbreviation for these organisations/ types of organisation and should be used consistently by all SoSNet partners.

CVS – Council of Voluntary Service

CVSs – Councils of Voluntary Service

BFCVS – Borders Forum of Councils of Voluntary Service

DGFCVS – Dumfries and Galloway Federation of Councils of Voluntary Service

AECVS – Annandale and Eskdale Council of Voluntary Service

BAVS – Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service

CBAVS – Central Borders Association for Voluntary Service

NCVS – Nithsdale Association for Voluntary Service

RAVS – Roxburgh Association for Voluntary Service

SCVS – Stewartry Council of Voluntary Service

TAVO – Tweeddale Association of Voluntary Organisations

WCVS – Wigtown Council of Voluntary Service

## **Conventions**

Association(s) - for the sake of brevity when Borders Forum of Councils of Voluntary Service and Dumfries and Galloway Federation of Councils of Voluntary Service are referred to together the word association(s) is used.

CVS is singular noun, therefore when writing about one the singular forms of verbs should be used, for example is/ was rather than are/ were.

Example: AECVS is committed to ..... **not** AECVS are committed to.....

## **Glossary**

Copy – the text of a piece of writing to appear in a newspaper or be broadcast.

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# Introduction

One of the shared objectives under the SoSNet project was the development and implementation of a common marketing, promotion and public relations policy. The aim of this policy is not principally to promote SoSNet (though it is essential that the SoSNet project is appropriately acknowledged). The principal aim is to raise awareness and recognition of the Councils of Voluntary Service (CVS )and their activities.

This document provides information on how to perform marketing and public relations tasks. It should be used as a guide and reference source to encourage consistency in the design of all our communication materials and a higher degree of performance in promoting our achievements.

It is understood that a shared identity should not detract from the individuality of each CVS. With this in mind, a degree of flexibility has been designed into the style guide. For example, each stationery item is designed to provide a shared appearance while carrying only the specific details of the CVS it has been prepared for. As such every CVS will have its own series of templates, bearing only its own contact details.

Providing the basics of the style guide are adhered to (particularly font and logo colours and sizes) there are no restrictions on the design of leaflets, posters or other marketing publications. However, you should give consideration to your design meeting the needs of the visually impaired, and to creating text that follows the guidelines of the Plain English campaign. For further information please refer to 'Guidance and Queries Contacts' in the appendices.

This document has been created electronically to save costs. Please only print pages if it is absolutely necessary, and then select only those you need for reference.

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# Visual Identity

## Why should we have a shared visual identity?

Establishing a common look to the way our communication materials are presented helps us to strengthen our position and messages

It shows:

- We are organisations with common aims, working within a south of Scotland network
- Our activities, projects and programmes can be more easily identified as CVS initiatives
- We have a considered and professional approach to the way we communicate - this is important in terms of attracting funding and presenting ourselves to other organisations.

In addition:

- We have a duty of care to ensure that recipients of our services can identify our organisation - having an agreed visual identity makes it easier for people to recognise our organisations as established, reputable bodies in which they can place their trust
- We have a responsibility to make our communication materials as accessible as possible, including for people who are visually impaired or have learning difficulties such as dyslexia - this means using a clear, sans serif typeface and a good size font.

A shared visual identity is only as good as the willingness of staff to implement it. **For it to be effective we must all use it!**

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## [Basic elements](#)

There are four main elements of the visual identity. These are:

- The CVS or association logo, adapted for each organisation
- The agreed strapline.
- The agreed colours
- The agreed typeface and font size

The visual identity is made up of a combination of these elements used in a variety of applications.





The following guidelines will explain how these elements should be used so that they appear consistent.

While it is understood each CVS will want to assert its individuality, every application must maintain the 'spirit' of the visual identity and be well designed even when budgets are small.

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## Logos

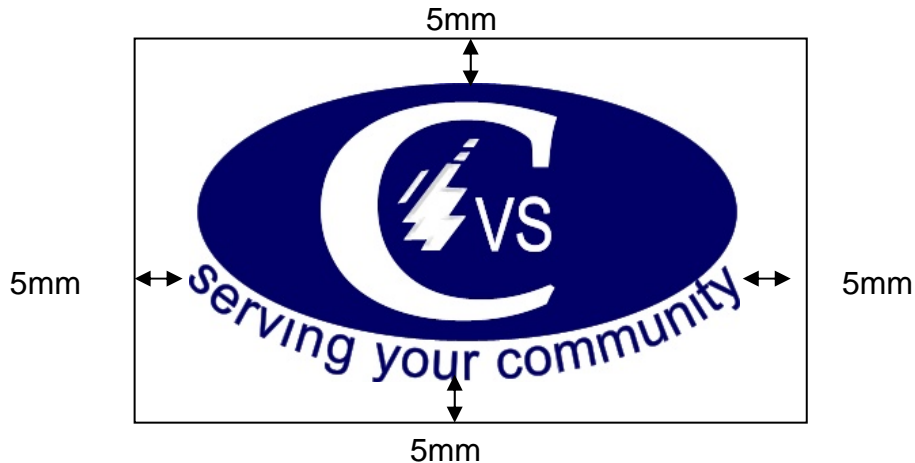
The CVS logo is unique and is the most important element of the visual identity.

 The image shows the CVS logo in blue on a white background. It features a large blue 'C' with a white lightning bolt and the letters 'VS' inside it. Below the 'C' is the tagline 'serving your community' in a blue, sans-serif font, following the curve of the bottom of the 'C'.	<p>Where you will be using a minimum of two colour print reproduction, electronic or audio-visual, it is best to present the logo in CVS blue. Always try to get a good colour match, do not render in any other colour.</p>
 The image shows the CVS logo in black on a white background. It features a large black 'C' with a white lightning bolt and the letters 'VS' inside it. Below the 'C' is the tagline 'serving your community' in a black, sans-serif font, following the curve of the bottom of the 'C'.	<p>When reproduction is more basic, the black and white version of the logotype should be used. Examples include: press ads, in-house documents etc. The black and white logo is also best used when the logo is required to appear smaller than normal.</p>
 The image shows the CVS logo in blue on a white background, but the 'C' and 'VS' are white and the lightning bolt is blue. The tagline 'serving your community' is also in blue.	<p>The CVS logo may also be reversed white out of CVS blue or background image. Either way, ensure the logo remains legible.</p>
 The image shows the CVS logo in black on a white background, but the 'C' and 'VS' are white and the lightning bolt is black. The tagline 'serving your community' is also in black.	

Advice and guidance is available – see Appendix – ‘Guidance and Queries Contacts at the end of this toolkit.

### Logo exclusion zone

An exclusion zone (the minimum unobstructed area around the CVS logo) has been developed to make sure the logo is sufficiently prominent. Do not allow type, rules or any other graphic device into this area (except when the logo is reversed out of CVS blue or another image).



### Minimum size reproduction

For clarity and reproduction quality **do not** print the logo smaller than the one shown here.



### Colour

When printing documents always try to use a blue as close as possible to the one shown here or use standard black.



CVS Blue

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## Typeface

The typeface family is Arial. Any typeface can be used from this family (eg Arial Black, Arial Narrow or Arial Unicode MS).

The minimum typeface size is 12 point, except for Arial Narrow that should never be less than 14 point for ease of reading.

The typeface may be used in **bold** or *italic* as well as in its regular format. No other typeface should be used alongside or independently of Arial.

Arial	Abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz <b>ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ</b> 1234567890!;/?,.@ ·%&*()£\<+>”©
Arial Black	Abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890!;/?,.@ ·%&*()£\<+>”©
Arial Narrow	Abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890!;/?,.@ ·%&*()£\<+>”©
Arial Unicode MS	Abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890!;/?,.@ ·%&*()£\<+>” ©

Arial is installed by default when installing MS Office. If it does not appear to be on your computer advice and guidance is available – see Appendix – ‘Guidance and Queries Contacts’ at the end of this toolkit.

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## Strapline

The CVS visual identity strapline is:

# **serving your community**

The statement is an important element of the visual identity and describes one of the main aims of the CVS movement.

It is an integral part of the CVS logo but may be used independently providing the following guidelines are followed:

The setting style for the strapline is Arial bold, all in lower case.

It can be produced in black or CVS blue (see sections 'Colours' and 'Typeface').

Do not change the appearance of the strapline in any way. Use the approved style only.

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## Relationship statements

A statement that describes:

- a CVS's relationship with a regional association (Borders Forum of Councils of Voluntary Service or Dumfries and Galloway Federation of Councils of Voluntary Service) where applicable

AND

- an organisation's membership of SoSNet

should appear on all stationery items.

A statement that recognises the principal funders of a SoSNet partner organisation must also be included on all stationery items (see Acknowledging Funding Organisations).

To minimise repetition and make best use of space, the following wording should be used both to explain associations and funding.

*(name of CVS)* is a member of *(name of regional association)* and South of Scotland Network of Councils of Voluntary Service.

We receive funding from the Scottish Executive, *name of local council* and the European Regional Development Fund.

Stationery templates will be adapted to incorporate the correct membership and funding statements appropriate for each SoSNet partner. The text will be set in the agreed typeface, **Arial bold**.

Membership or funding statements can be reproduced in blue or black. They may not be reversed out. The statements should be positioned in a discrete place, but must be legible.

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## Stationery

The official correspondence of any CVS is highly visible and it is important that everyone working for the organisation follows and applies the guidelines to create a consistent appearance.

Firstly, the correct typeface (Arial) must be used. Do not use any other typeface.

Arial is installed by default when installing MS Office. If it does not appear to be on your computer advice and guidance is available – see Appendix – ‘Guidance and Queries Contacts’ at the end of this toolkit.

Stationery templates have been created for you to use direct from your computer.

Ideally paper stock should be no less than 90gsm and contain no watermark. If possible, business card stock and other board material should be chosen to match paper stock.

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## [Letterhead](#)

Letterhead sheets can be printed in CVS blue or black, from the computer template supplied.

Each CVS has its own template letterhead, incorporating (where relevant) main office details, membership and funding statements, charity and company numbers, Investor in People recognition and the registered office of the CVS.

Use the template! Use only this version and do not alter or try to recreate it.

Type your text using the correct typeface (Arial). Do not substitute for any other.

Ensure subsequent pages are numbered.

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## [Fax Cover Sheet](#)

Fax cover sheets are printed in one colour, black on white, from the computer template supplied.

Use the template! Use only this version and do not alter or try to recreate it.

Type your text using the correct typeface (Arial). Do not substitute for any other.

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## [Compliments Slip](#)

Compliments slips have been designed for printing in either CVS blue or black.

The logo, address details and other components are exactly the same as on the letterhead and are tailored for each CVS organisation.

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## [Business Cards](#)

Business cards have been designed for printing in either CVS blue or black.

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## Email

All business emails should carry a 'signature'. The word 'signature' in the context of email, covers more than simply the sender's name.

Email signatures should contain all the following basic elements (numbers refer to the specimen below):

Full contact information for the sender and the sender's organisation, including the website address (1).

A confidentiality warning (2) and disclaimer (3).

Emails should display the network's shared identity elements including any logo and strapline (4).

Email should comply with obligations to acknowledge funders (5).

Emails should carry appropriate relationship statements in the same way as letterheads. (6)

### *Text of email*

#### (1) *Name*

Full Name

Job Title

Stewartry Council of Voluntary Service

17 Castle Street

Kirkcudbright

Dumfries & Galloway

DG6 4JA

Tel: 01557 331666 Fax: 01557 331346

[name@stewartrycvs.org.uk](mailto:name@stewartrycvs.org.uk)

[www.stewartrycvs.org.uk](http://www.stewartrycvs.org.uk)

(2) This email is communicated in confidence. It is intended for the recipient only and may not be disclosed further without the express consent of the sender.

(3) Views expressed in this email are not necessarily those of Stewartry Council of Voluntary Service.

This email should be checked for viruses on receipt. The sender accepts no responsibility for any virus transmitted.



(4)  
Stewartry Council of  
Voluntary Service



(5)  
PROJECT PART-FINANCED  
BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

Europe and Scotland  
Making it **work together**

Stewartry Council of Voluntary Service is a member of the  
South of Scotland Network of Councils of Voluntary Service

(6)

## PowerPoint

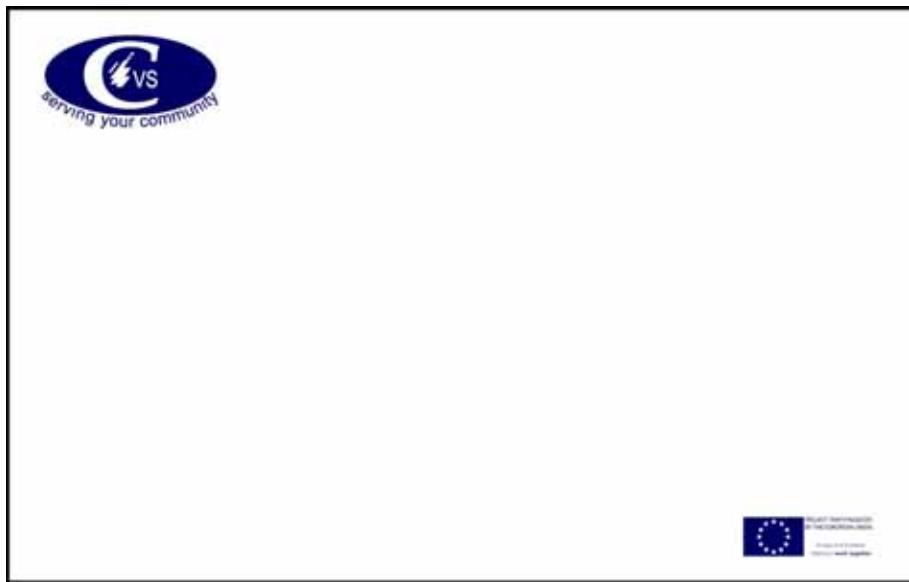
PowerPoint and is a highly visible communication tool and should therefore be designed strictly according to the visual identity guidelines.

A PowerPoint template is supplied for each SoSNet partner organisation. Please use the template.

Due to the nature of presentations, some amendment may be necessary for different slides. However, always maintain the 'spirit' of the design.

The following points should be noted:

- Maintain minimum space for logo (see previous 'Logo exclusion zone')
- Use the correct typeface, Arial. Do not use any other. Ensure the font size is legible from a distance.



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## Websites

The websites of all SoSNet partner organisations should follow the guidance on visual identity laid out in the preceding sections.

It is not required that partners' websites are uniform in structure and content, only that they follow the principles of the shared identity.

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# Acknowledging Funding Organisations

## Introduction

This section outlines the common policy of the SoSNet member CVSs and associations in acknowledging any organisation that provides or awards funding in whole or part to one or more of the CVSs or associations for any programme or project.

We are aware of how important it is to use branding as a means of communicating our work and activities, in terms of raising profile, demonstrating value, exemplifying operational transparency and building trust with the public. This policy document aims to set out clearly how and when we will apply the branding of our funding partners to the communication and marketing tools we create and publish.

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## External Audiences

The key audiences to whom we communicate our activities, including funded programmes, can be broken down into these groups:

- Our members and potential members
- The media – communicating key messages and programme achievements to regional, local and specialist press (eg voluntary / community sector periodicals) - this is particularly important for case studies and success stories
- The general public – to raise broad awareness of SoSNet CVSs and associations and their activities
- The voluntary and community sector – particularly important where projects deliver strong capacity building and social inclusion benefits
- Strategic partners – these include key figures in the Voluntary Issues Unit (VIU) of the Scottish Executive (and other relevant departments), funding organisations and grant making trusts, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Borders Council, Dumfries & Galloway Council, community councils and health sector organisations
- MSPs, MPs, MEP and local authority elected representatives - ensuring they are kept informed of SoSNet member activities
- Commercial organisations – particularly those considering corporate social responsibility activities with which we can engage to deliver.

## **Communicating Internally**

As an affiliation of between twenty and thirty staff, working from eight independent CVS centres throughout the south of Scotland, it is important to maintain effective internal communication across the network. We inform each other about our existing and forthcoming funded activities and projects via:

- Regular meetings
- Internal, published documents such as newsletters
- Induction programmes for new staff.  
Naturally these are intended to provide a broad overview of the funded activities and projects relevant to the employee's own CVS office, rather than the whole network. However, we expect staff to develop a broad awareness of funded programmes as their time with the CVS progresses and according to their position and responsibilities.

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## **Application of branding guidelines of funding organisations**

Subject to operational constraints, all SoSNet partners will follow and apply branding guidelines set out by funding organisations as part our contractual commitment to receive funding.

If at any point in the production of an item of communication we encounter a difficulty in the application of the branding as has been specified, we will contact the relevant person in the funding organisation to discuss the matter and obtain guidance.

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## **Generating new branding**

SoSNet partners will avoid wherever possible the creation of new branding for funded programmes or projects. Our policy is that it is more appropriate to use the existing branding / logos of the partners that are involved in the project or programme, as the creation of new branding, particularly for those programmes of fixed duration, is wasteful and leads to confusion.

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## **Branding where guidance is not available**

The remainder of this document specifies how, in the absence of clear branding guidelines from the funding organisation, we will incorporate the branding of funding organisations to each type of communication or marketing

activity we produce, and how we will state our relationship to the funded organisation.

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### **Letterheads**

Unless specifically requested and stipulated in contract, SoSNet partners will not produce special headed paper incorporating a funding organisation's branding with our own.

However, any correspondence referring to a project or programme that receives funding will always make reference to the funding organisation, including a statement of the relationship between the funding organisation and SoSNet partners.

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### **News Releases and Media Relations**

Unless specifically requested and stipulated in contract, SoSNet partners will not produce special news release paper incorporating a funding organisation's branding.

However, in any news release that relates to a funded project or programme we will always make reference to the funding organisation, including a statement of the relationship between the organisation and the SoSNet partner receiving the funding, either in the text of the release or as a note to editors.

In addition:

- Whenever we include a quote from a SoSNet partner, we will also offer the opportunity for a representative of the funding organisation to incorporate a quote
- A copy of the news release will be sent to the funding organisation's public relations representative, if possible in advance of general circulation.

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### **Public Affairs**

If a SoSNet partner plans to invite a Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP), Member of Parliament (MP), Member of the European Parliament (MEP), or senior local authority representative (eg council leader or department head) to endorse a project, attend an event or participate in any way in a programme that is funded in whole or in part by another organisation, we will inform the funding organisation's principal contact that we are doing so, and keep them informed of the progress of the request. We will also liaise with the funding organisation's principal contact regarding appropriate staff to be invited and included in any ensuing event or ceremony.

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## **Brochures, Leaflets and Newsletters**

If a SoSNet partner produces a document, wholly or partially referring to any funding received from another organisation, we will incorporate the logo of the funding organisation alongside ours, either on the front or back cover.

The statement of relationship with the funded organisation will also appear in the text at an appropriate point.

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## **Posters**

On any poster that is produced by a SoSNet partner that refers in whole or part to any funded programme, we will ensure the logo of the funding organisation appears with ours.

The statement of relationship with the funding organisation will be positioned where it best complements the design of the poster.

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## **Web pages**

On any web page that refers in whole or part to any SoSNet partner funded project or programme, we will incorporate the logo of the funding organisation with our own. The statement of relationship between the SoSNet partner and the funding organisation will be placed on the most relevant page.

In addition we will include:

- A hyperlink to the funding organisation's homepage
- A short description of the funded programme, including who it is aimed at, the benefits or targets, case studies (where available) and contact details.

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## **Exhibition and display panels**

Any exhibition or display stand created by a SoSNet partner with the intention of promoting in whole or part a funded programme will incorporate the logo of the funding organisation along with that of the SoSNet partner.

The statement of relationship with the funding organisation will be positioned on the most relevant panel.

All publicity materials and handouts used at the event will also conform to the specifications of this policy document.

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## **Events**

In organising any event to promote a funded programme, SoSNet partners will ensure that:

- Appropriate representatives from the funding organisation are invited to attend
- The funding organisation is asked in advance whether they would like to bring display or other marketing materials
- Where a SoSNet partner will be speaking, a representative from the funding organisation is also invited to speak - in this instance, speeches will be cross-checked beforehand to guard against repetition, to ensure consistency of facts and figures, and to ensure key messages are covered.

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### PowerPoint Presentations

On any PowerPoint presentation created by a SoSNet partner that refers in whole or part to a funded programme, the logo of the funding organisation will be incorporated alongside that of the SoSNet partner on any relevant slide.

The statement of relationship with the funding organisation will be placed on a slide that best complements the design of the presentation.

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### Certificates and Forms

Certificates and forms created by a SoSNet partner for projects or programmes funded in whole or part by an external body will always bear the logo of the funding organisation along with that of the SoSNet partner.

The statement of relationship with the funding organisation will be placed on the certificate or form where it best complements the design.

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### Signs

Signage or plaques created by a SoSNet partner for projects or programmes funded in whole or part by an external body will always bear the logo of the funding organisation along with that of the SoSNet partner.

The statement of relationship with the funding organisation will be placed on the sign or plaque where it best complements the design.

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### Relationship statements

The following statements will be used. In certain circumstances where we feel this wording is not appropriate we will seek guidance from the funding organisation and agree revised terms:

This *[service/project/programme]* is delivered by *[name of SoSNet partner]* and is funded by *[name of funding organisation]*.

Where there is more than one funding organisation involved, the following wording will be used:

This [service/project/programme] is delivered by [SoSNet CVS or association] and is co-funded by [name of co-funding organisation] and [names of other co-funding organisations].

Where the service is delivered by a third party on behalf of a SoSNet partner, the following wording will be used:

This service is delivered by [*name of third party*] on behalf of [*name of SoSNet partner*] and is funded by [*name of funding organisation or co-funding organisations as appropriate*].

Advice and guidance is available – see Appendix – ‘Guidance and queries contacts’ at the end of this toolkit.

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# Media Relations

## Why should we undertake media relations activities?

1. The majority of our funding comes from organisations that have received money from the public through taxation. As a result both the funding organisations and the public have a right to know how their money is being spent and we have a duty to inform them.
2. Making people and organisations aware about our work and projects raises our profile and helps build our reputation as agencies that can deliver community and voluntary initiatives.
3. Making our successes and achievements known helps us attract new funding.
4. Very often publicising a project or programme is a contractual commitment of funding.

## What is News?

1. News is information that tells us about the exceptional, something that is different or new.
2. It must be relevant to the readership of the publication.
3. It must be factual and current.

For SoSNet CVS partners, the main means of attracting publicity will be through communicating with local newspapers, local radio or specialist press (such as community based journals or, for example, voluntary/ community sector media).

Media relations can be split into two categories, called proactive and reactive. Proactive media relations happen when you or your organisation plans and generates the news – for example, by contacting a local paper to tell them about the launch of a new project. Reactive media relations occur when you are asked to respond to news that has been sourced from somewhere else. It is the latter that is generally considered to be the more difficult to handle.

## Proactive Media Relations

This is where you generate the news information and initiate contact with the media.

## News release

This is the most common communication tool used to contact the media with information. At the end of this section you will find some examples from other organisations. Study the style and content and use these best practice examples as a basis for writing your own news releases. The following tips should also be useful:

1. Copy (meaning the words you write) should be concise and factual. This is not the place for metaphors or flowing prose.
2. Fact should be separated from claims or belief by putting the latter in quotes (for example, you can say the programme is designed to help 50 people but 'We believe it is the first project of its kind' should be attributed to a spokesperson).
3. Your story should always supply the 'Five Ws' – that is Who, What, Why, When and Where. If the text does not cover any of these points it is probably irrelevant to the story.
4. Get the main news point into the first paragraph and preferably the first sentence. Organise your text so that most newsworthy information is at the top. Many journalists still edit news releases from the bottom up, so paragraphs you can more easily afford to lose should be at the end.
5. Keep sentences short. Use positive, not negative statements. Cut out subjective material. Keep separate points in separate sentences.
6. Eliminate the following: old-fashioned phrases, formal or pompous language, jargon unknown to readers, clichés or colloquialisms. Check the SoSNet Writing Style Guide for further advice.
7. Present the material neatly, typed with a 1.5 space as minimum and with generous margins all round.
8. Draft, redraft, edit, polish and perfect! Check spellings and punctuation. Get the view of a colleague. Accept constructive criticism and be self-critical.
9. Make sure you use headed paper and always provide a name and contact number for follow up enquiries. Ensure the phone number is one that will be answered promptly and during all normal working hours. Don't forget the date.
10. Read local newspapers, relevant publications and listen to local radio looking out for their style and tone. This will assist you in writing news releases that will need the minimum amount of editing and so will have more chance of being printed or broadcast.

Remember that one of the most important things about news is that it must be current. There is no point sending out a news release two weeks after something has happened. Find out when editorial deadlines are and ensure your copy is in by that time.

While you can ask journalists to attend events, the fact is that most are too busy to take time out of the office for all but the biggest occasions. If time is pressing you can ring and let them know about an event and give some details over the phone, but it is much better to provide your information in written form.

Here are some examples of best practice news releases:

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## CHILD POP STAR TEAMS UP WITH MINISTER TO WARN CHILDREN OF ROAD SAFETY DANGERS

Road Safety Minister David Jamieson today teamed up with child pop sensation Declan Galbraith to urge children to “Be Safe, Be Seen” on the roads during the dark winter evenings.

**Last year, over 2000 children were killed or seriously injured in the darker months of 2001. In total, 219 children were killed on our roads and over 38,000 were injured in 2001. Almost 5,500 of those killed and injured were child cyclists.**

The ‘Be Safe, Be Seen’ campaign forms part of the Government’s £13m Think! Campaign. To coincide with the clocks going back on 26 October, adverts featuring the road safety hedgehog characters singing an adapted version of ‘Stayin’ Alive’, will be back on air to raise awareness of visibility.

The Minister and the nine-year old popstar recreated a piece of music history by crossing Abbey Road zebra crossing kitted out in fluorescent and reflective gear and reminding children to be highly visible at all times when using the roads.

Road Safety Minister David Jamieson said:

“At this time of year it’s vital for parents and children alike to start thinking about safety and visibility. Although the number of child pedestrians and cyclists killed or injured on our roads has fallen since last year, every child killed or injured is one too many. With this new campaign, and the support of stars such as Declan, we are aiming to build on the good work that has already been done in increasing road awareness amongst children.”

Singer Declan Galbraith added:

“As the clocks go back and the nights get darker, it’s easy to forget that car drivers find it much harder to see you when you’re out and about. My mum was knocked down by a car in the dark when she was young, and my gran is a lollipop lady, so they’ve always made sure I wear brightly coloured clothes in the day and reflective clothes at night. No matter what age you are, being safe on the roads is really important – so make sure that you ‘think’ before going near roads at all times.”

Parents wanting to make sure their children are safe on the roads during the darker months should remember the following tips:

- Make sure that your child can be easily seen, especially at night, on dark days and in bad weather.
- Explain to your child why they should always wear something bright.
- Bright or fluorescent clothes show up best by day, especially in dull or misty weather.
- By night, reflective material is best and shows up in car headlights. Remember, fluorescent clothing doesn’t work after dark.
- In 2001, almost 5,500 child cyclists were killed or injured on the roads. It is an offence to cycle at night without a white front light, a red back light and a red reflector at the back, so make sure that your child’s bike is properly equipped and working.

Last year, nearly 5,000 children were killed or seriously injured on our roads. The Government has set a target for a 50 per cent reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured on the roads by 2010 compared to the 1994-1998 average. In 2001 the number of children killed or seriously injured fell by 27 per cent.

## **Notes to editors**

**SPOKESPEOPLE, PHOTOGRAPHY, CASE STUDIES AND BETA TAPES OF THE ADVERTISING ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST.**

1. A child is defined as someone under the age of 16. All statistics relating to child road accidents are sourced from the Department for Transport. The definition of “darker months” is January to March and October to December.
2. Declan Galbraith signed a £1 million recording contract with EMI.
3. The ‘Be Safe, Be Seen’ advertisement encouraging children to wear fluorescent or reflective clothing will be shown from 19 October – 3 November on primetime children’s TV slots.
4. Recent information on road casualties is available in Road Accidents Great Britain: 2001 at <http://www.transtat.dft.gov.uk>

**Press Enquiries: 020 7944 3066**

**Public Enquiries: 020 7944 8300**

**Email: [press@dft.gov.uk](mailto:press@dft.gov.uk)**

**Department for Transport website: <http://www.dft.gov.uk>**

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## NEWS



**Issue 067**  
**Wednesday 2 July 2003**

### **Commons Visit For Havering Family Learning**

Havering Family Learning Group paid a special visit to the House of Commons on Friday night (26 June) as a reward for their efforts over the last year. Their guide for the evening was Hornchurch MP, John Cryer.

Beginning the tour of the Commons in the Crypt Chapel, Mr Cryer's missed vocation in life as a tour guide became apparent! The group of twenty people, made up of families from Havering, including mums, dads and kids, quickly learnt of the ghost that wanders the crypt of the commons. The tour then took in the Commons itself and the hallowed corridors of parliament before the group enjoyed the view from the terrace. What Mr Cryer didn't know about the Commons, including the Black Rod ceremony, the Gun Powder Plot and Prime Ministers of the past, wasn't worth knowing. He also corrected the common misconception that Nancy Astor was the first female MP; it was in fact the obscure Countess de Markievicz, member for Sinn Fein in 1918, who never took her seat.

At the end of the evening, Mr Cryer was presented with a book of poems by Ivor Gurney, the First World War Poet, and thank you card from the families, before photos were taken on the green in front of Big Ben.

The family learning group take part in a varied range of themed courses, including creative arts, healthy living, family IT, Newspaper design and environmental issues. All the courses are designed to be friendly and accessible and help family members to improve their skills for life.

Dawn Cooke, Family Learning Co-ordinator for the Learning Freeway at Havering Adult Education College, said: "it's been a really successful evening that everyone has enjoyed immensely. John has been the perfect guide to the Commons and we're hoping to make this an annual event for the families if we can".

-ends-

For more information on the visit, including alternative photography, please contact Tim Parry at Learning and Skills Council London East on 020 8929 3943.

- Learning and Skills Council London East has provided funding for the Havering Family Learning Group through the Family Learning Fund.

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## [CVS Information Sheets](#)

It is also useful to have ready prepared a short description of your organisation, its services and useful statistics such as membership numbers, funding details and current projects. This should be updated at least annually.

[CVS Information Sheet – best practice example](#) *(to be inserted)*

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## Photographs

Good quality pictures will always help a story get into the press. While newspapers will have a staff photographer, they cannot be in all places at once, so it is useful to take your own pictures, or cultivate the goodwill of a friendly amateur who can record the event or launch you hope to publicise.

If funds allow, it is worthwhile getting professional studio portrait pictures of the CVS Organiser and Chair that can be held 'on file', together with short biographical details.

Keep all photographs filed together in one place. It is good practice to ensure each photo has relevant information on the reverse, eg time, date, event, names of people in view etc. It may be useful for future publications. Indeed, the pictures may well be around long after you!

## Letters to the editor

These are often a good way to open a debate, clarify misrepresentations, or put a relevant but opposing view to previous editorial. As with news releases, letters should be drafted in a concise style, making only factual points.

Here are some tips:

- Always indicate that your letter is 'FOR PUBLICATION' at the top
- Letters are unlikely to be published unless they are responding to an editorial issue recently covered by the paper
- Even if the subject is hotly contested, keep the text short, clear, calm and controlled - fight the urge to rant!
- Be professional and moderate in tone, but caring not impersonal
- Link the issues directly to the local audience – make them feel this issue really affects them
- Make sure it is delivered to the editor promptly so as not to miss the moment
- Letters may be faxed, emailed or hand delivered.

## Editor meetings

For local newspapers the editor is the key contact. The Organiser or Chair of each CVS organisation should know who their local editors are and how to contact them (see Appendix - Media Contacts List). If the editor is approachable, it is worth trying to plan a meeting with him / her once every 6-12 months, but in doing so you should have some items of substance to

discuss. If there is specific interest in a project or programme arrange for them to meet the main people involved.

### Creating a hook

Sometimes it makes your story stronger if it can be linked into something that is going on at a wider level. Think about timing a relevant event or launch to coincide with special calendar dates like World Health Day or National Literacy Week.

## Reactive Media Relations

This normally relates to unsolicited calls from journalists about a news story that involves your organisation either directly or indirectly. For example, a member of staff arrested for misdemeanours while at work will directly and absolutely involve your organisation making a response. On the other hand a statement by the Scottish Executive suggesting possible options for the future of voluntary funding for literacy projects will be relevant to your organisation but not exclusively so. However, in both cases you should be prepared for some level of reply.

### Some tips for handling reactive media relations

1. Establish who is to be your spokesperson, and who will formulate any replies to questions. Consider how out of hours press calls will be handled.
2. Ensure the central phone is staffed but only so that journalists' details can be recorded and passed to the nominated spokesperson. No other member of staff should be permitted to offer comment or answer questions; they are not authorised to do so. Make sure your staff and committee members know that. Keep them informed about what is going on to prevent internal rumours developing.
3. Get the journalists' full contact details: name, position (reporter, editor etc), publication or broadcast programme they represent, telephone numbers/email/fax details and their deadline.
4. Act quickly, but do not succumb to a knee jerk reaction. If you are certain that a call can be answered at a certain time, then say so and keep to that deadline. If you cannot respond to a claim or allegation immediately, issue a holding statement demonstrating that the organisation takes the matter seriously and is working to provide a full and satisfactory response as soon as possible. Do not offer to call back if you know the information will not be available. If this is the case say so and explain why.

5. Never lie, hide the truth or hold back information that is already publicly available. Be honest and transparent. Organisations that try to cover up or conceal relevant information always end up much worse off. The media will ultimately find out and the organisation will have severely damaged the trust placed in it by local people, opinion formers and journalists. Tell the truth – persuasively!
6. If the timing of a question is not appropriate at that moment explain why you cannot help. If you know that you may be able to respond if future circumstances change (such as on the publication of a report) offer to give a comment as soon as this happens.
7. Whatever you see on film or TV, ‘No comment’ is not an answer unless it is clarified with by a genuine reason. For example, ‘We cannot comment on this matter for legal reasons’. Never use ‘no comment’ alone.
8. Most bad news stories that you are likely to face will be based on poor and inaccurate information given to the press by other sources. You will therefore find that your crisis management work is largely focused around ‘putting the story straight’ and giving as much accurate and balanced information as possible. In proving your side of the story you will throw the onus back to the original sources to defend the reliability of their information.
9. However, if the information is correct it is important that your organisation issues a sincere and speedy apology. The majority of stories lose their impact when the organisation or person involved simply admits being wrong and says sorry.
10. Develop a library of facts, figures and policy statements that can be used when appropriate. Review any reactive news incidents after the event to see what worked well and what can be improved next time.

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### **Guidance for television and radio interviews**

It is strongly recommended that any person put forward for TV or radio interviews has undergone specific training. Find out what courses are available (for example SCVO run regular training days). They are an invaluable investment and will give your representatives a greater level of confidence.

If you receive a request for interview, find out the following information BEFORE you say ‘yes’:

1. The name and transmission time of the programme - is it to be broadcast regionally or on a wider network?

2. Where will it take place, outside, at your offices, in a studio, or (for radio) 'down the line' (ie by telephone)?
3. How does the item fit within the structure of the programme?
4. What is the context, and what perspective is the editor coming from?
5. Ask yourself, 'What does our organisation hope to achieve from taking part?'
6. Is the item to be transmitted live or pre-recorded? If live, how long will the interview last?
7. If recorded how much will the actual piece be edited down to a finished item?
8. Who else is to be interviewed? Ask yourself how your interview will relate to other participants (eg is one of your most hostile critics lined up to appear against you?).
9. Who will be conducting the interview? Do you know their style?
10. If the item is with a studio audience, will they be asking questions too?
11. What are the areas of questioning? You have every right to ask this, and while you are very unlikely to be given the questions word-for-word in advance, you should get a good idea of the ground to be covered.
12. If you have been asked for an interview to directly respond to an accusation or complaint, make sure you have all the detail about who has supplied the information and find out as much as possible about the circumstances.

Do NOT ask If you can see the item before transmission, or approve the content. You will just appear unprofessional. The only exception to this is if you have participated in a full length TV documentary. Then you may ask to see the programme in advance for any further media preparation but, again, not to agree changes or content.

If you have agreed to an interview, consider the following:

1. An interview is an opportunity. Do not waste it because you failed to identify what your objective is in taking part.
2. Decide on what you want to say. Most interviews only last a few minutes, so identify the main points. Three or four key points are the *absolute* maximum a viewer or listener can absorb from one interview. If there is time, repeat your points. If they are important enough to include in the interview, they are worth saying again.

3. Do not waffle. A good interviewer will always give you the chance with the first question to clearly and simply state your case. Take the opportunity.
4. Be prepared. Get facts, figures, background information and policy statements about the subject. Be informed about the wider context too (eg what this means for all SoSNet partners, not just your organisation). If you are doing a radio interview, DO NOT read from papers. It will be obvious to the listener and sound artificial and stilted.
5. If you are asked a question that is not on your agenda, then answer by starting with 'I think the real issue here is...' and then state your main point, steering the conversation back into your arena. Be warned though, if the question is relevant and deserves answer you will need to respond – if you have planned well you should have a response.
6. Do not say too much! Stick to your key points and facts. Too much data just washes over viewers or listeners. Remember they will know far less about the issues than either you or the interviewer. Keep it clear, sharp and appropriate. Using real life examples about people is often more powerful than reeling off a list of statistics.
7. When you meet your interviewer, check through the subject brief you have been given. At this stage it is quite acceptable to ask what the first question is going to be.

### Top Tips for Personal Appearances

Research shows when we watch someone talking, 70% of the impression they leave is based on their appearance not what they actually said. So do not lose the opportunity to get your message across because of the way you look. Start with:

1. Check yourself in the mirror before doing an interview. Most people fail to do this and it shows.
2. Clean hair. Greasy hair or scatterings of 'snow' on the collar look twice as bad under studio lighting.
3. If you are to be in full-length view of the camera, ditch the white socks under the trousers or the popsocks peeping out from under your skirt.
4. Keep necklines simple and unfussy. Jackets are best for both men and women. Try to avoid black which people consider an untrustworthy colour - it reminds them of death, lawyers and accountants.
5. If you can manage without spectacles, then do so. They are distracting to the viewer.
6. Sit forward, do not slouch. BBC actually stands for Bum in Back of Chair. If you appear overly relaxed you will come across as lazy and unfocused.

Sit in a manner that looks engaged, interested and relaxed. Avoid the swivel chair - it will tempt you to swing from side to side. Ask for it to be 'locked off' or ask for another chair.

7. Do not drink alcohol or take other narcotics in an attempt to clam your nerves. They will anaesthetise the brain and you will find the interview harder to handle.

Advice and guidance is available – see Appendix – Guidance and Queries Contacts at the end of this toolkit.

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# Public Relations

## Introduction

Public relations is about effective communication between an organisation and its audiences. It is about what the organisation says, how it presents its views and opinions, and how it conducts itself in any aspect of its business. **Essentially it is about the management of reputation.**

Consistent messages are essential to good public relations and for creating understanding about our organisation and its activities. Conflicting information leads to confusion and misunderstanding. In particular, membership organisations have to be aware of the importance of dealing equally with people and having a united, single voice about important issues.

The recommendations in this section are by no means exhaustive, but they do provide examples of the standards we wish to attain and maintain. Very many of the suggestions are already in practice as a matter of routine at CVS offices in our network.

## Customer Service

### Receiving the public

Callers to the office should always be attended to quickly and courteously. 'How may I help?' is the first question, and it should be established whether the visitor has a meeting with a member of staff or is making a general enquiry. If they have a meeting they should be signed in to an office register (required for fire and health and safety purposes), and invited to take a seat until their host comes to receive them. The host should be advised of the visitor's arrival, and if there is some reason for a delay in receiving them or starting the meeting this should be made known to the visitor via reception. A waiting area with seats should be available.

On departure the guest should sign themselves out of the office register.

If the visitor is a casual caller requiring information, they should be assisted as far as possible with details about their query, or signposted to an alternative organisation that may be better able to offer assistance. If a relevant member of staff is able to provide more help, they should be contacted. If it is not convenient for that member of staff to deal with them at that time, the visitor's contact details should be taken and a realistic estimate of when they will be contacted should be given. The contact details should be passed to the relevant member of staff by email.

Visitor areas and reception should be kept tidy and clean at all times. Visitor areas are a good place for displaying relevant literature and posters etc.

### Telephone protocol

The following is the accepted form of greeting:

- Good morning/afternoon
- Full name of organisation
- Name of person speaking
- How may I help?

For example:

'Good morning, Stewartry Council of Voluntary Service, Jane Smith speaking, how may I help?'

The ideal is to have the main telephone contact point staffed throughout normal office hours. Where this is not possible, and for calls made to the office during out-of-office hours, a recorded message service should be in place. The key elements of a recorded message should be:

- Greet the caller
- Thank them for calling your organisation (give the full name)
- State the office opening hours
- Explain why no one is available to handle their call at the present time
- Encourage them to leave a message
- Assure the caller it will be returned as soon as possible.

For example

'Hello, thank you for calling Stewartry Council of Voluntary Service. Our office hours are 10am until 1pm and 2pm until 4pm, Monday to Friday. If you have called outside of these times, or if we are busy with other enquiries, we will not be able to deal with your call immediately. But please do not ring off. Leave us a message with your name, contact details and time of your call, and we will call you back as soon as possible'.

During periods when the office will be closed for longer than normal (eg Christmas or Easter) then the message should be adapted to inform callers when normal office hours will be resumed.

Messages should be checked, collected, and forwarded by email to the relevant person. As a matter of routine this should happen at least three times per day. If this is not possible then alternative methods of collecting messages (such as remote accessing or diverting telephone numbers) should be considered.

The optimum is to have all calls answered within 24 hours of receipt (during normal working hours).

## Taking Messages

Writing down messages on scraps of paper, post-it notes or, worse, relying on memory, is not acceptable.

The standard means should be to send an email immediately to the person who needs to respond. While this may seem eccentric in a small office, it has value because:

- It provides a reliable, systematic means of delivery - unlike bits of paper, emails do not mysteriously disappear down the sides of desks, get swept up with irrelevant documents or appear to leave the building unaided.
- Using email provides a time and date for when the message was sent and avoids later disputes about communication (or lack of it)
- The nature of our business means many people work at different locations from laptops, or part-time - email is the most effective way of keeping people informed about callers and messages.

The email message should contain:

- Name of the person making contact
- Date and time of the call/enquiry
- Contact details (and best times for making contact)
- Brief description of nature of the enquiry.

## Post

Aside from unsolicited direct mail ('junk mail') every item received by post should be date stamped and its details entered into a dedicated log. The log should detail the date the item was received, the name and address of the source of the communication, a brief description (eg 'letter' or 'document' etc) and to whom the item has been passed.

## Email

See the section on Email.

## Compliments and Complaints

Every organisation should have an established procedure for dealing with both positive and negative comment from our members or the general public. Only by gathering these views can we keep up our good work or improve our performance.

Recommendations for collating compliments and complaints:

- Positive verbal comment should be recorded by the recipient and kept together with others on a central, electronic shared file.
- Other compliments such as letters etc, should also be kept centrally in a shared hard copy file.
- Complaints should, in the first instance, be handled by the recipient - if they are not able to deal with the matter, or if the complainant is not happy with the outcome, details of the complaint should be recorded on a standard form (see best practice example at the end of this section) and passed to the Organiser.
- The Organiser will be responsible for resolving the complaint - if it is necessary to spend some time looking into the nature of the complaint, then the complainant should be told when they can expect to receive a response.

### Feedback and quality assurance

Collecting regular feedback on our services from members enables us to monitor our performance, make and plan improvements to our services and quality assure our work.

### Events

Openings, launches, new projects and programmes, anniversaries and VIP visits are all reasons for creating a public relations event opportunity.

Good planning and attention to detail are crucial to a successful event. One person should be nominated as the main event project leader to avoid duplication or omissions in the arrangements.

The following is a checklist of elements to consider when planning an event.

First Steps - at least three months before the event, organise:

1. Date and time. Check there are no obvious clashes of dates. Ask round the office, committee representatives, members and any other useful sources to ensure the event will not coincide with some other occasion. If you are planning to have a VIP attend (such as an MSP) check with their office first and have several date options that they can choose from. Decide on start and finish times.
2. Critical path. Prepare an overall master plan. Identify decision dates for all key elements of the event so that nothing is forgotten.

3. Theme. Identify any themes and make sure anyone involved with displays, print or publicity is briefed accordingly. Select relevant speakers or special guests.
4. Invitations. Put together an invitation list. Include the direct audience (office staff, members, your committee) as well as other guests (VIPs, community leaders, opinion formers etc). Invitations should be issued about eight weeks beforehand, following up those invitees who have not replied four weeks later.
5. Venue. View the proposed venue and ensure it has the right size room and facilities for the event you are planning. Consider access for people with disabilities. If it is suitable, make a booking and agree all the necessary arrangements such as refreshments, public address facilities etc. Ensure all the details are confirmed in writing and any deposit requested is paid to secure your booking.

#### Next Tasks

1. Media relations. Let your local journalists know about the event so they can note the date in their diaries and so increase their chance of attending. Many will be too busy to turn up, so make sure you have prepared news releases, background material, relevant literature and photography that you can send direct to them, either before the event or immediately afterwards (check press deadlines so you don't lose the opportunity for coverage).
2. Print. Agree what materials you need to produce, prepare a brief of your needs and get at least two quotes (ideally three) from a printer and/or designer. Make sure you have an agreed production schedule and that this is confirmed in writing.
3. Displays. Plan any display or exhibition materials well in advance. As with print, if you are commissioning any work obtain quotes and have agreed schedules in writing.
4. Presentations. Agree speakers, the order of speaking and prepare a brief for each person. Check the physical resources you may require including a public address system, audio visual aids, recording facilities, speaker names for platforms etc. If possible arrange a rehearsal time, even if this is just before the event. Ensure speakers do not overrun allotted times.
5. Papers. Speakers should produce written copies of their presentations. These should be available at the event, following the formal proceedings or as guests leave. Ideally all materials to be given out should be together in one pack.

#### At least two weeks before the event

1. Hospitality. Confirm who will greet your guests, especially any VIPs attending. Agree in advance arrangements for signing visitors books,

gift presentations to principal guests, bouquets etc. Organise who will make name badges for staff and guests. If you need someone to make announcements, identify who this person will be and make sure they are briefed. Make sure you have considered cloakroom and toilet facilities.

2. Staff briefing. Communicate with all staff who will be at the event, making sure they are aware of the theme, style, policy and objectives. Stress the importance of attention to detail and their role as representatives of your organisation.
3. Travel. Make sure guests are supplied with location details, parking arrangements and other possible travel options to your event. Consider whether it would be helpful to have some directional signage at the venue to ensure guests get to the right room easily.
4. Catering. Keep a watch on the number of acceptances and advise those providing refreshments accordingly.
5. Photography. If you cannot afford to hire a professional, see if you can identify a willing amateur or member of staff to take pictures. Think in advance about the photos you want taken and discuss your needs with the photographer. Remember the backdrop and see if you can get pictures taken where the name of your organisation is clearly visible. If taking group shots, make sure people are standing close together – do not be shy about taking charge and posing people how you want them.

#### The Final Week

1. Run-through. Check the final plan, especially timings and budgets. Make sure the venue and refreshment suppliers are updated. Confirm any individual staff responsibilities. Double check name badges against the acceptance list and correct any discrepancies.
2. Contingency. Check the weather forecast and think round any problems that wet or bad weather might create. For example, do you need a supply of loaned umbrellas? Can the event programme be adapted in case a delayed start is required?
3. Budget. Prepare a final costing for the whole event and compare with your original estimate. Deal with errors or queries.

#### The Week After

1. Follow-up. Issue information packs to those unable to attend. Check to see if your media contacts have any further requirements and make sure you collect cuttings of any coverage. Issue letters of thanks and appreciation. Check bills against quotes.
2. Assessment. Have a debriefing session soon after the event. Analyse what was good and what could have been done better and why. Prepare a report so that your next event builds on the experience.

## Exhibitions

Exhibitions broadly fall into three categories:

1. The solo display. For example, where you take your stand and put it up in a public place such as a library or doctor's surgery. Apart from the cost of producing the exhibition materials and staff time, this is relatively inexpensive.
2. The cooperative event. This is where a group of like-minded organisations come together to pool resources and costs for a shared event, for example a joint exhibition at a civic centre. This can be useful in creating more interest across a broader audience than that attracted to a solo event.
3. The commercial exhibition. These are professionally organised and need to be very carefully considered. In most cases the cost will be prohibitive. Be wary of 'add on' costs for stands – they can almost double the cost of the initial quote which will only cover basic floor space.

When considering participating in any event or exhibition you should first ask what are the benefits of taking part. These may include:

- Improving awareness of your organisation
- Recruiting new members
- Reinforcing relationships with existing members
- Identifying new funding opportunities
- Introducing a new programme or project
- Strengthening relationships with key opinion formers
- Positioning the organisation as a source of authority and information
- Evaluating current attitudes to the organisation.

Only agree to take part if you can be very sure your chosen objectives will be met.

### Exhibition display panels

Many organisations waste a great deal of time and money trying to put far too much information on display panels or exhibition boards. Creating a balance between graphics, pictures and copy will avoid overwhelming the visitor with a wall of text.

Consider the following points:

- Keep the language simple and clear
- A maximum of 50 words per panel
- Black type coming out of a white panel background is easier to read than the other way round
- Asking questions can help grab attention (eg 'What did you do at work today?')
- Large full colour picture panels help to break up the heaviness of copy only panels

- Check your panels to ensure they are representative of your community and membership
- Great pictures are a tremendous asset and often speak louder than words.

## Newsletters and Leaflets

Most CVSs produce a regular newsletter for their members and other target groups. Here are some tips to consider when planning your next edition:

1. Know the messages you want to communicate about your organisation before you start writing.
2. Think about what information your readership is interested in. If you are not sure, do a quick survey of their views to establish what subjects are going to grab their attention.
3. Less can be more. If you are struggling to fill a quarterly newsletter with interesting information, ask yourself if it would be better to produce issues twice yearly instead. Do not produce newsletters for the sake of them, or just because it has always been done that way. If the information you are including is boring to you, just think what it will be for your readership. Most people receive more literature and mail than they can reasonably handle. If your newsletter is dull it will not be read, simple as that. Devote your energies to more productive activities.
4. Writing style should be plain, simple and jargon free. Use the Writing Style Guide in this toolkit.
5. Photography and easy-to-understand graphics are essential to break up text. Use wherever possible.
6. If you can afford to get input from a designer then do so. Your publication will look better and attract more interest.
7. Consider whether you need a copy sign off approval process and, if so, decide how it will be managed and by whom.
8. Double-check all quotes and facts before going to press.
9. Proofing. A tedious but necessary task. Often this is best done by two people, one of whom should not be involved in the writing of the document (and is therefore not so 'close' to the text). Have two copies of the document printed off and while one person reads aloud the text from one copy, the other person follows the text in the second copy. Check errors as you go along. Then reverse roles and repeat the process. Another way is to read the copy backwards: 'mat the on sat cat the' is not as easy to read as 'the cat sat on the mat', but it enables you to study the words in isolation from the meaning of the text and stops you skimming the copy (which is actually how we normally read).

If you know someone with fantastic grammar and attention to detail, ask for their help. Be self-critical about your work and edit and polish your copy as much as time allows. Never rely solely on computer spelling and grammar checkers.

- Think about electronic newsletters. At this stage of information technology development many members will still want to receive hard copy versions. But increasingly many members will appreciate an electronic copy. Of course the ultimate will be to have an email newsletter with direct links to the stories and information on your organisation's, but let's take things a step at a time...
- Distribution. Make sure your mailing list is correct and up to date, no point wasting a stamp! Copies should be available in your reception area, and placed in useful locations such as doctor's surgery waiting rooms, local libraries, community centres – anywhere that people in your 'patch' congregate and will be receptive to your information.

## Speaking Engagements

Most people find speaking in public rather daunting, so you are not alone if your stomach churns at the thought of addressing an audience. Only the best orators can speak without notes and break all the conventional rules of public speaking yet still sound polished and impressive. Preparation is the key to making an effective presentation, talk or speech. Here are some guidelines to help you.

1. As with any element of public relations, you must first consider what messages you want to communicate. Write them down, and have no more than five.
2. Then think about your audience. What interest will the listeners have in your subject? Are you talking to fellow professionals, opinion formers or the general public? Are they for or against your views? Do you need to influence their attitude? What's in it for them? You will need to tailor the delivery of your messages to the audience.
3. Gather statistics, facts and figures to support your views, but do not bombard people with quantified information – you can always add supplementary data to a handout. Unless you are addressing a group of actuaries, people are generally more receptive to a few, selected hard facts balanced by real life examples and case studies.
4. Plan out what you are going to say. Some people prefer to write out their whole presentation in full, others are happier to get straight down to some key headlines. If you go for the full option, this must NOT be what you take to the lectern. The biggest turn off is a person who stands up and reads out pages of A4, their eyes never meeting the audience. If you need a lot of practice, start by reading out the long version, and gradually replace the text with headings.

5. Unless you are incredibly famous, or are addressing colleagues you work with every day, start by introducing yourself, what your job/role is and for what organisation. Confirm what you are going to talk about, and for how long. Specify if you are happy to take questions during the talk, or what time there will be for questions and comment at the end of your presentation.
6. If you are reasonably confident, a joke, humorous short anecdote or amusing relevant quote from a well known person can get your talk off to a great start. People relax when they laugh, become more receptive and the audience will seem to be instantly on your side. On the other hand, if you are very nervous or not a natural joke teller, leave well alone. Concentrate on delivering your messages as well as you can.
7. Do not overrun. Stick to the time you have been given. If you have practised sufficiently you will know exactly how long your speech lasts. If you have not, you may end up having to curtail key points or, worse, be interrupted by the chair/MC and asked to finish as soon as possible. This will be disastrous.
8. When it comes to public speaking, length is not everything. Do not waffle and fill time for the sake of it. If you have been asked to speak for twenty minutes but you only need fifteen, then let the organisers know. Providing you have not scrimped on essential facts, people will be happier with a short informative talk than one that rambles and contains unnecessary detail.
9. These days, audio-visual really means PowerPoint. Keep the font size large and the information brief (no more than four bullet points per slide). Think of slides as subheadings to what you are saying, a complementary backdrop to your talk. Do not have too many – eight is the maximum for a five minute speech. Use graphs with care as they may be difficult for the audience to interpret from a distance. Fancy effects and animations can be amusing, but don't overdo it. Too much movement on screen distracts the audience and can eventually become tiresome.
10. Prepare handouts – either the long version of your speech, or headlines with selected key points. You can also add facts and figures that you could not include in your presentation. Make sure handouts are distributed after you have finished your talk, otherwise members of the audience tend to flick through them rather than paying attention to you.
11. If the organisers of the event are collecting feedback on speakers, ask for the results, so you can learn from the experience and create an even better presentation next time.

# Email

Increasingly email is the CVS network's preferred means of internal and external communication

Integrating an organisation's logo, strapline and other key information to email messages also creates important promotional opportunities.

To achieve maximum benefit from email messages it is important that certain basic guidelines are followed.

## Email versus post and telephone

Email is usually considerably faster than post. At best it takes only a matter of seconds. But the nature of the technology means that it can take longer than this.

Email is also a non-interactive means of communication. You send an email and wait for a response.

There are all sorts of factors that determine when the email is received or read and when it is replied to.

If you want to convey or obtain information immediately or if you want to be absolutely sure that someone has received your message speak to them on the telephone.

Emails cannot be signed in a way that is legally recognised nor can they be guaranteed to be confidential. Where an original or a signed document is needed or where confidentiality is important the post may be the only solution.

Email is not the answer to every communication situation. Choose the appropriate method.

## Email addresses

When sending email it is essential that the recipient's email address is correctly entered in the 'To' line. The most reliable method of ensuring accuracy is to store in your email contacts address book the email addresses of everyone you send email to regularly. Email addresses can then be selected from the address book, avoiding retyping.

The SoSNet Internal Contacts list (see Appendix) contains most of the network email addresses you are likely to need. This list can be imported into your Microsoft Outlook using the import function. Instructions on how to do this are circulated with the list.

The SoSNet Internal Contacts list is circulated to the whole network every time a change is made to it.

Your assistance is essential to keeping the SoSNet Internal Contacts list current. Details of any changes should be sent to the email address given in the Appendix.

### Distribution groups

Many recipients can go in the 'To' line so the same email can be sent to a number of people at once. Email addresses entered in the 'cc' line receive the email too.

If you regularly send email to a group of people their email addresses can be inserted together by creating a 'Distribution Group'. Most of the distribution groups you are likely to need for communication within the network have already been created in the SoSNet Internal Contacts list.

### To

When the BCC function is used an email can be sent with nothing in the To field.

Since spam emails often have nothing in the To field it is important that you put something there to avoid your email being deleted unread. See also the section above about Distribution Groups.

### CC (carbon copy)

Recipients whose addresses appear in the CC field receive the email in exactly the same way as recipients whose addresses appear in the 'To' field. However, CC should not be used unless the recipient will know why they are receiving a copy of the email.

### BCC (blind carbon copy)

If you send an email to more than one person and put all the recipients' email addresses in the 'To' field, all the recipients can see the email addresses of all the other recipients. You are effectively publicising other peoples' email addresses. In some situations this is not a problem. In other situations it may not be appropriate or acceptable.

Putting recipients' addresses in the BCC field means that they are not visible to other recipients. An email can be sent with nothing in the 'To' field as long as there is at least one address in the BCC field.

Be aware that putting nothing in the 'To' field could make the email look like spam.

To avoid this always put at least one address in the 'To' field (bearing in mind that recipients will be able to see it!).

### Subject

Create a title for your email in the subject field. Ensure it is meaningful to both you and the recipient. This will make the email easier to file and retrieve.

Be aware that spam email often has nothing or something meaningless in the subject field. You don't want your email to be mistaken for spam.

### Attachments

Do not attach unnecessary files.

Large attachments can slow down or even completely clog up email systems. Keep the size of attachments to a minimum.

If necessary use a compression program such as WinZip.

If you have a lot of files to send, use several emails and attach a small number to each to keep the total file size less than 1 megabyte.

Be aware that attachments are potential virus transmitters. Set your anti-virus system to check email before it is sent.

(See also Reply Attachments).

### Priority

Do not overuse the high priority option.

Likewise with the words URGENT or IMPORTANT in the subject field.

If you use these when they are not appropriate recipients will not believe you when you really send them an urgent or important message.

### Reply

Reply promptly to emails.

People tend to use email when they expect a prompt response. If necessary say that you need to get back to them, but don't keep them waiting for an initial reply.

Clicking the 'Reply' button in an email you have received will display a new email window with the email address of the person who sent you the email in the 'To' line. This is the quickest and least error prone method of replying to a single recipient.

## Attachments with Reply

Using Reply removes attachments from the reply message. If you wish to make changes to an attachment and return it in a reply you have to save the attachment to an appropriate location on your computer, make the changes, and then attach it to the reply.

## Reply to All

Clicking the Reply To All button will display a new email window with the email addresses of everyone to whom the original email (including those in the cc line) was sent in the To line.

Using the Reply to All feature is the quickest and most reliable method of carrying on an email discussion.

However, Reply to All should be used with care. Before using Reply to All, think carefully about whether or not you want your reply to go to everyone who received the original email

## Forward

Clicking the Forward button will display a new email window with no email address in the To window, but with the contents of the original email and the email signature of the forwarder (if this option has been configured). The person forwarding the email can add text to it. Forwarded emails carry any files attached to the original.

## Send

Read your email through before sending it to ensure that there are no spelling, grammar or layout errors and that the email says what you want it to.

Mistakes reflect badly on the sender and can cause misunderstandings.

Read through your email and consider carefully how the sense of your message is conveyed by tone and style.

Also check that you have attached any files you meant to attach, particularly when these are referred to in the email.

## Structure and layout

Use proper structure and layout.

Since reading from the screen can be more difficult than reading from paper, the structure and layout of an email is very important.

Use short paragraphs and blank lines between each paragraph.

When making a list of points number them or mark each point as separate

## Spelling, grammar, punctuation

Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation.  
Don't be tempted into non-standard usage just because it is an email.

## Abbreviations and emoticons

While some abbreviations and acronyms are acceptable in business correspondence abbreviations such as BTW (by the way) or LOL (laugh out loud) are inappropriate and should not be used.  
The same applies to 'emoticons' such as the smiley :-).

## Conciseness

Be concise and to the point.  
Remember that reading an email can be harder than reading a printed message and long emails can be off-putting.

## Formatting

Be careful with formatting.  
Remember, the recipient's email client may not be able to display some formatting. For example stick to standard fonts (see the style guide) such as Arial.  
When using colours or backgrounds bear in mind that some colours are difficult to read on other computer screens.

## Message thread

When you reply to an email it is a good idea to include the original email in your reply. Clicking Reply rather than New opens a message window with a copy of the original message in it, making it easier for the thread of the correspondence to be followed.

Doing this may mean that the email takes a fraction longer in download time but can save your correspondent considerable time looking for the related email in their inbox.

## Chain letters, virus hoaxes and spam

Do not forward chain letters or virus hoaxes.  
If you receive an email warning you of a new, unstoppable virus that will immediately delete everything from your computer, it is likely to be a hoax. Forwarding such emails wastes time and such emails sometimes carry viruses themselves.

The same goes for chain letters that promise incredible riches or ask for help for a charitable cause.  
Just delete these as soon as you receive them.

Do not reply to or follow links in spam emails. You may end up somewhere on the Internet you do not want to be or, even worse, you may find yourself connected to a very expensive telephone line.

### [Delivery and read receipts](#)

Use the delivery and read receipt functions sparingly.  
These functions may not work anyway since some email users block them and some email clients do not support them.  
If you want to know if an email has been received or read the best way is to ask the recipient to let you know.

### [Message recall](#)

Using the message recall function is not recommended. The chances are that your email will have been delivered and read before you try to recall it.  
If you have sent an email in error it is better to send another explaining that you have made a mistake.

### [Copying or forwarding](#)

Do not copy or forward a message or attachment without the permission of the originator. If you do not have permission you may be infringing copyright law.

### [Confidentiality](#)

Do not discuss confidential matters in email. Email is not confidential or secure.  
Think of email as more like a postcard than a letter.

### [Libel, defamation, obscenity etc](#)

Sending just one libellous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remark in an email could result you and your organisation in an expensive court case.  
Do not do it!

## Managing stored email

Most of us receive a considerable amount of email. Some of it can be deleted as soon as it has been read. The more that can be dealt with in this way the better.

However, a great deal of email needs to be kept for future reference and needs to be properly managed if it is to be accessible.

The email management tools and techniques discussed here refer to Microsoft Outlook, the application recommended in the SoSNet Communications Strategy. Most other email clients have similar tools.

Inbox, Outbox, Sent Items

Incoming email arrives in the Inbox, where it stays until deleted or moved.

Outgoing email goes into the Outbox when the Send button is clicked. It stays there until an internet connection is made and a send/receive takes place, after which a copy goes into the Sent Items folder where it stays until deleted or moved.

These locations are intended as temporary email stores only. Email should be filed into a user created folder system as soon as possible after being received or sent (see below).

There are several tools that allow email in these locations to be labelled and managed.

The default column heads (From, Subject, Received/Sent, Size) can be used to organise emails.

Clicking a column head will order the emails in ascending or descending order by the attribute named in that column head. Clicking the column head again will reverse the order. For example, clicking the Received head will arrange the emails in the chronological order in which they were received; clicking the Subject head will put the emails in alphabetical order by what is in the subject field.

Get to know MS Outlook so that you can configure it to best suit you.

It is useful to have the Preview Panel activated so that clicking on an email in the list displays it at the bottom of the window without opening it. The Preview Pane can be activated or deactivated from the dropdown menu under View on the menu bar.

## Backing up email and contacts

If an email is worth storing it is probably worth backing up. Use the most appropriate backup method available with you email client.

# Writing Style

## Introduction

This writing guide is aimed at all SoSNet CVS staff who need to communicate in writing as part of their job, but who are not trained writers. Whether you are composing a letter, a report or a leaflet, the tips in this guide should make your job a little easier.

## Basic principles of good written communication

1. Get your message clear in your own head first.
2. Keep things simple.
3. Use short, common, English words.
4. Favour uncomplicated sentences.
5. Avoid jargon and obscure abbreviations.
6. If you do need to use abbreviations and technical terms, write them in full or in explain them the first time they appear in the document. Thereafter the abbreviation or technical term can be used without definition.

## More detailed guidance

- 1. Don't try to write for a general audience**  
Decide on your 'typical reader' and direct your writing at him or her.
- 2. See things from the reader's point of view**  
Why should your reader bother with your text? What's in it for him or her?
- 3. Be specific**  
Give concrete examples to illustrate your points. For example:  
*SoSNet has taken steps to make each office in the region look more approachable. For example, we have commissioned new and attractive signs to let the public know when offices are open to visitors.*
- 4. Use active verbs and phrases**  
'The dog bit the man.' is better than 'The man was bitten by the dog.'  
The formula is: A did B to C.
- 5. Keep your sentences simple**
  - Read your text aloud. This will reveal whether your writing makes sense and is hitting the right note. If you run out of breath while you are reading, your sentence is probably too long.

- Each of your sentences should contain just one main idea. If many of your sentences are longer than 20 words, ask yourself whether you are trying to cover too much ground in each one. Try using full stops to break long sentences into shorter ones. If you can cut out any words, cut them out.
- Wherever you have used a long word, an abbreviation, a jargon term or a foreign-sounding word, see if you can find a short, ordinary, English one that will do instead.

### **Write out your text more than once**

The best writing happens by hard work. Good writers rewrite their pieces several times. You should try to do the same.

### **Words to avoid**

Some words that are commonly used in official writing are unnecessarily long, pompous-sounding or vague. This list contains a few of them, with suggested replacements in brackets.

additional (extra)  
 advise (tell)  
 the applicant (you)  
 acquire (buy, get)  
 commence (start)  
 complete (fill in)  
 cogniscent of (know)  
 ensure (make sure)  
 forward (send)  
 in accordance with (under, keeping to)  
 in excess of (more than)  
 in respect of (for)  
 in the event of X (if X happens)  
 in order to (to)  
 manner (way)  
 on receipt of (when we/you receive)  
 on request (if you ask)  
 particulars (details)  
 per annum (a year)  
 persons (people)  
 promulgate (publish)  
 prior to (before)  
 pro forma (form)  
 purchase (buy)  
 regarding (about)  
 should you wish (if you wish)  
 terminate (end/finish)  
 whilst (while)

## Writing Style Guide (A-Z)

The next part of this document covers writing style, common errors and some grammar basics. We should all try to keep to these rules in our written communication. In doing so our work will

- be easier for other to understand;
- look united and coordinated; and
- appear more professional.

This style guide is not an attempt to lay down the law about English usage. Its aim is to establish some style conventions for SoSNet CVS communications, so that all our writing is as clear and consistent as it is possible to be with such an eccentric and constantly changing language.

English is full of perplexing rules with maddening exceptions. Its vocabulary is uncommonly large and its spelling a minefield. Questions of style do not always, or even usually, concern right and wrong. More often, they are to do with points to which there may be more than one possible answer, or those confusing, hard-to-grasp areas where even experienced writers and linguists sometimes lose their grip. Should it be 'fewer than 20 per cent of CVS volunteers' or 'less than 20 per cent'? Is it 'common sense', 'commonsense' or 'common-sense'? Am I allowed to split an infinitive? Should I say 'the committee is' or 'the committee are'?

This following advice covers the most common style problems. For details not included in the guide, we recommend:

*Eats Shoots and Leaves: the Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* by Lynne Truss  
*Concise Oxford Dictionary*  
*Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors.*

Other useful reference books include:

R L Trask *Mind the Gaffe*  
Ernest Gower *The Complete Plain Words*  
Eric Partridge *Usage and Abusage*  
Bill Bryson *Troublesome Words*  
George Orwell *Politics and the English Language* (included in his collection *Inside the Whale and Other Essays*)  
Fowler *Modern English Usage*  
Kingsley Amis *The King's English.*

## A

**'a' or an 'an' before 'h'?** - Use 'an' only if the 'h' is silent: an hour, an heir, an honourable man, an honest woman; but a hero, a hotel, a historian. Be guided by the sound.

**abbreviations** - Omit full stops after contractions – abbreviations that include the first and last letter of the singular – for example, Mr, Dr, St. The only common exception is 'no.' (number, from 'numero').

Do not abbreviate the word councillor as cllr or coun. Spell it out in full.

Do not use full stops in abbreviations, or spaces between initials: BBC, USA, mph, lbw, PJ O'Rourke, WH Smith, etc.

Spell out less well known abbreviations on first mention; it is not necessary to spell out well known ones, such as EU, US, BBC, CIA, CD, Aids.

Use all caps only if the abbreviation is pronounced as the individual letters; otherwise spell the word out: the BBC, ICI, VAT, but Nato, Unison, Isa.

Square feet (try to favour metric). We take no punctuation, and a space after the figure – 200 sq ft.

Abbreviations containing apostrophes such as aren't, can't, couldn't, hasn't, don't, I'm, it's, there's and what's might make a piece more colloquial, but they can be a distraction. Use them with care.

Unfamiliar abbreviations tend to irritate the reader. Rather than make repeated reference to 'the CVSWG' or 'the SoSNetWG', it is usually better to refer to the abbreviated party as 'the committee', 'the working group' or whatever other word is appropriate.

**ACAS** - The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, at first mention; thereafter just ACAS.

**accommodate, accommodation** - double c, double m

**acknowledgement** - Not acknowledgment (US).

**acronyms** - A pronounceable name made up from the initial letters of other words (UNESCO). Spell out less well known acronyms on first mention followed by the initials in parenthesis. So, 'The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) has made enquiries.'

**act** - Upper case when using full name, for example, Criminal Justice Act 1998, Official Secrets Act; but lower case when speaking in more general terms, for example, 'we need a radical fire safety act'; bills remain lower case until passed into law.

**acting** - Always lower case: acting organiser (unless you are using the word as part of a title, for example, Acting CVS Organiser Jane Smith).

**addresses** - Where addresses are given in full, use the following form:  
24 Newtown Place, Edinburgh EH1 7SD. Do not use a comma after the building number or flat number. Street, Road, Avenue, etc. should be spelt out with initial caps. No punctuation between city/county and postal district. Do not use the postcode (except when providing the full postal address or addressing envelopes).

Do not use punctuation when laying out an address on separate lines, for example:

24 Newtown Place  
Edinburgh  
EH1 7SD

**Laying out contact details**

T: 01721 587200 x6000

M: 07785 1234567

E: peter.piper@stewatrycvvs.org.uk

W: stewatrycvvs.org.uk

**adverbs** - Do not use a hyphen between an adverb and the verb it qualifies: a hotly disputed debate, a constantly evolving organisation.

**adviser** - In preference to advisor.

**affinity** with **or** between, not **to** or **for**

**ages** - Peter Piper, 47, not aged 47; Simon, four; the woman was in her 20s, not twenties. Do not use ages unless it is important to the item you are writing.

**aide-memoire** - Plural aides-memoire.

**all right** - Not 'alright'

**alternative** - Strictly, a choice between two courses of action; if there are more than two, 'option' or 'choice' are better.

**amid, among** - 'Throughout the evening CVS workers searched among the rubbish for the document'. 'Among' applies to things that can be separated and counted, 'amid' to things that cannot. Since the rescuers were searching one lot of rubbish, the word here should have been 'amid'.

**among** - Not amongst.

**ampersand (&)** - Used in some references, and lexicographic work, in acts of Parliament, and in business names. In general prefer 'and' or use in company names when the company does: Marks & Spencer, P&O.

**analysis** - Plural analyses.

**annex** - a verb / **annexe** - a noun.

**and** - And it came to pass that people complained about 'and' sentences and 'but' sentences. You are allowed to start a sentence or paragraph with 'but' or 'and'. But do it nicely. And infrequently. Also see **ampersand**.

**ansaphone** - Use 'answering machine' as 'ansaphone' is a trademark.

**apostrophes** - These indicate the possessive case or letters that have been left out of words like can't, wouldn't. 'It's' means it is; it has. It's raining (ie it is raining). 'Its' is the possessive form. ('David blamed its poor performance on the weather'.)

Plural nouns take a singular apostrophe ('children's games', 'gentlemen's outfitter', 'old folk's home').

Do not use an apostrophe to represent the plural; it is MPs not MP's.

The possessive in words and names ending in 's' also takes the singular (Jones's, James's), but be guided by pronunciation and use the plural apostrophe where it helps: Moses' rather than Moses's.

Take care not to omit apostrophes in phrases such as 'This is our problem, not our customers'.', '20 years' service', 'five years' experience'. But remember there is no apostrophe when you write 'the woman was in her 20s'.

**appendix** - plural appendices.

**appraise** - To estimate worth.

**apprise**- To inform. But prefer use of 'inform'.

## **audio-visual**

**authority, local** - Use lower case unless writing the full name of the organisation. Use authorities when talking about more than one local authority.

**autumn** - Not capital initial.

## **B**

**bank holiday** - Use lower case

**barbecue** - Not 'b-b-q' or 'bar-be-que' or any other strange spelling.

**BC/AD** - BC goes after the date or century, for example, '55 BC', 'second century BC'; AD goes before the figure 'AD 64', but after the century, 'second century AD'. Set in small caps wherever possible.

**begs the question** - Best avoided, since it is often misused – it means evades the issue, **not** raises the question.

**best value** - Lower case unless you are using it in the sense of a committee, eg Best Value Panel.

**between or among?** - There is a misconception that 'between' applies only to two and 'among' to more than two, so that we should speak of dividing some money between the two of us, but among the four of us. This is correct as far as it goes, but it would be absurd to say: 'We sat down among the three lakes.' or 'We decided to build our house among the forest and the town and the mountain.'

More logically, 'between' should be used to indicate reciprocal relationships and 'among' collective ones. If, for example, we referred to trade talks among the Common Market countries, it would suggest collective discussions, whereas trade talks between them could indicate any two of them meeting separately. 'Between' emphasises the individual, 'among' the group.

**biannual** - Twice a year; biennial every two years. Alternatives: twice-yearly or two-yearly. Bi-weekly and bi-monthly – best avoided – substitute every two months/weeks.

**bill** - Lower case, even when giving full name; cap up only if it becomes an act.

**billion** - Accepted value is now one thousand million; use bn in headlines and text – '£1bn', '56bn people'.

**black** - (Race) lower case noun and adjective.

**book titles** - Italics, with initial caps except for words such as a, an, and, of, on, the: *Fire Safety First*, *The Pride and the Passion*, etc.

**bored** with or by, not bored of.

**both** - Unnecessary in most sentences that contain 'and'; 'both men and women' says no more than 'men and women'.

**Britain/UK** - These terms are synonymous. Britain is the official short form of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Used as adjectives, therefore, British and UK mean the same. Great Britain, however, refers only to the mainland of England, Scotland and Wales.

**BST** - British Summer Time

**budget** - The Budget: capital 'B', but budget talks, budget measures, budget growth, budget savings etc.

**bulleted lists** - If a bulleted list contains single words or very short statements use lower case with no full stops. Like this:

CVS workers are:

- very hard-working
- honest
- loyal

If a bulleted list contains longer phrases use lower case with full semicolons – full stop at the end of list. Like this:

CVS workers are:

- working to improve the community;
- applying for more funding;
- cleaning their mugs after use.

Avoid bulleted lists in committee reports because it is very difficult to refer to a specific bullet point during a public meeting.

**burned** - Not burnt.

**businesslike** - One word.

**buzz words and phrases** - Use with care: recent examples include 'think outside the box' and 'PC' (see also clichés).

**byelection, bylaw, bypass, bystander**

## **C**

### **capitals**

Consistency.

When using capitals aim for coherence and consistency, but not at the expense of clarity. As with any aspect of style, it is impossible to be wholly consistent – there are almost always exceptions, so if you are unsure check for an individual entry in this guide. Capitals are used for the first letter in every sentence, for proper names, for the names of the months and days and for the titles of books and newspapers. The only difficulty is with words that are sometimes written with capitals and sometimes not.

The particular and the general

Use a capital for the particular and a small letter for the general. Thus:

It is a street leading out of Princes Street.

I have said something about this in Chapter 1; I shall have more to say in later chapters.

In this case the Judge went beyond a judge's proper functions.

Many committees have been modelled on our Urgency Committee.

#### titles and ranks

Titles and ranks are nearly always capitalised when they accompany a personal name, for example, Chief Executive Officer Bryan Smith and Councillor Jack Spratt; they should not be capitalised when they are used in place of a personal name, for example, 'the chief executive'.

#### jobs

In all our writing the 'Convenor' and the 'Organiser' are always titles and require capital letters.

All others lower case, for example, deputy convenor, assistant organiser.

#### departments, directorates

All upper case unless you are talking about more than one department or directorate. For example, the Scottish Borders Planning Department.

#### organisations, ministries, treaties, acts, etc

These generally take upper case when their full name is used – Scottish Executive, Child Protection Act, Voluntary Issues Unit (VIU on second mention), Home Office, Foreign Office, Ministry of Defence (MoD on second mention), Department of Trade and Industry.

Parliament is often lower case when used as a general term but Scottish Parliament, House of Commons, House of Lords, House of Representatives are capitalised to avoid ambiguity. Prefer lower case for government – the Labour government, the government.

#### committees, commissions, special groups, etc.

Use capitals. So, for example, the Scottish Borders' Council Urgency Committee, Dumfries and Galloway Best Value Panel, Peebles Rugby Club, St Peter's Church, Edinburgh, Roxburgh Primary School. But Peebles and Galashiels Rugby clubs, St Peter's church council and family guidance panels.

#### artistic and cultural

Initial caps for names of institutions, for example, *Festival Theatre, Royal Court, Tate Modern, National Gallery of Scotland.*

#### universities and colleges of further and higher education

Caps. For example, Heriot Watt University, St Mary's College, Department of Medieval and Modern History.

#### geographical names and compass points

North, south, etc. are capitalised if they are part of an area or a political division. For example, the North, the South, the East, the West, South West Africa, Western Australia, the Orient, but not if they are descriptions in general terms. For example, south-east Scotland, but the South East (when talking about England).

#### subheadings

Apart from an initial capital and proper nouns, words in subheadings should not be capitalised.

## **CD, CD-rom**

**centre** on or in; revolve **around**

**century** - 8th century, 21st century, etc.

**Convenor** - In our writing, 'Convenor' is always a title and requires capital letters. For example, Convenor, Bill Smith (Mr Smith or the Convenor at second mention).

**chairman, chairwoman** - Are better than chairperson; if in doubt, use a different construction ('the meeting was chaired by Tim' or 'Cathy was in the Chair').

**chatroom** - One word.

## **childcare**

## **Christmas Day**

**City, the** - Capped when used as shorthand for the City of London (most often when referring to the financial sector), but not generally elsewhere. A city is a town that has been granted a charter by the Crown; it usually has a cathedral.

## **civil servant, civil service**

**clichés** - See also **buzz words** and **phrases**.

Overused words and phrases to avoid: back burner, boost (massive or otherwise), but hey..., drop-dead gorgeous, major, massive, political correctness, politically correct, PC, special, to die for, upsurge (surge will do).

**commas** - Be consistent. Use them to clarify complex sentences: 'Red, white and blue, and green flags flew from the building.'

There are no commas between names of people and any letters that follow, for example Michael Mansfield QC, John Smith MSP.

## **Commons, House of Commons** - the House

**company names** - Use names the companies use themselves, except in cases where they adopt typographical or other devices that, in effect, turn them into logos.

So: adidas, not Adidas; BhS (no italicised h); Toys R Us (do not attempt to turn the R backwards); Yahoo! is OK.

**compare to** - liken to; **compare with** - make a comparison.

**complete, completed** - Better than finalise, finalised

**Conservative Party** - And the same for other political parties.

**cooperat/e, -ion, -ive** - One word but store is Co-op.

**coordinat/ e, -ion, -or** - One word.

**councils** - Upper case: Scottish Borders Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council but lower case apart from place name when more than one – so the councils of Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway.

**council tax** - lower case.

**council tax payer** - Lower case, three words. But 'taxpayer'.

**criteria** - Singular criterion.

**currencies** - When the whole word is used it is lower case: euro, franc, mark, sterling, the dollar, the pound, the yen etc.

Abbreviations: DM50 (German marks); Fr50 (French francs); BFr50 (Belgian francs); \$50 (US dollars); A\$50 (Australian dollars); HK\$50 (Hong Kong dollars).

**currently** - Prefer now.

**CVS** - Council of Voluntary Service. Spell out on first mention, then use abbreviation. Try not to use council on its own as this may get confused with local authority councils. Note that the plural of CVS is CVSs, not CVS's.

## **D**

**dashes** - En dashes (–) are longer than hyphens (-). See **en rules**. Do not overdo them. Use them only as a form of parenthesis (which is another way of saying brackets) or to add something at the end of a sentence – like this.

**data** - Plural noun, but in data-processing 'data' is now treated as a singular collective noun.

**dates** - Keep dates simple: 1 May; Tuesday, 1 May 2008; May 2008. If several dates within one month are given, so that it would be clumsy to give the month each time, say on the 12th.

Decades are best expressed as 1990s (not 1990's or '90s) or seventies (not 'seventies).

Where a single year, such as a financial year, comprises parts of two calendar years, an oblique stroke is used (1998/9 or 1998/99). This leaves the en rule

(–) to indicate a period covering more than one year: ‘the years 1945/6–1947/8’.

Never start a sentence with a figure; spell it out.

**daytime** - One word.

**decades** - Use figures – the swinging 60s or 1960s, etc. with no apostrophe.

**decimals** - Where possible round up so that there is no more than one decimal after the point. Where there is no whole number before the point use a zero as in 0.4 for instance.

**definite articles** -The word ‘the’ must not be removed routinely from the start of sentences. But do remove the definite article where it is redundant as in ‘the Scottish Borders Council.’ However, where it is part of a proper name it should be used and capped up: The Bull public house, *The Scotsman*, *The Times*. It is the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* though – so check.

**departments of state** - Scottish Executive ministries take initial caps as follows:

Corporate Services; Development Department; Education Department; Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department; Environment and Rural Affairs Department; Financial and Central Services Department; Health Department; Justice Department.

Lower case when department is abbreviated, for example ‘enterprise department’.

Same pattern should follow for UK government ministries.

**Dependant** - Noun.

**Dependent** - Adjective.

**dependence**

**derisive** - Conveying ridicule.

**Derisory** - Inviting ridicule.

**Dilemma** - A choice of two unfavourable courses of action. Do not confuse this with a problem.

**disabled people** - Not ‘the disabled’. Use positive language about disability, avoiding outdated terms that stereotype or stigmatise. Terms to avoid, with acceptable alternatives in brackets, include victim of, crippled by, suffering from, afflicted by (prefer person who has, person with); wheelchair bound, in a wheelchair (wheelchair user); invalid (disabled person); mental handicap, backward, retarded, slow (person with a learning disability); the disabled, the

handicapped, the blind, the deaf (disabled people, blind people, deaf people); deaf and dumb (a person who is deaf and speech-impaired or a person who is hearing and speech-impaired).

**discreet** – circumspect; **discrete** - separate.

**disinterested** - Means free from bias, objective; it does not mean uninterested, not taking an interest

**disk** - (computers), not disc.

**dissociate** - Not disassociate.

**distance and money** - Use fewer for numbers, less for quantity. 'She travelled less than 50 miles' not 'fewer than 50 miles'. You are referring to the total distance, not the 50 individual miles. 'He earns less than £350 an hour' not 'fewer than £350'.

**dos, don'ts** - Not do's and don't's

**dot.com**

**dreamed** - Not dreamt.

**driving licence** - Not driver's licence.

## **E**

**east, eastern, the East, eastern Europe, the east of Edinburgh**

**East End** - London (capitals). Other cities lower case, Edinburgh's east end.

**e-business** - Capitalise the 'e' at the beginning of a sentence, in headings etc.

**educationist** - Not educationalist.

**Eg** - Eg, means for example. Prefer, 'for example'.

**e-government, e-learning** - Capitalise the 'e' at the beginning of a sentence, in headings etc. but not elsewhere.

**elder/older, eldest/oldest** - Elder and older are comparatives (use of only two), eldest and oldest are superlatives (use of three or more). She is the elder of two sisters; he is the eldest of the three brothers.

**Elderly** - Older people not the elderly.

**ellipses (...)** - Ellipses indicate the omission of words within quoted text: 'Brevity is ... wit'.

Ellipses should be set as three full stops without spaces between points. Because of the inability of Word to differentiate between an ellipsis followed by a full stop and a full stop followed by an ellipsis, it is probably better not to attach ellipses to the text around them: 'He said the CVS worker was perceptive, unflappable and ... wise.

**email** - One word; capitalise the 'e' at the beginning of a sentence, in headings etc, not elsewhere.

**embargo** - Plural embargos.

**employment tribunal** - Not industrial tribunal.

**enquire** -To ask; see also **inquire**.

**en rules** - En rules (–) are longer than hyphens (-), and can be used as parentheses – in pairs – or to convey a distinction in sense.

To convey a distinction in sense.

En rules are used when the first part of a compound does not modify the meaning of the second part. They can be thought of as standing for 'and' or 'to'.

En rules are used unspaced to mean 'and' in phrases such as:

Bruno–Tyson fight  
red–green colour-blind (but blue-green when you mean bluish green)  
Labour–Liberal alliance

Some people prefer to use an oblique where one or more elements consist of more than one word, for example, Borders/Dumfries boundary. There is no space between characters and the oblique.

En rules are used unspaced to mean 'to' in such phrases as:

input–output ratio  
1914–18 war  
London–Glasgow railway

If you find your en rules (–) are being set as hyphens (-), go into *Tools/AutoCorrect/AutoFormat* and *AutoFormat As You Type* and tick 'Symbol characters (- -) with symbols (–)'.  
*AutoFormat As You Type*

**ensure** - Make certain. Prefer 'make sure'. **insure** is to protect against risk.

**ethnics** -See racial terminology.

**euro** - The euro: the monetary unit, lower case 'e'.

Euro: capitalised, meaning 'European'.

Euro: capitalised prefix, for example, 'A Euro-sceptic'.

**every day/ everyday** - Noun and adverb: it happens 'every day'. Adjective: an 'everyday' mistake.

**everybody** - One word, as is nobody and everyone but no one is two words.

**exorbitant** - Not exhorbitant.

**exclamation marks** - Avoid! In general a good choice of words should give the emphasis needed.

**eyewitness** - One word, but prefer witness.

## **E**

**face** - a face-to-face meeting is just a meeting.

**far, farther, farthest** - Of distances; otherwise further, furthest.

**female** - Adjective and noun. If the person's sex is relevant, which it usually isn't, the preferred term is woman (eg a woman police officer rather than a female police officer). However, it is probably better to recast your sentence to avoid the term, or refer simply to 'women' and 'men' if relevant.

**feminine**- Female forms of nouns such as authoress, poetess and sculptress have fallen into disuse.

**fewer** - Use fewer for numbers, less for quantity. Less traffic, fewer cars, less arson, fewer fires, less rain, fewer showers.

**fiancé** - Male.

**fiancée** - Female.

**figures** - Spell out one to nine, except in tables. Use figures from 10 to one million (see **million**).

**finalise, finalised** - Avoid; use 'complete', 'completed'.

**first, second, third** - Better than firstly, secondly, thirdly.

**firsthand** - Adjective, one word, but 'at first hand' (two words).

**flammable** - Means the same as 'inflammable'; 'flammable' is better; the negative is non-flammable

**flyer** - Not flier.

**focus** - Plural focuses. Also focused, focuses, focusing - not 'uss' – use one 's' only.

**folk** - It is a plural so there is no such word as folks, no matter what it says at the end of Bugs Bunny. It is an old folk's home, not old folks' home.

**forego** -To go before; 'forgo' to go without.

**fractions** - to avoid confusion single fractions should be spelled out and hyphenated. Two-fifths, three-quarters.

**front line** - Noun, two words; adjective, hyphenated. So front-line soldiers, front-line service.

**fulsome** - Means insincere, not lavish. Avoid.

**fundraiser, fundraising** - No hyphen.

## **G**

**gases** - This is the plural of gas, not 'gasses'.

**gauge** - Not guage.

**gay** - Synonymous with homosexual, prefer 'gay' in text, do not use homosexual. Not 'gays' use 'gay men'. See also **lesbian**.

**gender** - The language we use should reflect not only changes in society but the organisation's values. Phrases such as 'career girl', 'career women', 'the girls', for example, are outdated and patronising (there is no male equivalent): never use them.

'Firefighter', not 'fireman' or 'firewoman'; 'PC', not 'WPC' (most police forces have abandoned the distinction). 'Businessmen', 'housewives', 'male nurse', 'woman pilot', 'woman (lady!) doctor': do not use terms such as these, which reinforce outdated stereotypes.

Use 'humankind' or 'humanity' rather than 'mankind'. Never say 'his' to cover men and women: use his or hers, or a different construction; in sentences such as 'a CVS Organiser who manages his/her staff efficiently', there is usually a way round the problem – in this case, 'CVS Organisers who manage their staff...'

## **general election**

**government** - Lower case in all contexts and all countries.

**government departments** - See **departments of state**.

## H

**haemorrhage** - Loss of blood.

**half a dozen; half past; half-price; halfway**

**handbill, handbook, hand out**

**handicapped** - Do not use. Use disabled people or people with learning difficulties.

**hanged** - People are hanged. Pictures are hung.

**harass, harassment**

**harebrained** - Not hairbrained.

**headteacher** - One word.

**headquarters** - Always lower case.

**Health and Safety Executive - HSE on second mention.**

**height** - In metres with imperial conversion, for example, 1.68m (5ft 7in).

**help** - Takes 'to' with another verb: for example, help to decide, not help and decide.

**help desk** - Two words.

**hiccup** - Not hiccough.

**hi-tech** - Not high-tec.

**hoard** - An accumulation but a 'horde' is a crowd.

**home page** - Two words when talking about the home page of intranet and internet sites.

**hon members** - of parliament.

**horrendous** - From the Latin for 'fearful'; overused, horrific is generally preferable.

**hospital, 'a'** - Not 'an'.

**hospitalised** - No such word; use taken (not 'rushed' or 'removed') to hospital.

**hyphens** - Hyphenation is a particularly confusing area so check if in doubt. 'Common sense', 'common-sense', and 'commonsense' are all accepted usage. We prefer two words in this case.

Our style is to avoid hyphens wherever possible but to use them where not using one would be ambiguous, for example, to distinguish 'The new law discriminates against black-cab drivers' from 'The new law discriminates against black cab-drivers'.

## !

**ie** – it means 'that is'. Avoid its use as far as possible.

**immigrant** - One who comes from another country. 'Emigrant', one who leaves for another country. A migrant leaves the country but tends to return. 'Immigrant' can be a very offensive word if used incorrectly. See **racial terminology**.

**impractical** - possible in theory but not in reality; **impracticable** - not workable; a plan that has been put into practice and has failed.

**inflammable** - Liable to burn; 'flammable' means the same and is better. Do not confuse with 'inflammatory' which means to cause anger.

**infinitives, split** - It is acceptable to split infinitives (see page 151 of *Troublesome Words* by Bill Bryson for an explanation of the grammar of split infinitives). Use common sense, and avoid ugliness.

**industrial tribunal** - Term no longer exists, use 'employment tribunal'.

**injuries** - People do not 'receive' broken legs, they break a leg.

**inoculate** - Not inoculate.

**inquire** - To undertake formal investigation; see also **enquire**.

**insure** - Protect against risk. See **ensure**

**internet** - Lower case; as is **web, website, world wide web**.

**in to** - he moved in to get a better position; **into** - he moved into a better position.

**install** - We favour this spelling.

**-ise, -ize** - Use -ise; 'capsize' is an exception.

**italic** - Use italic for: titles of published books and newspapers, except for the Bible, the Koran and books of the Bible, which are roman without quotes. Titles of chapters and articles are roman in quotes.

Foreign phrases, not yet naturalised, in an English sentence; but roman for proper names such as institutions and streets, and roman in single quotes for foreign quotations.

Names of parties in legal cases, but the 'v' between them is roman.

Italic should not be used for the names of acts of parliament, or for possessive 's' (or the apostrophe) following an italic word (except for emphasis), for example, 'the *Discovery's* home port', 'it was *the Organiser's* job, not the Convenor's.

italic punctuation

Italic punctuation should be used only within an italic phrase, not before or after it: In *Camilla: or a Picture of Youth*, Fanny Burney portrays ...

**its/it's** - The possessive form of 'it is' – 'its' (no apostrophe) – as in 'The cat lowered its head.

The form 'it's' is properly used only as a contraction for 'it is' or 'it has'. For example, 'It's freezing' or 'It's been raining for three days'.

## J

**jail** - Not 'gaol' and certainly not 'goal'.

**jargon** - Can be a useful shorthand to aid communication between people in the same profession. But it is often just exclusive and incomprehensible. It should be avoided in all our written communication, particularly documents aimed at the news media and general public.

**jobcentre**

**job titles** - Lower case: 'editor of *The Scotsman*'. Exceptions: within our organisation the posts of Organiser and Convenor of a CVS are always in caps.

**judgement** - A moral, practical or informal deduction but 'judgment', 'judgmental' (law) – a judge's or court's formal ruling.

## K

**key** - Only use as a description for something really important or special. The same goes for 'major' and 'vital'.

**kilogram, kilometre, kilowatt** - Abbreviate as follows: kg, km, kw.

**kitemark** - This is a trademark.

## L

**lady** – Use only as a title; Lady Penelope Creighton-Ward. Use woman otherwise.

**lesbian** - Use lesbian not 'gay women'. See **gay**.

**less and fewer** - 'Fewer' is for things you can count: 'fewer cars', 'fewer buckets', 'less' is for things you can't count: 'less traffic', 'less water'. Same goes for 'per cent': 'fewer than 20 per cent of the vehicles', 'less than 20 per cent of the traffic'.

**liaison**

**likely** - Takes the infinitive (he is likely to win) or a qualifier (he will very likely win), not 'he will likely win.' If you want to use that form, say 'he will probably win.'

**little** - Do not use little boy or little girl. The child's age is much more informative. See **ages**.

**licence** – noun; **licensed premises** - not 'Licenced'.

**license** - Verb.

**licensee** - Noun.

**linage** - What is paid to freelance reporters; 'lineage' is ancestry.

**loathe/loath** - Loathe means to hate. Loath means unwilling to; use loath not loth.

**lockout** - noun; **lock out** – verb

**long term** - Two words; adjective hyphen – the long-term project.

**lord lieutenant** - No hyphen; plural 'lords lieutenant'.

**Lloyd's** insurance but 'Lloyds TSB' bank.

**Lords, House of Lords** - But 'the House', not 'the house'.

**lordships, their**

## **M**

**M74, M8** etc. - No full stops. Also note that the M2 motorway is tautological (both words define the same thing).

**made-up verbs** - Do not use convenience verbs; 'stretchered' does not exist as a verb, neither does 'rubbished'.

**major** - Overused; avoid except in military context.

**males** - Adjective and noun, so 'male police officers' not 'man police officers', but only use if relevant.

**manifesto** - Plural 'manifestos'.

**mankind** - Prefer 'humankind' or 'humanity'.

**manoeuvre, manoeuvring**

**massive** - Often improperly used; prefer 'huge', 'enormous' etc.

**media** - Plural of medium: 'the media are at the door' etc; but 'medium' spiritualist; plural 'mediums'.

**medical** - All doctors are given the prefix Dr but most surgeons are Mr, although some are also doctors, so check. Some medical terms should be translated: fractured means broken; lacerations are cuts; contusions are bruises; **haemorrhage** is bleeding; abrasions are grazes. A Pill with a capital P is the contraceptive pill.

**Melrose Abbey** - Capitalise all when writing the name of any abbey or cathedral in full.

**million** - Use 'm' in headlines and text: '£10m', '238m people'. Do not use million or 1,000,000.

**medieval** - Not mediaeval; lower case m.

**meet** - Not meet up or meet with.

**memento**; plural **mementos**.

**midday**

**militate/mitigate** - Commonly confused. To militate against something is to influence it ('his record militated against his early release'); to mitigate means to lessen an offence ('in mitigation, her counsel argued that she came from a broken home').

**mileage**

**millennium** - Lower case m.

**minuscule** - Not miniscule. Think 'minus'.

**Mistakes** - Correct versions of some of common mistakes include: Linchpin, not lynchpin.

No one, not no-one.  
Rebut or deny, not refute.  
Seize, not sieze.  
Siege, not seige.

Supersede, not supercede.  
Targeted, targeting, not targetted, targetting.  
Under way, not underway.

**Motorways** - Use 'M1', not 'M1 motorway'.

**mh** - No points.

**MPs, MSPs MEPs**

**movable** - Not moveable.

**Mrs, Miss or Ms?** - Use whichever the woman in question prefers. If you do not know, try to find out. If that proves impossible, use Ms.

**muslim** - Not Moslem.

## **N**

**nationwide** - One word, no hyphen.

**naught** – nothing; **nought** - the figure 0.

**navy** - But 'Royal Navy'.

**nearby** - One word, whether adjective or adverb: the pub nearby; the nearby pub.

**nearsighted, nearsightedness**

**nerve-racking** - Not 'wracking'. Common error.

**Nevertheless** - But 'none the less'.

**New Labour** - But 'old Labour'.

**news agency**

**new year** - Lower case; but 'New Year's Day', 'New Year's Eve'.

**new technology** - Changing all the time but the existing style is: email, internet, net, hi-tech, multimedia, online, world wide web, website (one word).

**next week** - Use 'on Tuesday', 'on Saturday' etc, up to the end of the week you are writing in; for the following week, say 'next Tuesday' etc. If necessary to clarify, include the date.

**NHS** - Not necessary to spell out; health service is OK.

**nightcap, nightdress, nightfall, nightgown, nightlife, nightshade, nightshirt** - All one word.

**night-time** - Correct as adjective or noun.

**no. 10 - (Downing Street).**

**no** - Plural 'noes'.

**no one** - Two words but 'nobody'.

**none** - Short for 'not one' and should, strictly, take the singular verb: none is, not none are. However, idiom cannot sustain such ghastly constructions as, 'None of us is missing is he (or she)?'. So use common sense.

**nonetheless** - Means nevertheless: (one word), or not any the less (for that): (three words).

**north, northern, the North, the north of Edinburgh**

**nosy** - Not nose-y.

**notebook, notepaper**

**noticeboard** - One word, two words in US.

**numbers** - Spell out from one to nine: figures from 10 to 999,999; thereafter 1m, 3.2bn etc: 'the population of bacteria had grown from three to 3bn in 2.5 years'. Do not use 2 1/2 years.

'The number' and 'a number'

'The number' is a singular collective noun: 'The number of thefts is going down'. But 'a number' is a plural: 'A number of policemen have reported improvements in community safety'.

## O

**offhand, offline, off-licence, offside**

**oh! - Not o!**

**OK** - Not 'okay'.

**older people - Not the elderly**

**on board** - For ship or plane, not aboard.

**ongoing** - Prefer continuous or continual.

**online** - One word.

**only** - Should stand next to the word(s) qualified: I have only one ambition, not I only have.

**on to** - but **into**

**ophthalmic** - Very often incorrectly spelt. 'Ophthalmic' is the correct spelling. Pronounced 'offthalmic' not 'opthalmic'.

**organisation** - Not organization.

**os and oes** - A dangerous area. Many possible problems here so check if you are not sure. Here are a few common ones: cameos, commandos, concertos, crescendos, curios, dynamos, embryos, fiascos, folios, impresarios, infernos, magnetos, mementoes, provisos, ratios, solos, torsos, dominoes, echoes, embargoes, ghettos, haloes, heroes, innuendoes, manifestos, mottoes, potatoes, salvoes, torpedoed.

**outgrow, outgun, outmanoeuvre, outpatient** - One word.

**out-turn** - Always hyphenate.

**over** - As a general rule use 'more than' in preference to 'over' in sentences like: 'He was more than an hour late'. 'Over' and 'under' answer the question 'how much?'; 'more than' and 'fewer than' answer the question 'how many?': she is over 18, there were more than 20,000 at the game, etc.

**overtrousers** - One word, like underpants.

**owing to** and **due to** - At the beginning of a sentence it is better to use 'because of' rather than 'due to'.

## **P**

**panel, panelled, panelling**

**paparazzo**

Plural 'paparazzi'.

**paragraphs** - As a rule keep paragraphs short.

**parentheses** (round brackets) - Restrict their use to explanatory notes. Try not to have parentheses within parentheses. 'He visited the Scottish Executive

(Holyrood (see page 3)), where he met colleagues from other CVS organisations.' Reword the sentence or use punctuation to reorder the sentence.

**parliament, parliamentary** – but Scottish Parliament, Westminster Parliament.

**party** - Upper case in name or organisation, for example, 'Labour Party'.

**passerby** - Plural passersby.

**patients** - Are discharged from hospital, not released. They are taken, not removed, to hospital.

**payback, payday, payout**

**peacetime**

**pedaller** - cyclist; **peddler** - drug dealer

**pensioners** - Not 'old age pensioners'.

**per** - Avoid. Use English. 'She earns £14,000 a year' is better than 'per year'. If you must use it, the Latin preposition is followed by another Latin word, for example, per capita, not per head.

Exception: miles per hour, abbreviation mph.

**per cent** - Use 'per cent' in text and '%' in tables and headlines.

**percentage points** - Be careful when quoting percentage rises or falls. An increase from three per cent to five per cent is a two percentage point increase or a two-point increase, not a two per cent increase.

**Performing Right Society - Not 'rights'**.

**persons** - No. They are people.

**phenomenon** - Plural 'phenomena'.

**phone** - No apostrophe.

**phone numbers** - Like this: 01273 123456 or 0131 677 8787 or 020 7587 2000.

**photocopy** - Not Photostat or Xerox (trade names).

**picket** - noun (one who pickets); not picketer. Also picketed, picketing.

**pigeonhole** - Verb or noun.

**plc** - Not PLC.

**plurals or compound nouns** - The principal word, always a noun, takes the plural: 'courts martial', 'adjutants-general', but there are exceptions: 'trade unions', 'gin and tonics'.

**pm** - 3pm; see time.

**police, the** - police forces

West Lothian Police, Metropolitan Police (the Met at second mention), New York Police Department (NYPD at second mention), etc. There is no such thing as the British police force.

**postcode** - One word. See **addresses**.

**Post Office** - Capitals for the organisation, but buy stamps in a post office or sub-post office.

**post-mortem** - One word that means after death. Use 'postmortem examination' or 'autopsy'.

**practice** – noun; **practise** - verb.

**Précis** - Singular and plural.

**pre-eminent**

**prefabricated**

**premise/premises** - Do not use when describing buildings – be specific: the flat, house, factory.

**president** - Lower case except in title: 'President Lincoln', 'Abraham Lincoln, the US president'.

**press, the**

**pressurised** - Use pressured, put pressure on or pressed to mean apply pressure.

**preventive** - Not preventative.

**prima facie** - Not italicised. Prefer on first view/first sight.

**prime minister** - Lower case except in title: Prime Minister Tony Blair, but Tony Blair the prime minister.

**Prince of Wales** - First mention; thereafter Prince Charles or the Prince.

**Principle** - A fundamental truth or belief.

**principal** - (adjective) chief, like 'Our principal aim – making communities better places'; (noun) the chief person or an American headteacher.

**prior to** - If you mean 'before', say so, unless you are prepared to say 'posterior to' when you mean 'after'.

**probe** - A dental implement, not an inquiry or investigation.

**profile** - A noun, not a verb.

**program** - (computer); otherwise 'programme'.

**promulgate** - To publish or tell. Do not use 'promulgate' – prefer 'publish' or 'tell'.

**pronouns** - Always put the noun first, the pronoun second. So it should be: When Colin came into the room he looked first at the window NOT When he came into the room Colin looked first at the window.

**pros and cons** - means arguments for and against.

**protester** - Not protestor.

**proviso** - Plural provisos.

**provost** - Upper case only as title, 'Provost John Smith'; provost at second mention.

**publicly** - Not publically.

**purchase** - As a noun perhaps but use buy as a verb.

#### **punctuation – some common faults**

A full stop should come before the closing parenthesis or closing quotation mark if the whole sentence is in parentheses; otherwise after the closing parenthesis:

He wore a hat. (The sun was very strong.)

He wore a hat (the sun was very strong).

He said that a job with the CVS is, 'a dream come true'.

He said, 'A job with the CVS is a dream come true.'

At the end of a sentence there is no need to add a full stop after an abbreviation that ends in a full stop or after a punctuation mark finishing a quotation or a book title:

He was editor of *Which*?  
She was awarded a Ph.D.  
The article was called *Ruins in Malmesbury, Wilts.*

The most usual exception is if the abbreviation or question mark or exclamation mark is within parentheses inside the sentence:

He edited a magazine (*Which?*).

If the main sentence is a question or exclamation, and a quoted question or exclamation ends at the same point, two sets of punctuation will be needed:

'Who shouted "Fire!"?'

If you have to end a sentence using a web address, or email address, use a full stop. Our web address is [www.stewatrycvs.org.uk](http://www.stewatrycvs.org.uk).

## Q

**Queen, the** - If it is necessary to say so, she is Her Majesty (HM), never Her Royal Highness (HRH).

**queueing** - Five vowels in a row.

**quit** - Do not use when someone has retired or left in the normal course of events – quit suggests a dispute.

**quiz** - Police question people. People are quizzed on *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*.

**quotation marks** - In British style, single quotes are normally used, except for direct quotes or quotations within quotations: 'he described the scheme as "totally unworkable"'. We adopt the same style.

Headlines, captions and pullout quotes all take single quotes.

## R

**race** -Do not refer to a person's race or colour unless it is relevant to what you are writing.

**racial terminology** - Do not use 'ethnic' to mean black or Asian people. In a UK sense they are an ethnic minority; in a world sense, of course, white people are an ethnic minority.

Just as in the Balkans or anywhere else, internal African peoples should be called ethnic groups rather than 'tribes', a term that carries the legacy of years of negative racial stereotyping.

Avoid the word 'immigrant', which is very offensive to many black and Asian people, not only because it is often used incorrectly to describe people who were born in this country but also because it has been used negatively for so many years that it has negative overtones.

The words black and Asian should not be used as nouns but as adjectives: black people rather than 'blacks', an Asian woman rather than 'an Asian', etc. 'Asian' refers to someone born in, or living in, Asia, or a descendant of such a person.

**racism** - Use in preference to racialism (which is identical in meaning) so that it is consistent with sexism, ageism and other isms indicating discrimination against a section of the community. Perversely, feminism means the opposite.

**rack** - It is nerve-racking, not nerve-wracking and you rack your brains, not wrack. Wrack is a seaweed.

**racket** - Not racquet, unless you specifically mean the game racquet ball.

**raincoat, rainfall, rainproof**

**raze** - It means to lay level to the ground so you do not need to say razed to the ground.

**razzmatazz** - Not razzamatazz.

**re/re-** Use re- (with hyphen) when followed by the vowels e or u (not pronounced as 'yu'):  
for example, re-entry, re-examine, re-urge.

Use re (no hyphen) when followed by the vowels a, i, o or u (pronounced as 'yu') or any consonant: for example, rearm, rearrange, reassemble, reiterate, reorder, reuse, rebuild, reconsider.

Exceptions: re-read; or where confusion with another word would arise: re-cover/recover, re-form/reform, re-creation/recreation, re-sign/resign.

**recent** - Avoid; it can cause confusion in publications with a long shelf life. If the date is relevant, use it.

**redeploy** - One word.

**redundant words** - Words like basically, actually and fundamentally are usually only padding. Try reading the sentence without them and if it still makes sense delete the word.

**Red Cross**

**referendum, referendums**

**re-form** - to form again; **reform** - to change for the better; particularly in cases where we know improvement is likely.

**regional** - Do not use provincial.

**report** - Upper case in titles, for example, Lawrence Report.

**reported speech** - Goes in the past tense: 'she said that it was' not 'she said that it is'.

**representative bodies** - Do not use, prefer 'the unions'.

**restaurateur** - Not restauranter.

**risk-based** - Hyphen.

**river** - Upper case, for example, River Tweed, Amazon River.

**riverboat, riverside** - One word.

**roadside**

**royal family** - Use the Prince of Wales, Princess Royal and the Queen Mother in formal text. Do not use the overly formal HM the Queen or HRH the Prince of Wales. It is permissible to use the less formal Prince Charles, Queen Mum and so on in more informal writing.

**Royal Mail**

**roman numerals** - Few people can convert past X so do not use them.

**RSPB, RSPCA** - Do not normally need to be spelt out.

**rushed** - Accident victims are seldom driven slowly to hospital so rushed is usually redundant.

## **S**

**St Giles Cathedral** - Capitalise when writing the name in full.

**St John Ambulance** - not St John's.

**schoolboy/girl/children/room/ teacher** - All one word.

**Scottish Executive** - Always write in full. The Scottish Executive is the government in Scotland for all devolved matters. At Devolution, the powers and duties exercised by UK Ministers in Scotland relating to devolved matters were transferred to the Scottish Ministers. Most of the responsibilities

previously held by the Scottish Office have become part of the remit of the Scottish Executive.

**Scotland Office** - Not Scottish Office.

**Scottish Parliament** - Capitalise both words. Members are MSPs.

**scrutiny** - Careful attention. It does not have to be prefaced by the word close.

**seasons** - Lower case for spring, summer, autumn and winter.

**seize** - Not sieze.

**senior** - Abbreviate to Sr not Sen or Snr, for example, Frank Sinatra Sr.

**services, the** - Armed forces.

**set-up, set up** - Hyphenate adjective and noun; verb – two words. So, ‘the set-up was good’ but ‘Jo set up the table and chairs’.

**sewage** - Waste; ‘sewerage’ is the waste system, pipes, etc.

**Sheriff Court** - no apostrophe

**shock** - This word has almost lost all meaning outside electricity.

**shopkeeper**

**short term** - Two words; adjective hyphenate – the short-term project.

**shortlist, shortlisted** - One word.

**siege** - Not seige.

**single quotes** - In headlines (but sparingly), standfirsts, captions and text. See **quotation marks**.

**sizeable** - Not sizable.

**ski, skis, skier, ski'd, skiing**

**socialism, socialist** - Lower case.

**SoSNet** - South of Scotland Network of CVSs. Write in full on first mention, thereafter use abbreviation.

**South** - southern, the South, southern US, south of Scotland, south-west England

**Spacing** - Common examples:

ie	8 am
eg	5 mm
D.Phil	25C
Ph.D.	15° N
6%	
GMT	

**span of years** - '1995–99'; but 'between 1995 and 1999', not 'between 1995–99'

**split infinitives** - See page 151 of *Troublesome Words* by Bill Bryson for the last word on the old wives' tale that split infinitives are wrong.

**spring** - Lower case.

**staff** - Prefer 'staff' to 'personnel'.

**stationary** - not moving; stationery - writing materials. Think of 'e' for 'envelope' as a way of remembering which is which.

**sterling** - the pound; Stirling – a place in Scotland.

**stimulus** - Plural 'stimuli'.

**Storey** - plural **storeys** (buildings).

**straightforward**

**strategy** - Upper case when used in titles; thus CVS Cooperative Working Strategy, Internal Communications Strategy, but 'the strategy' at second mention. Also the Cooperative Working and Internal Communications strategies.

**stretched off** - Do not use; say carried off on a stretcher.

**subcommittee, subcontinent, subeditor, sublet, sublieutenant, subplot, subsection** - One word

**summer** - Lower case.

**supersede** - Not supercede.

**swap** - Not swop.

**synopsis** - Plural **synopses**.

**I**

**takeoff** - noun; **take off** - verb

**takeover** - One word when used as a noun, but you take over a business (two words).

**talk to** - Not talk with.

**targeted, targeting**

**taskforce**

**taxpayer** - Lower case, one word. But 'council tax payer'.

**teacup, teapot, teaspoon, teabag**

**team-mate**

**telephone numbers** - Like this: 01273 123456 or 0131 677 8787 or 020 7587 2000.

**temperatures** - Thus: 30C (85F) – ie celsius, with fahrenheit in brackets.

**terrace houses** - Not terraced.

**textbook**

**'that'** and **'which'** - That defines, which informs: this is the house that Jack built but this house, which Jack built, is now falling down.

**that** - is too often omitted or deleted from clauses, producing ambiguity.

**the** - Lower case for newspapers (the *Guardian* but *The Scotsman*), magazines (the *New Statesman*), pubs (the Coach and Horses), rock bands (the Beatles, the Verve), sports grounds (the Oval).

Sometimes omitting 'the' reads like jargon: say the Scottish Executive agreed to do something, not 'Scottish Executive agreed', the government has to do, not 'government has to'.

**theirs** - Not their's.

**these kind(s) of things/those kind(s) of things** - Things of this kind/that kind.

**thinktank** - One word.

**thunderstorm**

**time** - Use 4 pm, 3 am, 5.15 pm. Midday, noon and midnight stand on their own and do not need a 12 in front of them.

**titbit** - Not tidbit.

**Titles** - The order of precedence among the peerage is: duke and duchess, marquess and marchioness (some holders use marquis), earl and countess, viscount and viscountess and baron and baroness. Use full title at first mention, then Lord or Lady subsequently except for dukes and duchesses when they are the duke or the duchess. Note: a royal duke should take the capital letter ... the Duke).

**tomato** - Plural tomatoes.

**ton/tonne** - The British ton is 2,240lb. The metric tonne is 1,000 kilograms (2,204.62lb).

**tortuous** - a tortuous road – one that winds or twists.

**torturous** - a torturous experience – one that involves pain or suffering.

**trade names** - Companies guard their brands jealously. Hoover has apparently given up complaining about the generic form 'hoover' with lower case, but Ansaphone (use answering machine instead), Portakabin and Holmatro have certainly not. Likewise Biro objected to a magazine referring to 'biros'.

**trades council, trade unionist, trade union/trade unions, Trades Union Congress (TUC)** - Not trades unions. When more than one union use trade unions.

**tragic** - Use with care, especially avoiding clichés such as 'tragic accident'.

**Treasury, the**

**try to** - People try to reach agreement not try and reach agreement.

**t-shirt** - Not tee-shirt.

**turnover** - noun; **turn over** - verb.

**twofold**

**tying**

**twins** - A pair of twins is four, so be careful.

**U**

**uncooperative** - One word.

**uncoordinated** - One word

**under** - Mostly forms one word when used as a prefix but note: under-secretary, under-side, etc. Do not say under 10 people, say fewer than 10 people.

**underground** - But London Underground for name of company.

**under way** - Not underway.

**uninterested** - Means not taking an interest; not synonymous with disinterested, which means free, unbiased, objective.

**unique** - This is an absolute. You cannot be nearly unique, very unique or almost unique. You are unique or not, nothing in between.

**universities** - Use upper case only when writing the name in full, for example, Edinburgh University.

**Up** - Check, climb, lift, serve, etc, do not have to be followed by 'up.'

**up front** - Two words as an adverb, hyphenated as an adjective.

**up to date** - But an up-to-date appliance.

**US** - for United States, not USA: no need to spell out, even at first mention; America is also acceptable.

**u-turn**

## V

**V** - Roman for versus; not vs. 'Celtic v Rangers.'

**VAT** - First mention value added tax (all lower case) then VAT.

**verb (singular and plural)** - Deciding whether to treat nouns of multitude – words like 'group', 'government', 'majority', 'staff', 'team' – as singulars or plurals is a matter of the sense you wish to convey.

Idiom actually 'disallows' the singular form in the following examples.

The congregation solemnly bowed its heads. [Make it 'their heads'].

The jury has reached a unanimous verdict. [Make it 'have reached'].

But use common sense; the following is obviously wrong:

The committee were smaller when I sat on them.

Take care not to stumble between singular and plural in the same sentence.

This confusing extract is from *The Times*:

'The group, which *has* been expanding vigorously abroad, *are* more optimistic about the second half'.

Headlines should contain active verbs ('dog bites postman').

**Verdicts** - Recorded by coroners; returned by inquest juries.

**veterinary**

**vie, vying**

**VIU** - Voluntary Issues Unit. Write in full on first mention, thereafter use the abbreviation.

## **W**

**wake** - Do not use 'in the wake of' when you mean 'after'.

**walked out** - This implies walking out while the other party is prepared to continue with the talks, marriage or whatever. Only use if that is the case. Otherwise use 'left'.

**wap** - (wireless application protocol) phones. Include explanation in brackets at first mention until they become more widespread. (If ever.)

**war** - Use capitals where it is a recognised war, like Korean War, First World War and Second World War. Do not use World War One, the Great War and do not use the last war. Do not say 'before/after the war' (which war?).

**watercolour, course, mark, proof, works** - One word.

**web/website** – lower case for both. See also **internet**.

If you have to end a sentence using a web address or email address, use a full stop. For example: our web address is [www.stewatrycvs.org.uk](http://www.stewatrycvs.org.uk).

**west, western, the West, western Europe, west of Scotland.**

**Whereabouts** - Singular: her whereabouts is not known.

**whether or not** - Drop the 'or not' if the 'whether' means 'if'. 'The Organiser had to decide quickly whether (or not) the candidate was suitable. Drop the 'or not'. However, if the alternative is being stressed, leave it in. 'The unions will press for action whether the company likes it or not.'

**While** - Not whilst.

**whisky, whiskey** - Whisky comes from Scotland. Whiskey comes from Ireland or America.

**white** - Lower case in racial context.

**white paper**

**who, whom** - From a recent newspaper report: 'The US kept up the pressure by naming nine Yugoslav military leaders operating in Kosovo whom it said were allegedly committing war crimes.'

The 'whom' should have been 'who'. If in doubt, ask yourself how the clause beginning who/whom would read in the form of a sentence giving he, him, she, her, they or them instead: if the who/whom person turns into he/she/they, then 'who' is right; if it becomes him/her/them, then it should be 'whom'.

In the story above, 'they' were allegedly committing the crimes, so it should be 'who'.

In this example: 'Blair was attacked for criticising Hague, whom he despised' – 'whom' is correct because he despised 'him'.

But in 'Blair criticised Hague, who he thought was wrong' – 'who' is correct, because it is 'he' not 'him' who is considered wrong.

**who's** - Means 'who is' but avoid this where possible. 'Whose' is the possessive.

**Winter** - Lower case.

**wipeout** - noun; **wipe out** - verb.

**withhold**

**wit's end**

**work wear**

**World Cup** - (football, cricket, rugby).

**Worldwide** - One word but 'world wide web'.

**world wide web** - All lower case.

**Women** - Noun.

**Wrack** - Seaweed; racked with guilt, not wracked; rack and ruin.

**X**

**xenophobe, xenophobia, xenophobic**

**Xerox** - This is a trademark. Use 'photocopy'.

**Xmas** - Never use. Call it 'Christmas'.

**x-ray**

## Y

**year** - Say '2001', not 'the year 2001'.

**Yellow Pages** -This is a trademark.

**yoghurt** - Not yoghourt, yogurt or yaourt.

**yours** - No apostrophe.

## Z

**z-words** - Where there is an option use the -ise ending as in realise, specialise, harmonise, economise, etc. However, it is still capsize.

**Zero** - Plural 'zeroes'.

**Zigzag** - No hyphen.

# Appendix

## Guidance and Queries Contacts

If you have a query or would require guidance on any aspect of this Toolkit please contact the SoSNet Communications Officer:

Email: [glenmurray@stewartrycvs.org.uk](mailto:glenmurray@stewartrycvs.org.uk)

Telephone: 01557 331666

Fax: 01557 331346

# Appendix

## SoSNet Internal Contacts

### **Borders**

<p><b>Berwickshire Association of Voluntary Service (BAVS)</b></p> <p>Platform 1, Station Road Duns Berwickshire TD11 3HS Tel: 01361 883137 Fax: 01361 884976 E-mail: <a href="mailto:bavs@scvo.org.uk">bavs@scvo.org.uk</a></p>	<p><u>Tony Fowler</u>, Organiser (30 hrs) Mob: 07761497119 <a href="mailto:ajf@bavs.co.uk">ajf@bavs.co.uk</a> <u>Mary Warren</u>, p/t (15hrs) Admin Assistant <u>Sharon O'Brien</u>, p/t (12 hrs) Admin Assistant <u>Victoria Ross</u>, p/t (3 hrs) Admin Assistant <u>Renee Richardson</u>, (35 hrs) Dev. Worker (Eyemouth/Coldstream) - tel Coldstream: (01890) 882988; tel Eyemouth: 01890 751515 <a href="mailto:rene@bavs.org.uk">rene@bavs.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Central Borders Association of Voluntary Service (CBAVS)</b></p> <p>6 Roxburgh Street Galashiels TD1 1PF Tel: 01896 755370 Fax: 01896 759661 E-mail: <a href="mailto:cbavs@scvo.org.uk">cbavs@scvo.org.uk</a></p>	<p><u>Jan Gordon</u>, Development Officer (25 hrs) <a href="mailto:jgordon@cbavs.fsnet.co.uk">jgordon@cbavs.fsnet.co.uk</a> <u>Fiona McCulloch</u>, Administrator (25 hrs) <u>Simon Dyer-Lynch</u>, p/t (17.5 hrs) Dev. Worker-Selkirk Mob: 07801793308 <a href="mailto:vagalashiels@totalise.co.uk">vagalashiels@totalise.co.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Roxburgh Association of Voluntary Service (RAVS)</b></p> <p>1 Veitch's Close Castlegate Jedburgh TD8 6AY Tel: 01835 863554 Fax: 01835 864456 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ravs@scvo.org.uk">ravs@scvo.org.uk</a></p>	<p><u>Heather Batsch</u>, Development Officer (30 hrs) Mob: 07790042175 <a href="mailto:ravsmain@tiscali.co.uk">ravsmain@tiscali.co.uk</a> <u>Alison Watson</u>, Administrator (23.5 hrs) <u>Geraldine Strickland</u>, p/t (17.5 hrs) Dev. Worker (Hawick) – tel (01450) 379800 <a href="mailto:ravs.hawick@tiscali.co.uk">ravs.hawick@tiscali.co.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Tweeddale Association of Voluntary Organisations (TAVO)</b></p> <p>The Volunteer Resource Centre Newby Court, School Brae High Street Peebles EH45 8AL Tel/Fax: 01721 723123</p>	<p><u>Marlene Borthwick</u>, Organiser/Dev Wrkr (12 hrs) (Innerleithen/Walkerburn) <a href="mailto:marlene.borthwick@tavo.org.uk">marlene.borthwick@tavo.org.uk</a> <u>Anne Wannop</u>, Admin. Assistant (16 hrs) <a href="mailto:anne.wannop@tavo.org.uk">anne.wannop@tavo.org.uk</a></p>

### **Borders Forum of Councils for Voluntary Service (BFCVS)**

#### **Staff:**

**Liz Walthew**, Co-ordinator – Based at home: Whitsome Crofts, Duns, Berwickshire TD11 3NG (23 hrs) Tel: 01890 870336  
E-mail: [lizwalthew@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:lizwalthew@ukonline.co.uk) or [lizwalthew@bfcvs.org.uk](mailto:lizwalthew@bfcvs.org.uk)

# Dumfries & Galloway

<p><b>Annandale &amp; Eskdale Council for Voluntary Service (AECVS)</b>          16 High Street          Lochmaben          Dumfries DG11 1NH          Tel: 01387 810974          Fax: 01387 812010</p>	<p><u>Joyce Harkness</u>, (35 hrs) Senior Development Officer <a href="mailto:info@aecvs.org.uk">info@aecvs.org.uk</a>  <u>Barbara Richardson</u>, (35 hrs) Administrator <a href="mailto:admin@aecvs.org.uk">admin@aecvs.org.uk</a>  <u>Vacant post</u>, p/t (20 hrs) Local Dev. Officer <a href="mailto:support@aecvs.org.uk">support@aecvs.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Nithsdale Council for Voluntary Service (NCVS)</b>          Holywood Buildings          Old Assembly Close          Irish Street          Dumfries DG1 2PH          Tel: 01387 269161 or 01387 251192          Fax: 01387 269026          E-mail: <a href="mailto:ncvss@enterprise.net">ncvss@enterprise.net</a></p>	<p><u>Karen Lewis</u>, (35 hrs) Director <a href="mailto:karenlewis@ncvs.org.uk">karenlewis@ncvs.org.uk</a>  <u>Suzanne Lafferty</u>, (35 hrs) Administrator <a href="mailto:suzannelafferty@ncvs.org.uk">suzannelafferty@ncvs.org.uk</a>  <u>Vacant Post</u> – Development Worker</p>
<p><b>Stewartry Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS)</b>          17 Castle Street          Kirkcudbright DG6 4JA          Tel/Fax: 01557 331346          E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@stewartrycvs.org.uk">info@stewartrycvs.org.uk</a></p>	<p><u>Ruth Paterson</u>, (35hrs) Organiser <a href="mailto:ruthpaterson@stewartrycvs.org.uk">ruthpaterson@stewartrycvs.org.uk</a>  <u>Anne Corson</u>, (35 hrs) Administrator <a href="mailto:annecorson@stewartrycvs.org.uk">annecorson@stewartrycvs.org.uk</a>  <u>Marie Jackson</u>, (17.5 hrs) Development Worker <a href="mailto:mariejackson@stewartrycvs.org.uk">mariejackson@stewartrycvs.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Wigtown Council for Voluntary Service (WCVS)</b>          27 Church Street          Stranraer DG9 7JG          Tel/Fax: 01776 705645</p>	<p><u>Eileen Bryant</u>, (15 hrs) Organiser Mob: 07712898757 <a href="mailto:eileenbryant@wcvvs.org.uk">eileenbryant@wcvvs.org.uk</a>  <u>Maureen Rice</u>, Funding Officer (10 hrs)/Administrator <a href="mailto:maureenrice@wcvvs.org.uk">maureenrice@wcvvs.org.uk</a></p>

## Dumfries and Galloway Federation of Councils for Voluntary Service Staff:

**Ian Dyer**, (35 hrs) Federation Co-ordinator – Based at NCVS  
 E-mail: [iandyer@dgfcvs.org.uk](mailto:iandyer@dgfcvs.org.uk)

## SoSnet Central Staff:

**Glen Murray**, (35 hrs) Communications Officer – Based at SCVS  
 Tel/Fax: (01557) 331666/(01557) 331346  
 E-mail: [glenmurray@stewartrycvs.org.uk](mailto:glenmurray@stewartrycvs.org.uk)

**Peggy Taylor**, (35 hrs) Finance & Monitoring Officer – Based at SCVS  
 Tel/Fax: (01557) 331666/(01557) 331346  
 E-mail: [peggytaylor@stewartrycvs.org.uk](mailto:peggytaylor@stewartrycvs.org.uk)

# Appendix

## Media Contacts

### Newspapers

<b>Title</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone number</b>	<b>Email</b>
Annandale Herald	Dumfriesshire Newspapers Ltd	92 High Street, Lockerbie	01576 203895	
Annandale Observer	Dumfriesshire Newspapers Ltd	96 High Street, Annan	01461 202417	
Border Telegraph	Borders Weeklies	113 High Street, Galashiels	01896 758395	
Dumfries & Galloway Standard	Scottish & Universal Newspapers	Maxwelltown Industrial Estate, Glasgow Road, Dumfries	01387 240342	dgnews@s-un.co.uk
Dumfries & Galloway Today	Scottish & Universal Newspapers	Maxwelltown Industrial Estate, Glasgow Road, Dumfries	01387 268800	
Dumfries Courier	Dumfriesshire Newspapers Ltd	96 High Street, Annan	01461 202417	
Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser	Eskdale & Liddesdale Newspapers Ltd	Commercial House, 47a High Street, Langholm, DG13 0JH	01387 380012	
Galloway Gazette Ltd	Scottish Radio Holdings Plc	Victoria Lane, Newton Stewart, DG8 6DA	01671 404760	editorial@gallowaygazette.com
Galloway News	Scottish & Universal Newspapers	144 King Street, Castle Douglas, DG7 1LU	01556 504141	
Hawick News	Tweeddale	24 High		

	Press Group	Street, Hawick		
Langholm Community News	Scottish & Universal Newspapers			
Moffat News	Dumfriesshire Newspapers Ltd	96 High Street, Annan	01461 202417	
Peebles Times	Tweeddale Press Group	Scottish County Press Building, Sherwood Ind Est, Bonnyrigg, EH19	0131 561 6603	
Peeblesshire News	Borders Weeklies	40 Northgate, Peebles	01721 721492	
Upper Nithsdale News	Upper Nithsdale News	Exchange Building, Queens Road, Sanquhar	01659 50177	
Wigtown Free Press	Wigtown Free Press	St Andrews Street, Stranraer	01776 702551	

### Radio Stations

BBC South West Scotland		Elmbank, Lovers Walk, Dumfries, DG1 1NZ	01387 26808	
Radio Borders		Tweedside Park, Tweedbank, Melrose, TD1 3RS	01896 759444	
South West Sound		Campbell House, Bankend Road, Dumfries	01387 250999	

### TV Station

Border TV		The Television Centre, Carlise	01228 525101	
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# Appendix

## Design and Print Suppliers

**M2 Designs**, Yarasin, Burnside Gardens, Kirkcudbright, DG6 4JY  
Tel 01557 330793 Mobile 07810 725921 Email enquiries@m2designs.co.uk  
Website: [www.m2designs.co.uk](http://www.m2designs.co.uk)

# Appendix

## Service Evaluation Form (initial)

### SoSNet Initial Evaluation form

Dear Colleague the CVS has recently provided your organisation with a service. As part as our continuing efforts to provide the best service possible to voluntary organisations and to provide information to our funding bodies, we would like to build a better picture of the service we have provided to you To help us with this we hope that you can spare us a few minutes of your time to complete the questionnaire below and return it to us. The information provided will help us to evaluate the services we provide and make developments for the future. Any information will be kept confidential and in accordance with the Data Protection Act  
If you require any more information please contact:

Name and Address of your organisation

Your name and position held in the organisation

Nature of the work carried out by your organisation

How did you hear about the CVS?

Why did you first approach the CVS?

What was the main service provided by the CVS?

**Please tick the appropriate box for the following questions**

	Very good	Good	Not good	Poor
CVS' helpfulness with your initial enquiry was?				
The service provided to you by the CVS was?				
The quality of information provided by the CVS was?				
The ability of the CVS to listen to the organisation and be guided by them was?				
The ability of the CVS to work together with the organisation was?				

**Please circle Yes or No to the following**

CVS helped the organisation get information on the organisations needs to relevant agencies, such as the Local Authority? Yes/No

If yes which ones

Did your organisation receive funding through the CVS Yes/No

If Yes how much?

How essential was the funding?

How did you use the money?

Did the funding help you to initiate, expand or sustain any Community Services or Projects? Yes/No

Where any jobs/ voluntary posts created from the project? Yes/No

Would you recommend the CVS to other organisations? Yes/No

Are you a member of the CVS? Yes/No

If yes, would you recommend membership to other organisations?

Yes/No

If no, would you consider becoming a member of the CVS? Yes/No

Would you object to the CVS using your details to promote the work of the CVS? Yes/No

Please add any other comments you would like to make at this stage in the space below.

Please return to

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

# Appendix

## Service Evaluation Form (follow-up)

### **SoSNet Follow-up Evaluation form**

Dear Colleague the CVS has recently provided your organisation with a service. As part as our continuing efforts to provide the best service possible to voluntary organisations and to provide information to our funding bodies, we would like to build a better picture of the service we have provided to you To help us with this we hope that you can spare us a few minutes of your time to complete the questionnaire below and return it to us. The information provided will help us to evaluate the services we provide and plan developments for the future. Any information provided will be kept confidential and in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

If you require any more information please contact the CVS:

#### **About you**

Name and Address of your organisation

Your name and position held in the organisation

Nature of the work carried out by your organisation

How many staff are paid employees, if any?

Full time    Part time

How many volunteers do you have?

How long has the CVS been working with you? Please tick one.

0-3 months    3-6 months    6 months-1 year

1-2 years    2-4 years    4+years

How often do you have contact with the CVS? Please tick one.

More than 3 times a month    2-3 times a month    Monthly

Every 2 months    Less often

Is the level of CVS input sufficient for your group?

Yes    No

What sort of contact do you get from the CVS? Please tick all that apply.

- Ongoing support where a CVS worker regularly attends meetings
- A partnership with the CVS where the worker is a partner and regularly attends meetings
- Face to face meetings organised when you ask for them

- Provision of information when you needed
- Provision of regular information offered without request
- Participation in CVS training courses
- Newsletters
- Other (please specify)

Why did you first approach the CVS?

What has the CVS helped your group with? Please tick all that apply.

- |                           |                                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Market Research           | Action Planning                     |
| Helping set up your group | Obtaining Charity Status            |
| Funding Applications      | Fundraising                         |
| Community Consultation    | Networking with other organisations |
| Training                  | Finding information                 |
| Writing Constitutions     | Other (please specify)              |

How did you hear about the CVS? Please tick.

- Word of mouth
- Through a CVS employee/volunteer
- Through another organisation
- Through CVS publicity
- Other (please specify)

Would you recommend becoming a member of the CVS to other organisations? Yes/No

**About the CVS**

What do you think the core work of the CVS should be? Please tick as many as you think appropriate.

- |                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Funding information and advice | Campaigning                          |
| Developing & managing projects | Representing the voluntary sector    |
| Community development work     | Training for community organisations |
| Research                       | Providing desk space/meeting room    |
| Providing office services      | Providing Equipment                  |
| Other (please explain) _____   |                                      |

Could you list in order of priority which of the above services would be most useful to your group?

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1) _____ | 2) _____ |
| 3) _____ | 4) _____ |
| 5) _____ | 6) _____ |
| 7) _____ | 8) _____ |

**Please circle Yes or No for the following questions**

- Do you feel that the CVS responds to your requests quickly? Yes/No
- Has the CVS given you a clear explanation of what it can do to help your project? Yes/No
- Was it clearly agreed what the role of the CVS worker would play in helping your project? Yes/No

Has the CVS worker fulfilled that role? Yes/No  
 Was it clearly agreed what your role would be in your project? Yes/No  
 Is there anything further the CVS can do to help you fulfil your role in your project through training or further intervention Yes/No  
 If yes please specify

Do you feel that the CVS has assisted your project? Yes/No  
 Do you feel that you can contact the CVS at any time? Yes/No  
 Did your organisation receive funding with assistance from the CVS ?  
 Yes/No

If Yes how much?

How essential was the funding?

How did you use the money?

Did the funding help you to initiate, expand or sustain any Community Services or Projects? Yes/No  
 Where any jobs/ voluntary posts created from the project? Yes/No

The CVS often receives consultation and briefing papers which could be of benefit to your organisation, would you like to be part of a mailing list which receives these? Yes/No  
 If yes please provide an email address, or a postal address

Would you be happy for the CVS to pass on your details to other organisations? Yes/No  
 Would you be happy to let the CVS use your details to promote the work of the CVS? Yes/No

Have you received a copy of the CVS newsletter Yes/No  
 Can we improve to contents? Yes/No  
 If yes please elaborate

**How have we helped you?**

Please tick the relevant boxes to indicate how the CVS input has helped your organisation

	Stayed the same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
The knowledge of your organisation's members has			
The skills of your organisation's members has			
The confidence in your organisation in meeting community needs has			

Your organisation's effectiveness in meeting community needs has			
Your organisation's number of useful contacts has			
The quality of life of individuals in you community has			

Please circle the 4 words that best describe CVS input in your project

Interesting      Boring              Confusing      Basic  
 Irrelevant    Clear              Nothing new    Rushed  
 Useful              Comprehensive    Theoretical      Fascinating  
 Valuable      Difficult          Challenging      Unfocused  
 Terrible      Inspiring          Practical          Enjoyable  
 Waste of time    Thought-provoking    Enlightening      Bad  
 Innovative      Reliable          Unreliable          Okay  
 What was the most helpful input from the CVS?

What could the CVS have done better to help your organisation?

What other services do you think the CVS should offer to community organisations?

What do you feel are the benefits of being a member of the CVS?

Could you have got the information/help from elsewhere?    Yes/No  
 If yes, where from?

Are there any other comments you wish to make at this time?

Please return to

Thank you for completing this questionnaire