



21 May to 12 June 2016
The alternative garden festival
www.chelseafringe.com
@chelseafringe

5 Golden Rules for Writing Successful Press Releases

You can give your Chelsea Fringe Project a head start in the publicity stakes if you put out a press release/s and fall over backwards to help the media. Every time you speak to a journalist, they are offering the possibility of an audience of thousands!

Research your local media, local papers, websites and magazines, even local radio stations. Once you start getting media mentions, others will be keen enough to contact you direct as a result of the coverage.

A press release is a written statement to the media. It can announce a range of news items, including different stages in the development of your project, listing details for scheduled events, calls for support, etc. It can also be used to generate a feature story. Reporters are more likely to consider an idea if they first receive a press release. It is a fundamental tool of PR work, one that anyone willing to follow the proper format can use.

Golden Rule 1: Make sure it's news

What is news? News is the plural of new: if it's new, it's news! News implies change. Something happens - in your case you have registered and will be putting on an event or installation of some sort as part of our fifth anniversary Chelsea Fringe Festival.

Golden Rule 2: The Essential 5 Ws

Communicate the "5 Ws" (and the H) clearly - *Who, What, When, Where, Why and How* should tell the reader everything they need to know. Consider the checklist in context with the points below, using the example above to generate your press release:

- **Who** is this about?
e.g. **The Dalston Eastern Curve Garden**
- **What** is the actual news?
Participating and laying on event/installations as part of the Chelsea Fringe Festival 2016
- **When** does this event happen?
21-27 May 2016
- **Where** does this event take place?
The Dalston Eastern Curve Garden, Dalston Lane, Hackney E8
- **Why** is this news?
The Curve Garden has never held an event like this before or this is the 5th year we have been involved or celebrity or mayor opening the event...
- **How** is this happening?
The Chelsea Fringe Festival launches on 21st May and the Dalston Curve Garden project is one of xx projects taking place across London and beyond...

- With the basics defined, fill in the gaps with information about the people, place, event, display, dates and other things related with the news.
- Keep it short and to the point. If you are sending a hard copy, the text should be double-spaced.

Golden Rule 3: Strip Out Superlatives

Once you've written your text, strip out the superlatives: adjectives like 'wonderful' and 'brilliant' are your (biased) opinions and will irritate fact-driven journalists. Superlatives don't belong in the world of news and they're so over-worked that it's unlikely that people pay much attention to them anyway.

Golden Rule 4: Personalise the Release to the Target Media

A local newspaper serves a local community and rarely carries news that can't be related to their readership area.

Local media know their audience. Local radio stations, for example, find that their listeners get irritated if they carry news of offers or events outside their local area, so they don't.

TOP TIP: Turn the media's thirst for local connections to your advantage. If you want local press coverage give them a local connection right up front in the headline and first sentence.

E.g. For the Hackney Gazette:

Dalston's Eastern Curve Garden to Serve up a Host of Events During the 5th Chelsea Fringe Festival 21 May - 12 June 2016

Don't bury your impeccable local connections at the bottom of the release or expect the press to make the connection for you from your address. An average press release gets a three-second scan from busy journalists and they rarely read past the first sentence.

Golden Rule 5: Lay it Out Professionally:

Keep your release down to a single page including the contact details at the foot. That means an upper limit of about 150-200 words per release. You can add more details on a separate sheet called Background Notes.

Keep sentences short and to the point.

Use the word 'ENDS' when the release finishes.

Always include details of the person to contact for further information at the foot of the main press release: with home & mobile numbers, as well as work, and an email address. Be available for at least 24 hours afterwards.

When developing the rest of your release with your answers to the **WHY?** question, bring out the aspects of your event / installation that makes it different from anything else.

Why is it different? / Why is it better? / Why is it new? / Why is it innovative? / What gives it that extra spark that no-one else has?

SAMPLE: PRESS RELEASE: 207 words

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Acton Allotments to Host Turkish Style BBQ as Part of The Chelsea Fringe Festival

Insert your website url if have one

For Immediate Release

Day /Month/Yr

Acton's Old Oak Lane Allotments will be hosting a community barbeque for all allotment holders and friends on Saturday 21st May from 1pm until dusk. This event is part of the **Chelsea Fringe Festival 2016** and aims to showcase how gardening can help towards leading a healthier lifestyle.

Gardening is a physical pastime and burns up a serious amount of calories and we all know that we are supposed to be eating more fruit and veg so Hassan and Rita who chair the Allotment Committee will be barbequing wonderful home grown produce such as courgettes, peppers and aubergines.

Other allotment growers will be juicing their pears and apples and watermelons and everyone will be serving up salads from the allotments and delivering the best and healthiest early summer BBQ.

Hassan Abdullah, chair of the Acton Allotments said, "We as a nation are getting fatter and more unhealthy each year and it's our aim to get more people into gardening, growing and eating home grown healthy produce. The Chelsea Fringe Festival is the catalyst for all of us to get hoeing and growing and our community BBQ day is open to all of our allotment gardeners, so get preparing and let's have a great day on 21st May"

-Ends-

Notes to Editors:

For information on the Chelsea Fringe check out www.chelseafringe.com

For information about Acton Allotments and how to participate in the Chelsea Fringe BBQ day please contact: xxxxx web/ phone/email etc

Photocall Notices are you way to let your media know about a photo opportunity.

If you are planning an official launch or opening for your project/event then be sure to let your local press know about this via a press release. Also, send a photocall notice to the picture desk/picture editor of your local paper/magazine, **IF** there is going to be something worth photographing. Will the photo be novel or unique, feature a local personality (the mayor, local MP...) or a celebrity? If so, the paper might want to send a photographer. The photocall notice should give all the details:

What/Who: Mayor Jules Pipe to launch the Dalston Eastern Curve Garden Chelsea Fringe Exhibit

Where: Dalston Eastern Curve Garden, Dalston Lane E8

When: 9.30am 21st May 2016

Make sure you put contact details of someone involved in the launch/photocall that the photographer can contact to organise the shot.