



# FREEDOM TICKET FOR LIFE

## HOW TO USE YOUR PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

In today's age of 24-hour non-stop news, sending out a press release (preferably by email or by fax) is THE accepted way of giving journalists accurate details of any event or story.

Don't automatically fear the media! Journalists are doing a good job and want interesting local stories but are working to very tight deadlines. Using this template will help you to help them.

### Your main headline:

You are most likely going to be sending your press release to your local newspaper.

Use the main headline to outline your run and that it is planned by a local community member / group / organization. By highlighting the community aspect of the event you will grab the interest of local editors or reporters. This information tells them immediately that the story you are providing is regionally relevant.

### Your sub-headline:

Is optional, but allows you to give a few more key details. For both the main and sub-headline, DON'T waste time trying to think up clever, witty or alliterative headlines – that's the journalist's job! Far better to say it simply! If you are asking others to join in for example, you could simply say 'join us!' or 'take part, get involved'.

### Quotes:

Putting quotes on your press release may well save you time; a journalist writing a short article might be able to use the quote you have provided, and therefore won't need to ring you to get one. It will also highlight and emphasize your run. You can use sentences from the Freedom Ticket For Life pack if you wish.

### Contact details:

The space for details at the top of the press release is VITAL. If journalists need more information, or want to do a large piece they need to be able to see clearly and at a glance whom to contact. You can also repeat your contact details at the end of the press release. You may need to decide on one or more people in your group who are happy to field requests for more information.

### Notes to Editors:

The "Notes to Editors" section at the end is where you can add important background information, like the STOP THE TRAFFIK and Freedom Ticket for Life website. You might want to add basic transport details for getting to your event.

## Organisations:

Names of organisations can take up a lot of space. You can save space by writing, for example, Oldham Boy's Brigade (OBB) and then (OBB) thereafter.

However, when writing STOP THE TRAFFIK please use the full name.

Never assume that a journalist will have heard of human trafficking! Be prepared, if necessary, to insert a few words explaining who you are and what you do/stand for on your press release – see how STOP THE TRAFFIK has been described on the template.

## Information about trafficking:

Remember that you want your press release to result in a story in the local media, whose audiences may know nothing at all about human trafficking. Make sure what you add to the template is easily understood by people from all backgrounds.

## Who to send your press release to:

Local papers love stories about local people doing unusual and charitable things!

You can find contact details for your local paper by:

- Buying a copy and flicking through to find the contents page – you need to speak to the editorial department, in particular the news desk (not the advertising or any other department).
- Using the search facility available at [www.yell.com](http://www.yell.com)

This allows you to search for newspapers based in a particular town or city. It will give you a telephone number and often a website.

NB: If more than one paper is listed, always ring to check that it does cover the town/city/village where you will be holding your event. If not, they may be able to tell you which paper does.

## When to send out your press release:

Most local papers come out either daily or weekly on a particular day. Check in advance and get your press release to them in time. Ideally, you will get coverage both in advance – to let people know your event is happening – and also on the day – e.g. your local paper sends a photographer to get a picture of you in action, and it goes into their next edition or you send them a picture you've taken yourself. You should also send the press release after the run. In this release you can say how many people ran, how much you raised etc and attach some photos.

## Sending out your press release:

Call your local paper and ask to speak to the news desk. When put through, say that you have a local story which you hope they will be interested in and be ready to give them very brief details – be aware that journalists are busy, so keep to the point!

If they tell you that you have called on the day they go to press, then offer to call back the following day when things will be calmer for them.

You will almost certainly be asked to email your press release – don't be afraid to double-check the email address they give you to ensure that it is the correct one. DO get the name of whom you have spoken to.

Send your press release with a brief covering email. Think about what title to put on your email – try to grab the interest and attention of the recipient(s). You could use the main headline from your press release in the title field of your covering email.

Ask as well if the paper has a "what's on" or event listing section that you could potentially send details to.

### Following up:

If you are able to, call a few hours after you've sent the email or the following day to check that it has been received. This is where having made a note of whom you spoke to comes in handy! But don't be pushy about whether or not they are definitely going to cover your run – no one can predict if a major breaking news story will happen on the same day.

### Other media:

As well as contacting your local paper, don't forget local community websites, newsletters etc. In addition to these publicity opportunities, you can also send your press release to local radio and TV programmes, however, do remember that radio and TV programmes need people who are happy to be interviewed and/or filmed and if no one in your team feels happy or confident doing that, then you may want to think twice before sending your press release to these types of media.

