Neighbourhood Watch Press Release
Date:
For immediate distribution/Embargoed until:
Contact Details:

HEADLINE (one line only, in caps, make it punchy and memorable. This is your main chance to grab the reader's attention)

In the first line you'll want to easily summarise the news you are issuing. A good strategy is to consider the five W's about your story - who, what, where, when and why.

A recent example NW used recently (which made it's way to the front page of *The Times*) follows;

"Negative stereotypes (what) of Neighbourhood Watch members (who) as nosy curtain twitchers are offensive, unproductive and responsible for putting people off joining the crime prevention movement (why), its leader said today (when)."

The second paragraph should build out the story with only the essential information that gives your release context. Be selective. Ask yourself why are you releasing this news now and not another time?

The Neighbourhood Watch press release examples follows: "The body, which oversees Neighbourhood Watch schemes across England and Wales, points to recent media coverage where it says its members are unfairly maligned.

"A Guardian column by comic David Mitchell inferred that putting Neighbourhood Watch members in charge of law enforcement would result in crimes such as speeding and burglary being prioritised over online child abuse and modern slavery."

Next you should include quotes from your main spokesperson. Ideally, have just one person quoted as no reporter wants to read a similar quote from three different people.

The quote should give insight, as well as adding colour and flare to the story rather than purely passing on information.

The Neighbourhood Watch example follows: "**John Hayward-Cripps, CEO of the Neighbourhood Watch Network, said:** "Neighbourhood Watch volunteers are often characterized as a group of middle-class keyhole Kate's - spying on the neighbours, interfering in people's lives. This lazy stereotyping is harmful and does not reflect the real work of the modern Neighbourhood Watch."

Try to structure your press release with short punchy sentences rather than overly long paragraphs.

Ends

Always include a name, phone number and email address of a contact that a reporter can follow up with at the end of the main section of the press release. Remember a release is not meant to give the full story but only to create interest in a story. Once you've hooked interest, then you can deliver the full picture.

Note for editors

Here is the opportunity to give general background about Neighbourhood Watch. Treat this as the Any Other Information section of the release. It's common for the same notes to be reproduced on all press releases. The Neighbourhood Watch examples follows; "

1. The David Mitchell column referred to in this press release can be found at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jan/13/david-cameron-and-art-of-blaming-other-people
2. Neighbourhood Watch schemes cover approximately 2.3m households across England and Wales.
3. Neighbourhood Watch is a proven crime deterrent with studies showing a reduction in criminal activity of up to 26% in areas where a scheme is in operation.
4. More information about Neighbourhood Watch, including the ability to join or register a scheme, is available at: www.ourwatch.org.uk
5. The Neighbourhood Watch Network can be found on Twitter (@N_Watch) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/ourwatch).

Further advice on writing press releases can be found at: https://www.theguardian.com/small-business-network/2014/jul/14/how-to-write-press-release

Always try to include a photograph – you're much more likely to get featured. If you do include a photograph, reference it at the end of the press release, with a caption of what/who it depicts, and include on the email as a separate attachment.