

## Why bother with local media?

- You have a story to tell - the media is hungry for stories.
- The local media can help you reach people who will never otherwise come into contact with your church.
- Being 'in the news' helps build your profile and positions the church at the heart of the community.
- It can change perceptions of what the church can offer people
- It's good for the morale of the congregation.
- If you take the initiative, you have a chance to shape the story, rather than letting someone else set the agenda.
- The media can be your allies in tough times.
- News coverage is free - and it's not that difficult!

## What makes a newsworthy story?

**The new** - There's no point publicising an event that happened a few weeks ago. Does it pass the 'so what test'?

**The unusual/different** - '50 people go to church on Sunday' is probably not news. '50 people go to church on Thursday' might be. Or 'Church goes to people at car boot sale'.

**The quirky** - 'Church holds harvest festival in supermarket'.

**The first/biggest/oldest/youngest** - the media love statistics and milestones.

**Genuinely local** - local media want a local angle.

**Something visual** - a good photo opportunity is much more likely to attract the media.

**Case studies** - if your new church hall can now offer excellent value wedding receptions, do you have a couple who' be happy to say why?

**People not things** - look for the human interest - 'church gets new gate' is not very interesting; 'local craftsman makes gate from ancient oak' is more so.

**Connection to current issues** - eg if there's a national report on young people and ASBOs, the club you run for teenagers excluded from school would interest the media.

BUT REMEMBER, news value is relative. A minor story can make the media on a slow news day, but may be binned if a major story breaks.

### So now what?

Research your local media; get to know what they like to cover.

Plan in advance - and write a press release (see our [Guide on how to write a press release](#)).