

Editorial guidelines

Using words correctly to ensure a consistent professional image

November 2021

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Introduction

Together as the Church of England across Waveney and Norfolk, we have the privilege of sharing the good news of the gospel. To ensure this message is shared as clearly and responsibly as possible across our communication platforms, **these editorial guidelines apply to all our content** whoever creates or writes it and wherever and however it is received. They:

- set out the standards expected of everyone making or presenting output;
- help all of us to meet the expectations of our stakeholders and produce distinctive and challenging content to the highest ethical and editorial standards.

This document should be read in conjunction with our branding guidelines which detail use of the Diocese of Norwich's logo and visual style.

Standards (informality, copyright, images, verification, proof reading, language and tone, interaction, length, audience and message)

Guidance on informality

We wish to be friendly and approachable by all and our style should reflect this:

- Capitalise the first letter in a heading, but not the others (unless they are a name), e.g.
 - Engaging with children and young people
 - Finance resources
 - Board of Finance
- Officers or staff member's titles (e.g. **Mr/Mrs/Miss**) should not be used unless they are a priest (e.g. The Revd/The Revd Canon).

Copyright and images

- We should not use content from non-authorized third-party sources - whether pictures, text or other media - without obtaining the necessary permissions.
- Always consider the use of images with your editorial copy. Good images always enhance text. If you need stock images, ask the Communications Team.
- Never use photographs from Google Images or similar unless they are free-licensed, and always check any stock images are copyright free.
- Where appropriate, check if you need to credit the photographer. If you are not sure, do not use the image.
- Always credit clearly if you are quoting from other publications/websites/information and ensure it's accurate.

Verification

- Check your facts are correct before publication.
- Check the links to any outside organisations, publications and information are functioning and are updated as necessary.

Proof reading

- Always have someone else check through what you've written before you publish. A fresh pair of eyes not only to check for literals and grammar, but to see if they appreciate the main message you're trying to get across.

Language and tone

- Respect for our audience demands that we should not casually use words that are likely to offend.
- The tone will differ according to the platform being used. **PCC News** and the website is mostly written in first or second person. Most of our output is formal in tone, but is more informal on social media platforms, more like a conversation.

Length of articles

- This varies according to the publishing platform. If it's mostly a factual report or news piece, 300 - 500 words is a reasonable length.

Audience and message

- Define your primary audience and what you want them to understand or engage with before you start to write. Think about the most appropriate channels to use. Then read it through again to check you've achieved this. Our aim is always to support and enable the work of our churches, parishes and schools and the individuals within them.

Diocese name

- Always use Diocese of Norwich not **Norwich Diocese**
- When referring to the Diocese of Norwich, Diocese always has a capital D
- Avoid the word **Diocesan** wherever possible – instead: the Diocese of Norwich Board of Education.
- When referring to anything managed or coordinated by the Diocese, use: “Diocese’s” (not **Diocese’** or **Dioceses** or **Diocesan**)

Church names

- Church of England
- CofE without spaces or full stops (not **C.ofE.** or **C of E**)
- St Peter’s Church
- Church name, then location: St Edmund’s, Taverham (not **Taverham St Edmund’s**)
- churches or church in all other contexts (even when talking about being Church or the Church)

How to address the clergy

- Clerical titles should always follow the correct Crockford’s style – see ‘How to address the clergy’ at <https://www.crockford.org.uk/faq/how-to-address-the-clergy> for detailed guidance.
- Our house style for clerical titles is: The Revd
- Examples not to use: **Rev Rev. Rev’d Reverend**
- When written within a sentence a lowercase ‘t’ is used, e.g. “and then the Revd <Name>”.
- The Revd [first name, surname], then after, use the first name only.
- When writing documents and articles use the title as a first reference, e.g. the Bishop of Thetford, or the Archdeacon of Norwich, then Christian names for the rest of the article: Bishop Alan, Archdeacon Karen.
- For Bishop of Norwich do not use: ‘The Lord Bishop of Norwich’. Terms such as His Grace should not be used.
- The Dean is an exception. Refer to the Dean of Norwich (not of Norwich Cathedral) on the first occasion, and then the Dean thereafter.
- In general if someone becomes a Rural Dean we don’t need to say **remaining as** as most people will know Rural Deans are parish clergy.
- resigned on rather than **has resigned on**

Style (capitalisation, acronyms, numbers, dates, titles, homophones)

Capitalisation

- As explained above under the 'Guidance on informality' heading, we wish to be friendly and approachable by all and our style should reflect this by only capitalising the first letter in a heading and not the others (unless they are a name). Examples given above.
- A few titles are always capped up, whether you name the person or not (e.g. the Queen, the Pope, Archbishop of XX, Bishop, Archdeacon, Dean) but our style generally is to minimise the use of capital letters.
- Political job titles have initial caps only when the title is next to the name, in whatever order. Thus:
 - The Foreign Secretary, Harold Thomas, said...
 - Headteacher James Tucker, but Mrs Gordon, who has been headteacher since 2015...
 - Churchwarden, Bill Gates who has been a churchwarden
- Key Stage 2
- Eucharist, but eucharistic service
- Bible
- Vision – when talking about the Vision of the Diocese of Norwich
- Rogation Sunday
- For place names: use upper case for recognised regions, and for vaguer political/geographical areas (e.g. the Middle East, Western Europe). Otherwise, lower case (south-west France, east Lancashire). Also, lower case for south Wales, north Wales, mid Wales etc.
- Gospel of Mark or Mark's Gospel, or The Gospels (if referring to the four books specifically but otherwise lower case for preaching the gospel, she took it as gospel etc.
- Deaf/deaf – capital when talking about Deaf people as a community/people group; lower-case when describing the medical condition.
- The Archbishop of Canterbury
- COVID-19, Coronavirus, Covid-secure, during the pandemic, during the global pandemic

Lower case for:

- he and him when referring to Jesus, God, the Holy Spirit
- apostle
- good news
- kingdom (as in kingdom of God/kingdom values)
- internet

Acronyms

- Use the abbreviated form of a title without explanation only if there is no chance of any misunderstanding (e.g. UN, Nato, IRA, BBC). Otherwise, spell it out in full at first reference, or introduce a label so:
 - the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC)
 - Multi Academy Trust (MAT)
 - Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT).
 - Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM's) – (no longer referred to as 'Readers' except on database)
- There are a few exceptions:
 - the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence is capped up i.e. NICE
 - the UK Independence Party is capped up i.e. UKIP
 - Seasonal Affective Disorder becomes SAD ('Sad' would be confusing).
- For names with initials, we avoid full stops and spaces (i.e. JK Rowling and WH Smith). When abbreviating a phrase, rather than a name or title, use lower case (i.e. lbw, mph).

Numbers and dates

- Monday 8 September 2019
- 6.30pm (with a full stop not a colon, and we do not use 24 hour clock, e.g. **18.30**)
- 21st century
- Bible references should be written: John 3.16-17 John 3:16,17
- Words for number less than 10, numbers for 10 and above. However, words if starting a sentence with a number.

Preferences

- per cent, not **%** or **percent** when in articles (permissible in social media for sake of space).
- Churchyard not **graveyard** (unless it's a council/municipal one)

Titles

See the 'How to address the Clergy' section earlier in this document.

Other titles

- book titles, publication names and songs/hymns, lectures, exhibitions: italic, except in headings
- book titles for reviews: Main title: subtitle
- events: max caps, inverted commas

URLs/links: bold when in print, otherwise hyperlink is sufficient in digital media.

Homophones

Easily mixed up, so try to commit to memory:

- Affect/effect - The verb "to affect" means "to have an influence on"; "to effect" means "to cause, accomplish". In most cases affect will be the verb, effect the noun.
- Altar/alter – for communion/to change.
- Bail/bale – Use bail for the temporary release of someone awaiting trial. To bail out is to help a company or person with financial problems (noun: bailout). Use bale out for removing water from a boat or jumping out of a plane.
- Complement/compliment - To complement means to make complete or supply what is lacking. Whether as a noun or verb, compliment means (to) praise.
- Defuse/diffuse - first is to make safe an explosive; second is something that's widespread.
- Discreet/discrete - first means "careful" or "tactful"; second means "distinct and separate".
- Enquiry/inquiry - "enquiry" to refer to the general sense of "ask a question," whereas inquire and inquiry are used in contexts of formal investigations.
- Fazed/phased - someone who is disorientated or disconcerted can be described as fazed, whereas phased means "introduced in stages".
- Formerly/formally - first means previously; second according to convention.
- Forward/foreword – first is a directional word meaning ahead. A foreword is a short introductory section in a book.
- Gate/gait - first is an entry; second is a manner of walking.
- Hangar/hanger - a hangar is where aircraft are kept. A hanger is for putting clothes on.
- Hyperthermia/Hypothermia - first is where the body temperature is greatly above normal. Hypothermia is where the body temperature is markedly below normal.
- Illicit/elicit - first means illegal; second is to extract something, usually information.
- Licence/license - The noun is licence with a "c" (e.g.: driving licence); the verb has an "s" (e.g.: our clergy are licensed to officiate).
- Practice/practise - the noun has a "c"; the verb has an "s". He's a practising lawyer running his own practice.
- Principal/principle - first means "first in order of importance" or a school head; second means "a rule or belief governing one's personal behaviour".
- Programme/program – we prefer programme, although program is often used in computing contexts.
- Rein/reign - first is used on horses; second is what monarchs do. So, you would rein in spending or take over the reins.

Spelling (a/an, fewer/less, that/which, who/whom, who's/whose, split infinitives)

- As a general rule, refer to the Oxford English Dictionary – and where there is an option choose the first use – see list below for common ones.
- One exception is that we use ...ise rather than ...ize - hence, recognise and not recognize; specialise and not specialize. It is also our style not to use **x** in the middle of a word where there is an alternative spelling of ct – hence:
 - inflection not inflexion;
 - reflection not reflexion;
 - connection not connexion.

A/an

- Pronunciation is the key. Use “an” before any word or abbreviation beginning with a vowel sound, including words beginning with a silent “h” (as far as we know there are only four of these: hour, honour, heir, honest and their derivatives). You use “a” with consonant sounds (e.g.: unicorn), including words beginning with an “h” which is pronounced (e.g.: hat, hotel).

Fewer/less

- Use fewer when you can count something, as in “The committee wants to have fewer meetings next year”. If you cannot count it, use less, as in “Voters are calling for less bureaucracy”. The same rule applies for percentages: hence, you would be correct to say “less than 30 per cent of the hospital survived the fire” and “fewer than 30 per cent of the patients were rescued”.
- Do not use **no less than** with numbers – say e.g. “He exceeded the speed limit on no fewer than 12 occasions”.
- However, ages, heights and weights take less e.g. “Tom Thumb was less than 3ft (91cm) tall”; “Police say the man is less than 30 years old”; “She weighs less than seven stone (44.5kg)”.

That/which

- Generally: “that” defines, and “which” informs. So: in the sentence The house that Jack built is to be knocked down, the phrase “that Jack built” is included to differentiate his house from the houses built by Jill, the Three Little Pigs, Wimpey etc. It defines which house we are talking about. Compare: The house, which Jack built, is to be knocked down - where the fact that Jack was the builder is the new information.

Who/whom

- The rule is that “who” is the subject of a verb, and “whom” is the object. Where the “who” or “whom” introduces a new clause, work out which pronoun would be correct if you were to create a separate sentence. If the answer is “he”, “she” or “they”, then the clause should begin with who. If the answer is “him”, “her” or “them”, then it should be whom - e.g.: Mr Smith ignored Mr Clarke, whom he disliked is correct, because he disliked “him”. And Mr Smith ignored Mr Clarke, who he believed had been disloyal is also correct - because he believed “he” had been disloyal.

Who’s/whose

- The apostrophe is needed if the meaning is “who is” or “who has”. It represents the missing letter or letters - e.g.: Who’s a pretty boy, then? and Who’s left the cage open? (This is relevant only for direct quotes since it is our policy otherwise not to use contractions.) The apostrophe is inappropriate where you are indicating possession - e.g.: Whose parrot is this?

In these cases where there are more than one spelling, our preferences are:

- adrenalin
- adviser (but advisory)
- Caesarean
- dispatches
- focused/focusing
- impostor
- jail
- judgement
- medieval
- protester
- tsar (rather than czar)
- yoghurt

Split infinitives - are **not** banned. Split the infinitive if the alternative looks ugly – e.g. “He said his wages were going to more than double.”

Contractions – **generally** do not use contractions such as “don’t”, “isn’t”, “can’t” in news stories (except in direct quotes). Spell it out: do not, is not, cannot etc.

Punctuation (abbreviations, apostrophes, commas, semi-colons, quotation marks, hyphens)

Abbreviations

- e.g. not **eg**
- i.e. not **ie**

Apostrophes

- Apostrophes indicate either possession (e.g.: the children's nanny, the emperor's new clothes, journalists' pay) or the omission of one or more letters (e.g.: It's a lovely day today; Life's a bitch; Who's been sleeping in my bed?). There is no apostrophe in the possessive "its" (e.g.: Virtue is its own reward).
- Some common abbreviations do not require apostrophes (e.g.: phone, plane, flu). It's wits' end and winner's medal.
- Dates do not require apostrophes (e.g.: 1900s) - unless the century is omitted (e.g.: the England squad of '66).
- Neither are apostrophes generally needed for plurals (e.g.: MPs, MBEs), but they are for the pluralisation of letters of the alphabet (e.g.: Our task now is to dot the i's and cross the t's).
- For names, use the possessive 's whenever possible - e.g.: Burns's, Jones's, Charles's, James's, Dickens's, Phillips's. But be guided by how the last syllable of the name is pronounced - e.g.: Jesus', Bridges', Moses', Hodges', Griffiths', Walters' - also Wales' and dioceses'.
- There should be an apostrophe before the word "time" in sentences such as The game will be played in two weeks' time or They stop work in an hour's time.

Commas

- Used properly, commas can eliminate ambiguity and make blocks of text more digestible - especially important when you are converting the spoken word into copy.
- But they can also create unnecessary clutter and may often be avoided, e.g. by not including a definite article with a title (Foreign Secretary Erica Simmons protested... rather than "The Foreign Secretary, Erica Simmons, protested...").
- Neither are they needed where you are using a "job description" - whether it fits more than one person (e.g.: Footballer David Jones has been taken to hospital) or one specific individual (e.g.: England football captain Roy Rover has...).
- **Oxford/serial comma**: only use when good editing cannot make a sentence clear.

Semi-colons

- Semi-colons connect related independent clauses: the group of words that comes before the semi-colon should form a complete sentence, the group of words that comes after the semicolon should form a complete sentence, and the two sentences should share a close, logical connection:
- I ordered a cheeseburger for lunch; life's too short for counting calories.
- Use semi-colons in a serial list. Delete the conjunction when you use a semi-colon.

Quotation marks

Quotation marks should be single:

- In headlines and cross-heads (e.g.: UK 'to leave EU'); in promo text and for quotes within quotes (e.g.: Tom Bone said: "They say, 'The Labour Party is finished' before every election") and inside quote boxes (e.g.: They sprayed 'go home' on our front door – Sandra Harris).
- In headlines where the attribution is clear, do not include unnecessary quote marks (e.g. Britain won't hold referendum, says PM rather than Britain "won't hold referendum", says PM).

Quotation marks should be double:

- Outside the categories listed above - in regular text, summaries and picture captions. Also, at first use of phrases such as "mad cow disease" or "road rage". (But quotation marks will be single if the phrase comes inside a direct quotation (e.g.: The minister said: "The spread of 'mad cow disease' had ruined thousands of lives.") Either way, no punctuation is required after the first reference.
- Open quotation marks when a person is speaking. If the quote continues over several paragraphs, continue to open quote at the start of each new paragraph, only closing at the end of the final paragraph to denote the end of that particular person's quote/speech.

Hyphens

- ...are often essential, if the text is to make immediate sense. The headlines *Mother-to-be assaulted* and *Mother to be assaulted* are telling very different stories - just as an *easy seal pack* and an *easy-seal pack* conjure up very different images and *She never gives tips to black-cab drivers* is a world apart from *She never gives tips to black cab drivers*.
- There are no universal rules on hyphens, but in general do not overuse. They are required for compound adjectives, as in: "If I come with you in first class, will you buy me a first-class ticket?" But they are not used when part of the adjective is an adverb ending in -ly: "badly researched report", "severely wounded man", "newly cleaned car".
- We would say Jim Smith is a father of two but it's father-of-two Jim Smith. Likewise Jim Smith is 25 years old but 25-year-old Jim Smith.
- Phrasal verbs are constructions such as *build up*, *turn out*, *drive in*, *take over*. Some need hyphens when they are used as nouns. Those ending in -in, -to, -on or -up use a hyphen (*check-up*, *break-in*, *turn-on*). Nouns ending in -off have a hyphen (*pay-off*, *turn-off*, *drop-off*) but those ending in -out do not (*payout*, *turnout*, *dropout*, *bailout*). Nouns where the second part is four or more letters are one word: *takeover*, *clampdown*, *giveaway*, *setback*, *lookahead*, *runaround*. Rare exceptions are where two vowels need to be separated by a hyphen, as in *go-ahead*, though this isn't always necessary.
- In general, use a hyphen to separate repeated letters in a compound word - *re-emergence*, *co-operative*, *film-maker*, *night-time* - but there are some exceptions, including *overrun*, *override*, *overrule*, *underrate*, *withhold*. . ***As usual, consult the Oxford English Dictionary if in doubt.***

Examples of words and phrases which do and don't need hyphens:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| • A-level - also AS-level, O-level | • heatwave | • sat-nav |
| • all-age | • holidaymaker | • seabed |
| • asylum seeker | • homegrown/homemade | • schoolchildren |
| • best-seller, best-selling | • lamp-post | • second half, second-half - no hyphen in the noun, but there is a hyphen in the adjective |
| • by-law | • multicultural | • short-term, in the long term - as an adjective it takes a hyphen, but no need for one for the noun |
| • clear-cut | • off-peak | • smartphone |
| • co-ordinate/co-ordinator/co-ordinating | • peacekeepers, peacekeeping | • think tank |
| • crowdfunding | • plane-spotter, train-spotter (but no hyphen in the book/film <i>Trainspotting</i>) | • touchline |
| • crowdsourcing | • quarter-final | • three-quarters (and other fractions) |
| • filmgoer (also theatregoer, partygoer etc) | • reopen | • under age - a child may be under age but is an under-age child |
| • film-maker | • retweet | • X-ray |
| • flypast | • right-wing, left-wing - hyphenated if used adjectivally; no hyphen if used as a noun | |
| • full-time | • rollercoaster | |
| • fundraising | | |
| • half-time | | |
| • handheld | | |

Who to contact

The Communications team are here to help and support everyone in the implementation of these guidelines across all areas of the Diocese.

To seek clarification or advice your first point of contact should be: news@dioceseofnorwich.org