

Guidelines for Submissions to the Crime Reduction Website

1. Introduction

Please read these guidelines carefully.

This document provides the rules on what is and isn't acceptable for publication on the Crime Reduction Website, and advice on how to make your submission to the site as useful as possible for other practitioners. This document is also available in online at www.crimereduction.gov.uk/submissions.htm and PDF format.

2. Submissions

Material submitted to the Crime Reduction Website will be edited and collated by the Web Team prior to posting on the site.

Material submitted to the website which does not meet these guidelines will be returned to its originator.

The decision of the website manager on the inclusion of material on the website shall be final.

You can submit information by sending either an article or web link to submissions@crimereduction.gov.uk.

What to include in crime reduction projects or initiatives

- information on the context in which the project/initiative was implemented - identify any special circumstances or 'hidden ingredients' which may have contributed to success or failure
- clear negative findings - what doesn't work is as important to know as what does work
- details of the intervention mechanisms (the principles by which the initiative blocked the causes of the crime problem, eg restricting resources for offending)
- details of the intervention method (how the intervention was put into effect, eg clearing up bricks and bottles in the town centre before Saturday night drinking),
- details of the implementation process (how the intervention was targeted on the causes of the crime problem, designed and delivered)
- any insertion methods of particular interest (how other people or organisations in the community were mobilised to implement the method or otherwise support the initiative).
- avoid "press release syndrome" - press releases tend to be short-lived and unless they are of national import or introduce a nationally innovative scheme or project capable of replication elsewhere, tell other practitioners very little that would be of use to them.

3. General rules & disclaimers

Material submitted to the website must not be malicious or designed to offend. In particular, the use of swear words or undue profanity is discouraged.

You should remember that you are legally responsible for what you write. By submitting material for inclusion on the website you undertake to indemnify the Home Office and its employees and sub-contractors against any liability arising from any breach of confidentiality, copyright or other intellectual property right published by you on this site and against all damages, losses, claims and costs (including without limitation all expenses incurred in conducting or defending any proceedings) arising from any such publication.

You must not make statements that are libellous, obscene, seek to incite racial hatred or otherwise break the laws of the United Kingdom.

No advertising is allowed except where it is for an event, publication or similar item that has direct relevance to a website topic or topics. The site doesn't currently carry links to commercial organisations or endorse commercial products. We link to public sector, voluntary sector and non-profit making organisation's websites that are primarily focused on crime reduction.

The decision of the webmaster on the inclusion of material on the website shall be final.

By virtue of your submission of material to the Crime Reduction Website, you will be deemed to have agreed to abide by these rules.

4. Language

Website content should be written for the target audience - crime reduction practitioners. Consider what a practitioner will want and phrase your material to suit them.

Follow these guidelines:

Use plain English and short sentences. The Plain English Campaign have made available a number of helpful short guides.

Avoid using technical terms. If you use them, explain them. Consider a glossary - this can go at the end of the document with hyperlinks between a term and its glossary entry.

Avoid acronyms - use the full name. If an acronym recurs within a paragraph you can use it for the second occurrence, but the nature of the web means that you cannot rely on users reading every paragraph in a document. They may skim through to a paragraph that looks interesting, or they may follow a hyperlink to a section deep within the document and not read any initial explanatory matter.

It is harder to read long documents on screen than it is on paper. Aim to write in reasonably short, snappy sections which can effectively stand alone (aim to make them no longer than three or four screens). Make extensive use of section headings.

In a long document put section headings at the top of the document - readers use them to jump directly to the section that they are interested in. References from one section to another can also be made into hyperlinks.

When there is no alternative to a long document give a brief summary at the top. Many readers will not want to read the full document and this allows them to make an informed choice. Consider writing an executive summary and linking to the full text of the document in an easily printable format.

5. Text

Web-page templates will govern the font used on the site. You should be aware that it is possible for users to override any fonts and font colours specified in the web-page (and some users still use black and white monitors and/or non-graphical browsers). Do not rely on the colour of text to differentiate it: use bold or italics which are more widely supported (you can use italics as well as bold). You can also differentiate text by indenting it.

Italics should not be used for extended passages of text - it can be difficult to read on screen.

Underlined text is also best avoided, since users may mistake the text for a hyperlink.

Text boxes can be used on web-pages, to emphasise key points. The background colour of the box should be kept pale, to maximise contrast with the text.

For accessibility reasons (see below), text boxes should be inserted between paragraphs, rather than at the side of the main text, as would often be done in printed publications.

6. Links

Links to related websites are a very useful way of giving access to further information and website users like to see them. If you know of related sites, include a list. Each link should be supported by a brief description of the information available there to allow users to make an informed decision about using the link.

The website manager will check hyperlinks and will return to the originator submissions which have missing or broken hyperlinks.

For links to other sections within a document put in the text to form the link and put in brackets after it "Link to:" and the document/section you want to link it to. The link will be put in at a later stage.

For links to related sites just give the web address of the site. The actual link will be added later.

It is common practice to add links as a separate section (usually at the end of the text). In some cases it may be useful to link to another site from within a paragraph. If you do this, tell users that the material they will be accessing is on another site: e.g. "further information can be found at the ABC website", rather than just "click here for more information".

7. Images

Images can be very effective in conveying information but bear in mind that this website is deliberately designed to be text-rich with a minimum of graphics. This makes pages fast to download, easy to print and suitable for a variety of browser software.

If you intend to use images make sure that they actually add value to your material. A photograph of the author, for example, adds nothing. Images add to download time and therefore to the phone bills of readers.

JPEG and GIF images are the only types accepted for publication. Images should be no more than 30Kb and no more than 300x300 pixels. Where there is a specific requirement for a larger image (such as a technical diagram) it may be possible to use a thumbnail and full-screen version. Contact the web team for further details.

8. Accessibility

To ensure that the website is accessible to partially sighted/blind users, please consider the following:

Text, including headings, should be left-aligned

Sentence case should be used for all text and headings.

Avoid presenting text in multiple columns - while there are ways of replicating this on the Internet they are not suited for partially sighted/blind users.

Use of tables should be minimised - many blind/partially-sighted users have equipment that ignores cell boundaries and reads straight across the table rather than a cell at a time.

Give meaningful descriptions with images (use ALT-tags)

For more information on making your web pages accessible to the widest audience, visit [The World-Wide-Web Consortium \(W3C\) Website Accessibility Initiative](#).

9. Adobe Acrobat (PDF format) files

There may be a need to reproduce some documents that have been carefully designed as printed publications, for example some publicity material. This is possible using Adobe PDF format, which ensures that the "look" on screen is the same as that in the original document. PDFs would usually be provided by the document's designers/printers. Reading PDFs requires special software and although this is free and widely available, some users dislike it. If material is provided in PDF then consideration should be given to providing either the full text or a summary in HTML format so that site visitors have a choice. Bear in mind that PDF files are more taxing on the eye to read on-screen, so should only be used where it is intended that visitors will print out copies of the document to their local printer.

PDF files are often quite large, so can take longer to download. Consequently all PDF files on the site are prefixed by an introductory page

that gives a summary of what the user will find in the PDF, allowing an intelligent decision to be made about whether or not to download the document in full.

10. Maintenance

All documents published on the website will have a 'Last update' date

The Crime Reduction Centre will operate a maintenance system to identify out of date material and alert originators. **This is intended as a back-up to your own webpage review systems.**

11. Further advice

If you need further help or guidance please contact:

The Web Team
The Hawkhills
Easingwold
North Yorkshire
YO61 3EG
Tel 01347 825064
Email: webteam@crimereduction.gov.uk

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