



HOME STUDY FOR TENANTS

CONSTRUCTING A NEWSLETTER

WORKBOOK

AIM

The aim of this self-study pack is to assist you design and produce a newsletter.

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN IN THIS WORKBOOK

Methods and techniques for designing a newsletter. Hints and tips to make the job easier.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Go through it at your own pace. Stop for a break whenever you want. When you start up again, look back at the section you had just completed.

As you go through the workbook you are asked to carry out tasks.

If you get stuck on something, try the following:

- ❖ Leave aside and try again later
- ❖ Turn back pages in the workbook looking for clues and ideas
- ❖ Phone TIS for assistance - use our free phone number 0800 731 3772 or reverse the charge

HELLO

Hello and welcome to this Newsletters Workbook. It is hoped that you find the workbook informative, enjoyable and easy to use. Take your time and carry out the tasks at your own pace, remember to follow the order of the book and don't miss sections or jump ahead to others too soon.

INTRODUCTION

Most people read newspapers or magazines on a daily basis because they are interested in what's going on around them, and like to find out others views on current events. Many tenants/residents groups produce their own newsletters to keep their membership up to date, to get their ideas and opinions across to a wider audience and to get feedback from their leadership. Newsletters also help groups from different areas keep each other informed and share ideas and tactics.

Task 1

List three reasons why you think people read newspapers.

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Task 2

There are a number of reasons why groups produce a newsletter. List the reasons you wish to produce a newsletter.

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Are your answers the same as listed below?

- *To publicise members' views
 - *To recruit new members
 - *To seek other tenants views
 - *To gain support for your group
 - *To promote discussion locally
 - *To keep members up to date
- [There may be more than one reason]

When producing a newsletter it should be clear whom the newsletter is it aimed at

- *Members of the tenants' group
- *Other local people
- *Local people in general
- *The wider tenants' movement
- *Politicians
- *Agencies, e.g., Housing Dept.

Task 3

Who is your newsletter aimed at? List below

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📅 FREQUENCY OF ISSUE

How often you can produce a newsletter will be determined by a variety of factors for example, the amount of news you have to share, the capabilities and resources of your group. If you are an occasional newsletter producer try to link your copies of your newsletter with specific events for example key campaign dates, a Christmas edition or Summer Special, your Annual General Meeting. It should be made clear in your newsletter how often you intend to produce it.

- *Every week [although this would be quite a commitment]
- *Every month
- *Every two months
- *Quarterly
- *Twice yearly
- *Annually
- *As and when you need to

Task 4

Think how many times you and/or your group wish would wish to produce a newsletter in the year. Try not to be over ambitious about what you can actually achieve. Detail below:

📖 NEWSLETTER SUB GROUP

Establishing a newsletter sub group to plan each issue within your group, is a good idea. Decide who will be responsible for contributing articles.

Will it be sub-group members only, or any group member, or other local organisations. Set publication deadlines in advance. This is especially necessary if the newsletter is to advertise a public meeting or event. If it is possible plan well ahead as this keeps you on track to know when certain things have to happen e.g. articles in by, layout completed by, date for printing, distribution deadlines.

📖 SIZE OF PAPER

Decide what size of newsletter you require a lot will depend on costs.

- ◆ A5 (half of this size sheet of paper)
- ◆ A4 (this size)
- ◆ A3 Twice this size (usually comes folded)

A5 (half this size) or A4 (maximum) are the normal options for leaflets. The size of sheets used, and the number of newsletter pages will have implications for the cost of photocopying or printing. Use the best quality of paper you can afford.

📖 RESOURCES

You will require a number of resources. Such as people, time, typing facilities, word processor or computer, graphics, cartoons, illustrations, photocopying or printing facilities, means of distribution. It is a good idea to make a list of what you need and the likely costs. You may consider applying for grant assistance to help you meet these costs, but remember the most important resources are the people who contribute to the newsletter's production.

Task 5

What resources do you need? Are they available?

Make a list of what you need.

Resources:	Available:	Required:

(Your list maybe longer)

📖 CONTENTS

It is important to decide what issues or ideas do you want to highlight in your publication. Make a List of them, in order of importance. This will help you work out what to put on the front page of a newsletter as your headline story, and what to put in the subsequent pages. Decide if your newsletter will contain any regular features. For example,

- *Letters page
- *Editorial
- *Crosswords
- *Photos

- *contacts section
- *Advertising local events
- *Cartoons
- *Quizzes

📖 DESIGN

The purpose of good design is to make your publication easy to read and attractive to the eye. Pages should look balanced and well thought out. **The best way to design your newsletter is to copy someone else's.** Find a newsletter produced by another group and try copying its style and layout. Nowadays there are computer packages such as "desk top publishing" that makes the design of a newsletter very simple.

📖 DISTRIBUTION

Give careful consideration to how the newsletter will be distributed for example, round the doors, in public places, shops, or community centres. They are no good lying on a shelf.

Task 6

How do you intend to distribute your newsletter? List Below

📖 AND FINALLY

The illustration sheet contained in the next page gives you some idea of style and layout. It's now over to you to have a go at producing your own newsletter. The final page in the workbook contains a checklist to help you evaluate your newsletter. We hope you enjoyed using this workbook and look forward to adding your newsletter to the others in our resource library.

Here is a guide, which we hope you will find useful to help you evaluate your newsletter.

Front Page

YES NO

- Does it contain the name of the organisation?
- Does it have the date of issue?
- Does it contain something of importance?
- Does it make the newsletter look interesting?
- Is the layout attractive and uncluttered

General Appearance

SCALE 1 to 5

- Does the newsletter look neat and attractive?
- Do headings and layout of stories reflect their comparative importance?
- Is the type clear?
- Are the layout and illustrations effective?

Content

YES NO

- Is it aimed at the general public?
- Does it say who is doing what in the newsletter?
- Does it say what is happening over the next week/month?
- Does it show the scope of the organisation's activities?
- Does it have local news?
- Is the space well used?
- Does it say who is responsible for compiling the newsletter?

Style

YES NO

- Is it readable and to the point
- Will the language be understood and appeal to the general reader
- Are the headings appropriate?
- Is there repetition or monotony?

Tone

YES NO

- Does the newsletter give a good impression of the organisation?
- Does it indicate a membership actively working towards the Objectives of the organisation
- Does it show an organisation that is wanting to involve all sections of the community?

📄 WHAT NEXT?

Phone or write to TIS to ask for the Checkback pack for this workbook.
We'll send it to you straight away.

In it you will get: -

- ❖ A "Things to Remember" sheet of helpful hints
- ❖ A suggested list of other information sources on Newsletters
- ❖ A list of other course in the TIS "**Home Study for Tenants**" series
- ❖ A questionnaire to allow you to give us feedback on how well or how badly this course worked for you
- ❖ **A Certificate of Completion**

**For the moment - Congratulations in completing this workbook.
We hope you enjoyed learning this way and that you will go on and
do more of the course in the series.**



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