

5 Photographs

Part of your familiarisation campaign with your local media needs to include what photos they will take, what resolution they require and how they want to receive them. Never send large files of photographs to a newspaper or magazine without checking with them first. If it crashes their inbox your email will be the most unpopular of the day.

If your newspaper has a picture editor, find out who they are and send them a copy of any media invitations which involve the opportunity for photography. Often they are the one who makes the decision about where the staff photographers go and even if a journalist does not turn up to your event a photographer might and you might get a picture story with an extended caption. Remember they say a picture speaks a thousand words. If your story is really visual or quirky or striking (remember the Newcastle/Gateshead 'Pink Link'?) try sending the release to the Press Association picture desk and the nationals picture editors. Depending on what else is in the news, you might make the big time!

Always use a good photographer. Do you have a professional or semi professional in your club or does a club member have a family member or friend with suitable skills? Some local newspapers use freelancers who are very willing to work for us too. The advantage is that they will already know the picture editor and know the type of photos they will take, plus they have one foot in the door. If you choose carefully they are often not too expensive either.

Plan the timing of the media invitation for photographers carefully. If it is a photocall as part of a bigger event, such as a tree planting, ribbon cutting or a programme action activity of some sort, make sure that the photographers can attend, get their photo and get away promptly. Don't make them wait through long speeches and presentations or you will find they have dashed off to the next job and you have lost your picture. It is even worth 'mocking up' the activity for the camera half an hour before, if all your key participants are there (if need be with two lots of ribbon to cut) just to get the photo you want and to let the photographer escape.

Remember too that although journalists are out gathering news in long shifts often local and regional newspaper journalists work Monday to Friday so if you are planning a big story, think about trying to get the photocall scheduled for the Friday or Monday. If really does have to be a weekend, Saturday mornings are about the best time, as weddings and sports events will often drag photographers away in the afternoon.



Tell them who is in the picture – one trick is to hand the photographer a copy of the press release after they have taken the photos. If there is a line up stand next to the photographer (out of his/her way!) and print in block capitals on the press release sheet, the names of the people in the photo from left to right spelling all names and titles carefully including Soroptimist. If more than one line up or group shot is done, number them in the order they are taken. It makes the photographer's job so much easier and your printing will be way better than their writing. As well as being the photographer's new best friend, you will also have a friend in the picture editor who has to sort this lot out. It sounds obvious really but if you don't do it, I promise you there will be errors in the caption.

Keeping it Legal

The laws about privacy have become even more strict in recent years. It is important to protect yourself, your Club and the organisation when taking photographs at a public event or one being held by the Club to which members of the public have been invited (whether paying for entry or not). The rules are especially tight when it comes to taking photographs of children. A photograph taken of you is regarded in law as being part of your personal data, in other words subject to data protection and other privacy laws. Before you take a photograph whether it is of a group or an individual you should always seek their permission,. At Club events we pretty much take this for granted, if you attend as a Soroptimist you expect to have your picture taken and you expect it to be used for the media, on the website, in a publication or in a powerpoint presentation at some time. You can never make this assumption about non Soroptimists and you should always ask their permission. It is recommended that if you are running a large event and lots of members of the public are present it is wise to make a statement at the beginning when you do the housekeeping, fire exit, toilet locations, mobile phone announcements. For example:

“During this event Club Members/ photographers/ film crews will be taking photos shooting DVD footage etc. These will be used purely to promote Soroptimists/ the charity/the campaign etc and not used for any commercial gain. We hope you will not have any objection to this, but if you do not wish your photo to be taken please signify this clearly to the person behind the camera.”



The law is even more restrictive about children. If children under 18 are present and you want to take pictures of them, even in a group, it is advisable to get their parents, teachers, guardians, other supervisors eg Guide or Scout Leaders etc to sign the proforma which you will find on the PR page of the Members Only Section of the website. This grants permission for the children's photos to be used. A copy of the signed form should be sent with the photo to the newspaper or magazine also to Soroptimist News. On the whole the protocol in recent years is not to identify individual children by name in a publication if they are photographed in a group eg 'the winners with their posters' or 'Simon, the winner of the 6 years and over competition' etc.