

In recent months I have had to spend more and more time re-writing and re-formatting requests to get them into a fit state to send out. Items are sent in a format I can't read or can't use, information is missing - and often people expect me to actually write the entire notice for them. It's got to the point where I am often having to spend 30-60 minutes PER MESSAGE to get them fit for sending,

Also information is often missing from a request. When this happens I have to spend time trying to chase it down. Otherwise readers will email or phone ME to ask for more info about your event or for-sale item. Aside from the fact that it's not my job to be everyone's PA, I can't answer the questions anyway! And sometimes people then get angry/abusive with me for not knowing about your event.

So I'd just like to outline again what information I need and what format it should be in. From now on mail that isn't in a format I can use, or which has information missing, will not be processed.

Also please remember - email notice requests must come to notices@tackleyvillage.co.uk and NOT to my personal email address.

Here's a brief list of what I need:

1. Contact Information:

All email notices must have a contact name and either a contact phone number or email address with it. Without this, how do you expect people to contact you if they want more information? There have even been occasions in the past where I personally have received abuse in response to messages sent out without contact details. That's totally unacceptable.

2. Freecycle/Wanted/For Sale:

You must send me a title and a brief but relevant description of the item you are offering or requesting along with the price if selling. Just saying something like "black shoes" doesn't give anybody much to go on. You can attach one or two photos if it will help. And don't forget your contact details.

3. Webpage address:

If your club or society has a webpage please put a link to it in your mail so that readers know where to find out more information. Also, if your page is on the village website, please keep it up to date. It's pointless having the webpage if it isn't being used properly and if information is missing, people just start emailing me with questions I can't answer.

4. Legible English Please

Messages must be in legible English and as you want it to go out, so I can copy and paste it. I'm not going to write your mail for you and it's certainly not fair sending me a message that says, "Please can you put out a notice telling people the event is in the usual place" - what event? Where? When? - or sending me an unpunctuated and uncapitalised string of words that I have to try to make sense of. My job is to circulate the information, not write the notice for you.

5. Plain Text if possible:

If you have a simple message that can go out as plain text, DO NOT waste your time creating a Word document or PDF or something! Just email me the text. I get too many documents written in some obscure word processor or with masses of complicated formatting. Even if I can read them, they're not compatible with the email system and I have to rewrite the

whole thing. So plain text please.

If you want to include a photo or two with the text, that's fine, just attach them to the email.

- 6. Plain text part 2:** We have people in the village who are visually impaired and who rely on electronic reading software to get their email. JPEGs and PDFs are not readable by screen-readers so if you create a poster you **MUST** send me the plain-text as well. Otherwise I will not be able to send it out.

7. PDF/jpeg Posters

If you send me a poster which has text in it, please make sure you send the plain as well. I cannot always grab text from PDFs and definitely can't from photos. PDFs are not compatible with the mass mailer so I have to manually recreate the whole layout in the system and then retype all the text. This can take HOURS if the poster is complicated in layout and the final result will not look exactly like what you have sent me anyway because of point 6 above.

8. No Fancy formatting

Along the same lines, don't waste your time putting fancy borders and graphics all over an A4-size page. Email is not A4 sized and I can't include any of this.

I hope this makes things a bit clearer. Recently I have been spending upwards of half an hour on a single email notice to get things in a fit state to go out. It may not sound much when it's one email, but I can send anywhere between 10 to 20+ notices per week so those hours soon add up.

If you are in any doubt, just drop me an email and check with me first; I am here to help you and will do all I can to help you to get things right.

Thanks for taking the time to read this.

Mary McIntyre

notices@tackleyvillage.co.uk