**Be your own publicist – 5 steps to achieving local media coverage for your World Parkinson’s Day event**

Approaching your local media with a story about your World Parkinson’s Day event is a great way to spread the word about your local group, Parkinson’s UK, and the new *Parkinson’s Is* campaign. Here’s our advice on how to go about it…

**1. Create a press release with all the key details a journalist will need to cover your story**

In short, a press release is written information that you can email to your local media to get them interested in covering your story.

Don’t worry! You don’t have to be an amazing writer. We’ve created two press release templates that you can fill in. One will help you drum up support ahead of an event, and one is to send out post-event to celebrate your event’s success.

You’ll also need to find or take a good quality digital photo to send with your press release – this will dramatically increase the chances of your local newspaper covering your story.

If you have any problems filling out the press release templates pasted at the end of this document, or need advice with a radio or TV interview, please email [pr@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:pr@parkinsons.org.uk)

**2. Find the details of your local media**

You can find out the telephone number for your local newspaper and radio stations online – go to their website and have a look.

If you can’t find the number on their site try Googling, for example, ‘Northampton Chronicle telephone number’ and the number will come up in the search results.

**3. Give them a call and ask to speak to the ‘news desk’**

Tell them that you are calling from a local Parkinson’s UK group and think they might be interested in your story about World Parkinson’s Day – briefly run through the key details.

**4. Tell them that you have a press release and photo you can send them**

If it’s a radio station (and you would be happy to!) also say that you are available for interview too. Make a note of the email address they ask you to send your press release and photo to, and then pop it over to them to have a look at.

**5. Done!**

If they're interested, they’ll cover your story – so there’s no need to call or email them the details again. Although they might get back in touch with you to check a detail, or to arrange an interview or professional photo. Make sure you respond quickly if they do (the same day if possible) or they might lose interest and decide not to cover your story after all.

If you land a TV or radio interview let the PR team know – we can help you prepare and feel confident about how to approach it. Just email [pr@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:pr@parkinsons.org.uk) and the team will be available to help.

**Template press releases**

A press release is written information that you can email to your local media to get them interested in covering your story – our press release template below will help you get this information together.

Simply cut and paste the below press release template into an email - and fill in the key details where [indicated].

Also included at the end of this document is advice on taking a photo to illustrate your finished press release - which will drastically increase the chances of your local paper covering your story.

Template one (pre-event template):

**Parkinson’s UK in [enter your town] to mark World Parkinson’s Day**

Charity Parkinson’s UK’s [enter town] group is set to mark World Parkinson’s Day on Thursday 11 April by holding [a special event / fundraiser] and is calling for the local community to get involved.

Volunteers at the group are inviting people to attend their [briefly describe what your event or fundraiser is] at [enter location, date, and start and finish time].

At the [event / fundraiser] there will be [enter details of what’s happening].

[if this is a ticketed event enter the cost and how people can buy them here].

Parkinson’s is a serious and progressive neurological condition with more than 40 symptoms that affects people of all ages. Currently there is no cure.

Parkinson's UK is the leading charity driving better care, treatments and quality of life for those with the condition. Its mission is to find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's through cutting edge research, information, support and campaigning.

The [enter town] branch is one of 365 local groups in the charity’s network that offer a space for people with Parkinson’s to meet others in similar situations and access support.

**[enter name, enter title], at Parkinson’s UK [enter town], said:**

“[this is a space for you to write a quote about your event. For example: We hope to raise as much money as possible with this fundraiser. So please come along have fun - and help us raise vital funds to keep our group going.”

The [enter town] group is also backing Parkinson’s UK’s national *Parkinson’s Is* campaign, which aims to shatter public misconceptions about the condition by highlighting the reality of everyday life for those living with it.

The campaign has been launched in response to frustrations from people with Parkinson’s that the condition is viewed as “just the shakes”.

According to recent research from Parkinson’s UK, 8 in 10 people with Parkinson’s believe that awareness and understanding is low because people don’t consider it to be a serious condition - and only associate it with one symptom - a tremor.

**Steve Ford, Parkinson’s UK Chief Executive, said:** “Despite the fact that Parkinson’s is the second most common neurodegenerative condition after Alzheimer’s, many people still don’t understand what Parkinson’s is or how it affects people.

“We hope our new Parkinson’s Is campaign which sees people across the UK share how the condition affects their lives will raise awareness and help correct public misconceptions about this much misunderstood condition.”

For more information about charity Parkinson’s UK’s new *Parkinson’s Is* campaign visit [www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk)

ENDS

**Notes to editor:**

For more information please contact [enter your name] on [enter your mobile number].

Photo 1: [enter description of the photo you send with the press release e.g. L-R, Kathy Lloyd, James Peach and Mohammed from the local group].

**About Parkinson’s and Parkinson’s UK**

* Every hour, two people in the UK are told they have Parkinson's
* It affects 145,000 people in the UK – which is around one in 350 of the adult population
* Parkinson's is a degenerative neurological condition, for which there currently is no cure. The main symptoms of the condition are tremor, slowness of movement and rigidity
* Parkinson's UK is the UK's leading charity supporting those with the condition. Its mission is to find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's through cutting edge research, information, support and campaigning.
* For advice, information and support, visit [www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk) or call its free, confidential helpline on 0808 800 0303

Template two (post-event template):

**Parkinson’s UK in [enter your town] mark World Parkinson’s Day**

Charity Parkinson’s UK’s [enter town] group marked World Parkinson’s Day on Thursday 11 April by holding [a special event / fundraiser].

Volunteers at the group organised a [briefly describe what your event or fundraiser was] at [enter location].

On the day [enter what happened – e.g. over 50 visitors heard more about how Parkinson’s affects group members, and £100 was raised from a cake sale].

Parkinson’s is a serious and progressive neurological condition with more than 40 symptoms that affects people of all ages. Currently there is no cure.

Parkinson's UK is the leading charity driving better care, treatments and quality of life for those with the condition. Its mission is to find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's through cutting edge research, information, support and campaigning.

The [enter town] branch is one of 365 local groups in the charity’s network that offer a space for people with Parkinson’s to meet others in similar situations and access support.

**[enter name, enter title], at Parkinson’s UK [enter town], said:**

“[this is a space for you to write a quote about your event and what it achieved. For example: We’re so proud of our members who spoke out to people about how Parkinson’s affected them, raising awareness and understanding is of the upmost importance to us…”

The [enter town] group is also backing Parkinson’s UK’s national *Parkinson’s Is* campaign, which aims to shatter public misconceptions about the condition by highlighting the reality of everyday life for those living with it.

The campaign has been launched in response to frustrations from people with Parkinson’s that the condition is viewed as “just the shakes”.

According to recent research from Parkinson’s UK, 8 in 10 people with Parkinson’s believe that awareness and understanding is low because people don’t consider it to be a serious condition - and only associate it with one symptom - a tremor.

**Steve Ford, Parkinson’s UK Chief Executive, said:** “Despite the fact that Parkinson’s is the second most common neurodegenerative condition after Alzheimer’s, many people still don’t understand what Parkinson’s is or how it affects people.

“We hope our new Parkinson’s Is campaign which sees people across the UK share how the condition affects their lives will raise awareness and help correct public misconceptions about this much misunderstood condition.”

For more information about charity Parkinson’s UK’s new Parkinson’s Is campaign visit [www.parkinsons.org.uk/parkinsons-is](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk/parkinsons-is)

ENDS

**Notes to editor:**

For more information please contact [enter your name] on [enter your mobile number].

Photo 1: [enter description of the photo you send with the press release e.g. left to right - Kathy Lloyd, James Peach and Mohammed manned the cake sale at the World Parkinson’s Day event].

**About Parkinson’s and Parkinson’s UK**

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**Advice on taking photos to accompany your story**

Sending your press release to your local paper alongside a good quality digital photo drastically increases your chances of them covering your story. So, don’t be camera shy – say cheese and get snapping!

These days most smartphones will be capable of taking a high-resolution photo that a newspaper can print but if you don’t have one a photo taken on a digital camera is great alternative.

Our top tips for taking the perfect photo:

1. We suggest that you take a group photo of 3-4 people involved in the event, all looking and smiling at the camera, and ideally wearing Parkinson’s UK T-shirts
2. Take your photo outside if possible as the light will be better
3. If you take your photo indoors, make sure that you are against a plain background and use a flash
4. When you email over your press release, attach your photo or photos to the same email and let the journalist know the full names of who is in each photo