

SUMMARY OF INDYMEDIA UK EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

Please note that each of the regional indymedia centres has its own guidelines which may differ from these.

- [1] Original, first hand reports on actions and other events** and good, original analysis are likely to be promoted in the uk newswire.
- [2] Re-posts from other sources** (blogs etc.) and announcements of events are unlikely to be promoted unless there is a good reason to do so: for example, where announcements have significant background/news content, or where important news stories are copied from one of the uk indymedia sites which aren't part of the uk collective.
- [3] Articles and/or comments may be hidden for the following reasons:**
 - * **Repeated:** content that is reposted or text that was originally a comment posted as a report.
 - * **Non-news:** posts which are clearly purely comment, opinion or rants unrelated to a recent event or action etc.
 - * **Discrimination:** posts using language, imagery, or other forms of communication promoting racism, fascism, xenophobia, sexism, homophobia or any other form of discrimination.
 - * **Inaccurate:** posts that are inaccurate or misleading.
 - * **Advertising:** posts with personal or product promotions.
 - * **Hierarchy:** The newswire is designed to generate a news resource, not to be a notice-board for political parties or any other hierarchically structured organisations.
 - * **Disruptive:** Contributions by individuals who habitually publish above-mentioned discouraged content. Posts where topical or regional selections disrupt the utility of the sub-pages (ie spamming regional and topic selections).
 - * **Reposts:** Articles that are simply pasted from corporate news sites. Please write something original, by all means link to articles elsewhere and quote from them, but don't just copy them.

- [4]** On very rare occasions some content may be fully deleted
Past instances have included pornography and personal details.



Indymedia - How to guide (1)



How to publish your news on indymedia

Posting a written report and/or photos to the indymedia uk newswire. Background info, step-by-step guide, editorial guidelines, tips: in short, everything you need to be an effective indymedia reporter and get your grassroots news online.

www.indymedia.org.uk

WHAT IS INDYMEDIA?

Indymedia is many things and there are many ways you can get involved. The Zapatistas expressed their vision of indymedia in 1996, three years before the first indymedia website went online. They called for "a network of independent media... We need this network not only as a tool for our social movements, but for our lives; this is a project of life, of humanity, humanity which has a right to critical and truthful information." Imc-ista Maqui talks about indymedia as it exists today:

"Indymedia is a fluid mix of politics, technology and media. It is a web of politically active networks, collectives and individuals that come together to maintain numerous projects, which in turn aim to build up physical and electronic horizontal [ie non-hierarchical] spaces for co-operation, exchange and participation, in other words, grass-roots autonomy... Indymedia is here, a reality that, despite its flaws, works. But only if people make it their own... Indymedia can only be a working alternative to corporate and mainstream media if the 'movements'... actively participate in the project. Today you do an action; tonight you click the publish button at the top of the newswire and tell people about it first-hand. Or... today you publish in indymedia so tomorrow the context and the arguments of your action, campaign or project are much clearer to everyone else 'out there'."

BE THE MEDIA

Indymedia is not an alternative news service that can be brought in, complete with journalists, cameras and kit, to report on your action or event. It's a collaborative project which allows YOU to become the media yourself, for example by participating in a regional collective; by getting involved in radio, video or print production and other indymedia projects; or by reporting your grass-roots news via the PUBLISH button on the website.

The guiding principle behind indymedia is Do-It-Yourself. There are indymedia people around to help you when you want to learn how to do something and there are collectives to join and work with on regional, video, radio and other indymedia projects, but please don't expect imcistas to do it all for you.

If you post a message to one of the indymedia email lists or on irc (internet relay chat) asking for help with something you want to do, you should get a friendly and supportive response. If you post a message asking for something to be done for you - common examples are requests for indymedia to 'cover' an action or to write a feature about a campaign - then you're likely to get short shrift.

We know that it can be daunting for someone new to indymedia to take the first steps in getting involved, which is why we've produced this guide. If you want to have a go at publishing your own grassroots news stories to the indymedia newswire, then all the basics you need are here in these pages.

Indymedia is what you make it. Happy reporting!



POSTING REPORTS TO INDYMEDIA FROM YOUR MOBILE PHONE

It is an experimental, lightweight and streamlined version of all indymedia sites around the world. You can find the UK site and the regions under the Europe sub-menu.

Navigation around the site is designed for those without a mouse, with options selected from your numerical keypad.

Publishing text reports direct from your mobile is possible via the publishing forms but it's in very early stages of development at the time of writing.

The project is documented at <http://docs.indymedia.org/view/Global/MobileIndymedia>

Feedback, comments and ideas about this new service are welcome. Report problems or make suggestions to [imobile\[at\]indymedia.org.uk](mailto:imobile[at]indymedia.org.uk)

`((i))mobile uk can be found at http://mobile.indymedia.org/`

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT...

When you send a report to the newswire, four things can happen:

(1) Your report may be left as it is on the main newswire.

(2) Your report may be 'promoted' so it appears in a highlighted box on the main newswire and also appears on the 'promoted newswire'.

(3) Your report may be hidden for one of the reasons listed on the back page.

(4) On very rare occasions, your report may be deleted.

See the back page of this leaflet for more details about what might get promoted, hidden or deleted. Please post within the editorial guidelines!

To find out if your report has been hidden, go to www.indymedia.org.uk/en/viewallposts.html which will show the status of all recent posts to the newswire.

If your report has been hidden or deleted, the place to discuss it is not on the newswire. Send a message to imc-uk-features@lists.indymedia.org to raise a query. You can also use this address if you notice any serious mistakes or if the article needs to be updated.

If you write to the features list, always quote the 6-figure number in the url (web address) to identify your article, and explain what the problem is and/or what changes need to be made. Updates can also be made by adding a comment to your article. You can ask the features list to promote the comment to an 'addition', which will place your update directly below the original article, but please note that comments are subject to the same editorial guidelines as articles and comments may not always be promoted.

You should save the web address of your article as a 'bookmark' or 'favourite' in your web browser, and keep an eye on it for the next few days. This is important as people may wish to ask you questions, seek clarification about it, or make suggestions about how you can be more effective in future.

Is the United States Killing 10,000 Iraqis Every Month? Or Is It More?
16-07-2007 13:20

property damage against arms company
16-07-2007 13:20

Back to The Roots (Sharrow Festival - another report)
16-07-2007 13:16

New Israeli President
16-07-2007 12:58

Save the autonomous centre of edinburgh - updated objection address!
16-07-2007 12:22

Steven O'Doherty - a racist in charge of deaths in police custody?
16-07-2007 12:16 | 1 comment

No Inquest into the Death of Dr. David Kelly
16-07-2007 12:14

Brighton Tubas Friendship and Solidarity Group Appeal for Funds
16-07-2007 11:56

Promoted: grassroot reports get highlighted in the newswire

HOW DOES INDYMEDIA UK WORK?

Part of the global indymedia network, Imc uk (United Collectives Indymedia Centre) is run by a network of regional collectives and individuals working on the numerous indymedia projects which make up indymedia uk.

One of these projects, and the main public face of indymedia uk, is the website www.indymedia.org.uk, which offers open publishing facilities for anyone to send their news, subject to the editorial guidelines, to the newswire via the PUBLISH button near the top of the front page.

The uk website hosts pages for a number of regional collectives: currently Birmingham, Cambridge, Leeds Bradford, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Nottinghamshire, Oxford, Sheffield and South Coast. There are also links to other indymedia sites which are not part of Imc uk (Bristol, Scotland, York) and to indymedia sites around the world.

Home | Mobile | Editorial Guidelines | Mission Statement | About | Contact | Help | Security | Support Us

INDYMEDIA UK

A network of individuals, independent and alternative media activists and organisations, offering grassroots, non-corporate, non-commercial coverage of important social and political issues.

Upcoming Coverage

View and post events

UK
18th - 22nd July, Norfolk:
EPI Summer Gathering
22nd July, London:
Gatwick No Border Camp
2nd Meeting
29th - 30th July,
Nationwide: Actions

A Taste Of Things To Come
07-07-2007 01:01

Full article | 1 comment

Over three weeks ago, the government's chief scientist warned that for the UK, flash floods were likely to be the biggest immediate problem caused by global warming. David King told a committee of MPs that the country would have to prepare for extreme weather such as heatwaves and "torrential downpours". Two weeks later, large areas are counting the cost of the worst flooding this country has seen for over 50 years. The floods have left seven people dead and over 40,000 homes damaged. The army was

UK NEWSWIRE

PUBLISH YOUR NEWS
Need help with publishing?

Search
Temporary Scroogle search

Promoted Newswire | Open Newswire

Whether you publish your news - via the PUBLISH button - on indymedia uk or on pages run by any of the ten regional collectives, it all goes to the same database. Where your story eventually appears (on the main uk page, on a regional page and/or in various topic pages) depends on which boxes you tick or untick on the publishing form.

Newswire reports appear in a column on the right-hand side of the indymedia uk frontpage. There are also 'features' which appear in the middle column. This guide doesn't cover how to write features; this will be covered in a future leaflet. In the meantime, you will find some help here: <http://docs.indymedia.org/view/Local/UkFeaturesHowTo>

Indymedia uk, like the rest of the global indymedia network, is open, participative and is run by volunteers, most of whom are linked with a regional collective. Decision-making within indymedia uk takes place by consensus at regional meetings, at uk-wide network meetings, at virtual meetings on irc (internet relay chat) and on a variety of e-mail lists.

More background information about indymedia can be found here: <http://docs.indymedia.org/view/Local/UkNetworkSnapshot>

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED IN INDYMEDIA PROJECTS

This guide is mainly about helping you, as an individual, campaign group or grassroots organisation, to get your news onto the indymedia newswire. Follow the instructions, click the PUBLISH button and you're there. But first, here's a bit more information about other parts of indymedia, and ways in which you can become part of the network.

On the Website: Even if you're only ever going to publish the odd bit of news to the newswire, spending some time investigating the indymedia uk website at <http://www.indymedia.org.uk> will give you a better idea of what indymedia is about and how it works. Hopefully it will also inspire you to join your nearest regional collective, to get involved in one of the other special projects which are part of indymedia uk: mobile, radio, video, cinema, photo and print, or in some other part of the network.

Links to all these places can be found in the left-hand column of the front page of the uk website. Each of the links to regional collectives will take you to a page maintained by that collective. Collectives always need more people to help with all aspects of indymedia work, from reporting, photography and feature-writing, to techie and admin tasks, to maintaining existing and developing new projects within the region. The various special projects that exist will also welcome your involvement.

Further down the column, there are links to global indymedia projects and, right at the bottom (but well worth a visit) are all the 'process' links. Here, you can find the indymedia mailing lists, a documentation project full of useful information, and a place for anyone interested in the technical side of indymedia uk.

Internet Relay Chat (IRC): You can chat (type) directly with indymedia people on irc. It's a good place to go if you have a question about indymedia or need some help quickly. The main uk channel is #uk and instructions for using indymedia irc can be found here: <http://docs.indymedia.org/view/Sysadmin/IrcHowTo>

Email Lists: There are global lists, uk lists and lists for groups within uk indymedia. If you are interested in getting involved, then it's a good idea to join some of the lists to get a feel of how indymedia works. Some of the main lists are: imc-uk-network for information, imc-uk-process for discussion, developing proposals etc., imc-uk-tech to sort out how to do things, and imc-uk-features, where new middle-column features are proposed and moderation is reported and discussed.

For an overview of all the lists, see: <http://lists.indymedia.org/> Most of the uk lists can be found under 'local europe' and take the form imc-uk-name of list.

How to Volunteer: If you want to volunteer and get involved in indymedia projects, then fill in the form here: <http://volunteer.indymedia.org/>



STEP 4 - SELECT MEDIA ITEMS (if you have photos)

Copy and paste the title of your photo into the box 'Title 1'.

Then use the BROWSE button to find the photo saved on your computer and insert the file location into the box 'Media 1'. Repeat for additional photos in boxes 2, 3, 4 etc.

You can upload your photos without titles if you like. Where the photos are self-explanatory this is fine, but good photo titles can make your report more meaningful, particularly where a series of photos tells a story.

THE FINAL STEP - PUBLISH

What it says - click the CONTRIBUTE button only ONCE.

If you receive the message "You have successfully contributed your article", please DON'T click CONTRIBUTE again as your article HAS been accepted and should appear in a few minutes (can be much longer if the site is busy or if there are technical problems). ONLY if you don't receive this message, check that all the mandatory fields have been filled in & then click the CONTRIBUTE button again just ONCE.

When you go to www.indymedia.org.uk, you are actually allocated randomly to one of several indymedia 'mirror' sites - identical to the main site. These are updated regularly but not together. It can take quite a while for your article to appear on the newswire, but if you've seen it and it then mysteriously 'disappears' when you re-open a page, this is probably because you've gone to a mirror that has not yet been updated. DON'T PANIC! It will eventually appear on all the mirrors.

More help with publishing can be found at www.indymedia.org.uk/en/static/help-publish.html

PUBLISHING YOUR REPORT

Is your saved report open and ready to cut and paste into the publish form?

Have your edited and resized photos been renamed and saved?

Then you're ready to hit the PUBLISH button at the top of the home page of

www.indymedia.org.uk

NEXT STEPS

(1) THE PUBLISH BUTTON

Click PUBLISH YOUR NEWS. This will take you to the PRE-PUBLISH page.

(2) PRE-PUBLISH PAGE

Here, you can choose between a text only report, a report with a number of photos or other attachments, and a report with larger attachments which you upload via ftp.

This last option isn't covered in this leaflet but there's help on the website if you need it, at <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/static/help-ftp.html>

If you don't have any photos or other attachments, click TEXT ONLY PUBLISHING.

If you have one or more photos, enter the number of pictures you want to upload in the box, then click PUBLISH WITH ATTACHMENTS.

Both these options will take you to a PUBLISH form. They are nearly identical, but if you've opted to upload attachments, there will be extra boxes for this on your form.

(3) THE PUBLISH FORM

STEPS 1 AND 2

Steps 1 and 2 of the publish form have been explained on page 5. You should have your chunks of text ready to cut and paste into the form. Fill in the boxes (leaving the email and website boxes blank if you like) and then go on to step 3.

STEP 3 - SELECTING REGIONS AND TOPICS

Here, you can tick and untick the boxes that will determine where your report will appear: on the uk newswire, in one or more regions, under a topic and/or in one of the major reports. If you're not sure which box(es) to tick, you can check out the various topics and major reports on the uk website (in the left-hand column).

Because loads of people tick London when their reports have nothing to do with London, it will soon only be possible to tick the London box if you publish via the London page at www.indymedia.org.uk/en/regions/london/

STEP BY STEP PUBLISHING GUIDE

So, you've got a report to send to the indymedia newswire. If you possibly can, aim to publish your story the same day, or as soon as you can after that. Old news very quickly becomes non-news.

Before you start, it's worth taking a look at the main fields on the publish form and what they're for. This way, you'll be able to prepare your report in a word-processing document, save it onto your hard drive and then just paste the various bits into the right sections. If you don't take the precaution of saving your work first, you're liable to lose everything if your internet connection drops or you have any other technical glitches. The six boxes you need to be aware of right now are in steps 1 and 2 of the publish form.

STEP 1 - YOUR DETAILS

There are boxes for author, email and website address.

Author: You can use your own name or any pseudonym you like. However, bear in mind that if you use a pseudonym and then add your website address and/or your email address in the other boxes, then it may not be difficult to identify you! The author box is mandatory and has to be filled in with something.

Email address: If you want people to be able to contact you directly, then enter your email address here. It's best to replace the @ sign with [at] as this stops spammers from 'harvesting' your address. This field is optional.

Website address: Enter the address of a website relevant to your article or report, or your own web address if that contains relevant information. Include <http://> in your web address. This field is optional. Leave it blank if you like.

STEP 2 - YOUR ARTICLE

In this section, there are boxes for title, abstract and article.

Title is the heading of your article, and also what appears on the newswire, so it needs to be quite short, informative and descriptive. Don't put it all in capitals.

Abstract should be a short paragraph (max. 5 lines) introducing or summarising what your report is about, and should encourage the reader to want to find out more. It will appear at the top of your article.

Text of your article is your report. This section can be as long or as short as you like. Don't repeat the abstract in this section. If you do, people will have to read it twice in succession, which they will find very irritating.

The screenshot shows the 'UK NEWSWIRE' logo at the top, followed by a 'PUBLISH YOUR NEWS' button and a 'Need help with publishing?' link. Below is a search bar with a 'Search' button and the text 'Temporary Scroogle search'. At the bottom, there are links for 'Promoted Newswire' and 'Open Newswire', and a list of promoted news items with checkboxes and timestamps.

Promoted Newswire Open Newswire	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Struggle in Oaxaca at the beginning of the Guelagueta 17-07-2007 09:14
<input type="checkbox"/>	Struggle in Oaxaca at the beginning of the Guelagueta 17-07-2007 09:06
<input type="checkbox"/>	New island found in Mediterranean. 17-07-2007 07:52

PREPARING YOUR REPORT

Type up your report following these six headings - (i) author, (ii) email (optional), (iii) web address (optional), (iv) title, (v) abstract and (vi) body - along with titles of any photos you plan to use. See the report checklist below for some tips on creating a good report. Then save your work. It's worth taking time and care over writing your article. You don't need to be a professional writer to write something that is effective, clear, and will be taken seriously.

REPORT CHECKLIST

(1) Does your report answer these six questions clearly and concisely?:

- (i) What happened?
- (ii) Where and
- (iii) When did it happen?
- (iv) Who did it?
- (v) Why did it happen? and
- (vi) How?

(2) Is your report easy to read?

Look at your article from a reader's point of view, as if you had never seen it before. Readers will be put off by a long piece of text that runs all together with no breaks so split it up into paragraphs. It's also worth dividing a long article into sections with sub-headings so people can see at a glance what it covers. It is currently not possible to publish articles in html and all formatting apart from new lines will be removed when you publish, so use capital letters for emphasis, dashes to simulate bullet points etc. Ask someone to read it and give you feedback.

(3) Have you explained the background?

Don't assume that your reader knows about the subject. All good reports should give basic background information. If you're going to use acronyms and abbreviations in your report, make sure that the first time you use them you type the words out in full followed by the shortened version in brackets - or the other way round. Add a link to further background information or to relevant websites if you think this would be helpful. Try not to use jargon.

(4) Have you checked the spelling and grammar in your report?

If you publish to the uk newswire, your report will end up on the front page of a national website and it looks really bad if it's full of spelling and grammatical errors. Most word-processors have spelling and grammar checkers or, better still, ask someone else to check it for you. It's easy to miss your own mistakes and computer checkers are by no means foolproof.

(5) Does your report meet the indymedia uk editorial guidelines?

A summary of the guidelines is on the back page of this leaflet. If your report doesn't meet the guidelines, then there's a strong possibility that it will be hidden.

The guidelines for some of the regional indymedia pages are slightly different. If you want to publish to one of the regional pages, you'll find a link to their editorial guidelines on each region's homepage. Links to these homepages can be found in the left-hand column of <http://www.indymedia.org.uk> under **United Collectives**.

(6) Have you resized and edited any photos you plan to upload with your report?

Help with resizing and editing photos, along with tips for taking good photos, will be covered in a future 'HOW TO' guide. In the meantime, there's a really useful guide to editing and resizing photos here: <https://docs.indymedia.org/view/Local/UkResizelImagesWithFreeware>



Photos should have a longest side of no more than 500 pixels. Save your photo as a jpeg file (.jpg), compressing to around 70% quality. This will allow people with slow internet connections to see your picture without waiting ages for it to load.

If your photos are in any way incriminating, choose different ones for your report. It's possible to obscure faces in pictures using photo-editing software, but people may still be identified by clothes or other distinguishing features. If there is any possibility of this happening, err on the side of caution and DON'T publish them.

Save your selected & edited photos in a separate folder and give them meaningful file names. This will help you upload them with the right titles and in the right order (frontofmarch.jpg is much easier to remember than DSC20371.jpg!) Add the titles you plan to give your photos to the bottom of your word-processing document, in the order you want the photos to appear.