



Best Community Newsletter Competition ENTRY FORM 2015

To be completed and returned with entry fee no later than **FRIDAY, 13th MARCH 2015 to:**

**Sylvia Batty, Cheshire Community Action, Suite G7, Ground Floor, Northwich Business Centre,
Meadow Street, Northwich CW7 5BF.**

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**You should include with your application the latest edition of your
parish/village newsletter**

Your name John Headon

Your address/postcode Oakhurst, Church Minshull
Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 6EA.

Name of Villages Church Minshull and Acton

Name of Newsletter Insight

Who receives copies of the newsletter? Every one of the 1300 homes across the villages, an estimated readership of 2,750 people. There are eight issues per year, free of charge and with new residents specifically targeted. The W.I. are to put together a welcome pack for new residents in Church Minshull and the magazine will be included. The churches target new worshipers and ensure all are given a copy and are then added to the circulation list. We include clear direction to local websites where further information can be found. Copies are in magazine holders at both church gates and visitors to the grave yards take over 200 copies per issue. They are also distributed at the local inns and a nursery and shop, all free of charge, accounting for a further distribution of 60 per issue. This is the only free publication and only news magazine in Church Minshull, Fadiley and Ravensmoor, the latter two villages being included within the parish of Acton. This is one of two free publications in Acton village where there is a quarterly parish council news sheet. We are repeatedly recognised by our readers for keeping them informed and preventing social isolation, the most recent letter received in February 2015. With very few public venues to disseminate local information and news informally, we take our role of providing and sharing information very seriously, always promoting events across the area.

Who decides the contents of the newsletter? The Editorial Team of five, backed by regular contributors covering Churches, W.I.s, Parish Councils, the School, Youth Club, organisations and societies.

Background The two parish churches published a magazine of their own up to 2012 but were aware from 2010, that it was of a poor quality and was only concerned with church matters. Many told us that it was put straight into the bin and was irrelevant to them and their lifestyle. We completed a survey of 80 people to learn what was required of a Community Newsletter/ All Village Magazine and provided alternative publications for them to choose a preferred format. This took 9 months to action and then to assimilate a new magazine with an editorial policy to include all village groups and societies. The magazine was renamed, to reflect it's new, all inclusive approach and responded to the information we had received, still retaining the financial support of advertisers and the two churches and using the church voluntary distribution network. The new magazine was A4 rather than A5, all colour rather than black and white, on glossy paper rather than standard finish, article dominated rather than filled with adverts, illustrated with photos rather than all written and subdivided into pages for Parish Council, Faith, Youth, News, W.I. etc. In short, we believe it is our readership who decide our content, which is why we put great emphasis on feedback to 'keep our finger on the pulse', ready to change with them.

Can anyone contribute to the newsletter or are there any restrictions?

Anyone can contribute and there are no restrictions, within the scope of family reading. We have never failed to include an article, though we may have found it necessary to hold it over for one month when short of space. No charges are made for articles.

If so, what information did you gain from this?

It is vital that our readers contribute articles and that they can cover any subject, without fear of any censorship by the editorial team. We have had 44 contributors over the three years that the magazine has been printed, since March 2012. They have been wide ranging from Cheshire Police to play groups and have covered local news to life stories. Feedback from our approach has been very positive, with articles being written by local people on many diverse subjects. We have learned that articles written by local people for local people and often about local people are most popular, with subsequent comments like 'I never knew that' and 'I've learnt something'. Our recent survey showed 99% of people liked these stories, the highest article approval rating. (Please see the enclosed magazine for details). Villagers who have left the area can request issues are posted to them and this is done free of charge.

Is there a way people can give feedback on the newsletter? Yes

If yes, how?

- We request comments on page 3.
- We held a feedback meeting, open to all members of the public, after we had been in print one year.
- We included a Magazine Feedback Questionnaire in our February 2015 issue asking our readership for their criticisms. This was for publishing in the following issue.

Do you invite people to share information and ideas in any way through the Newsletter? Yes

If so, how?

- We request articles on page 3, providing a date for submission.
- We provide a web address for contributors to contact.
- We request news and photographs in person at all events.
- We follow the village websites and ensure any news is included in our publication.

What are the hopes and aspirations for the future of the newsletter?

- To widen the coverage of the magazine, which now includes some news from St Oswald's, Worleston and St. David's, Wettenhall.
- To include more pages, so that we can run regular local history pieces, things to do, recreational guides, gardening tips, recipes etc, which are not currently featured in every issue.
- To widen the editorial team to include diverse ages and ethnicity.
- To post the magazine onto local websites.
- To conduct more interviews with people who may not live in our area but whose stories are topical or of local interest: ie the holocaust interview of Mayer Hersh, MBE in September 2012.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTINUE ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO EXPAND YOUR ANSWERS.

Please return form to Cheshire Community Action, Suite G7, Ground Floor, Northwich Business Centre, Meadow Street, Northwich CW9 5BF

NOTES

- **Attractive and lively appearance**
- **Community involvement**
- **Good design - easy to read**
- **Informative for newcomers to the area**