

PUTTING TOGETHER A NEWSLETTER

Clyde Network

For the Clyde Network newsletter, Janice writes and collates most of the content and Jana works her magic with the design and editing. They tell us below how they go about it.



How do you decide on the newsletter content?

We base our content on what has happened locally since our previous newsletter. We aim to include similar topics each time such as a write up from our educational meetings, fundraising efforts, local supporter stories, updates from Scottish Parliament committees and dates for your diary adverts for future events. We report in detail on our various speakers from our educational events to ensure that those who cannot attend do not miss out on information from the day.

How do you encourage the team and local supporters to contribute?

We have previously included articles asking members & supporters to share their fundraising feats and

awareness-raising activity with us to include in the newsletter. Examples include walking the West Highland Way or the Great Wall of China or running marathons in aid of Crohn's & Colitis UK.

We always welcome local success stories! When local supporters raise money and we go along to collect cheques, we always ask for a photo and a short write up on the event so we can thank them for their support. We like to do small interviews with fundraisers or supporters who wish share their story. Many readers identify with a personal story and this provides a different angle from the medical side of things.

Tip for putting together a newsletter:

- Make it a joint effort: everyone can bring different skills to the task
- Photographs of each event are vital to break up large amounts of text on each page and making it more visual
- If people are not confident about writing an article, we ask for a few notes which we then work into a short paragraph
- We really enjoy putting a comprehensive newsletter together but producing a one or two-sided newsletter is equally great to disseminate local information and events



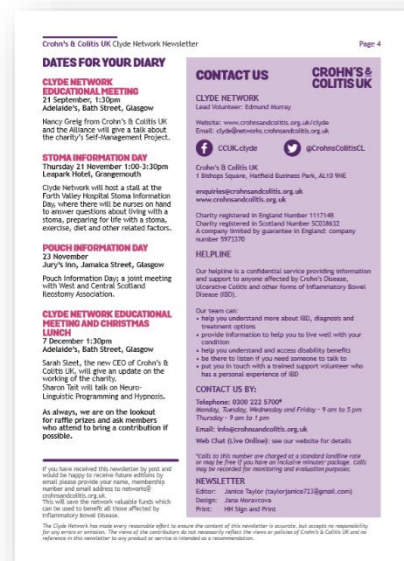
- We send copies to our Medical Advisers and IBD nurses at local hospitals. Some local newspapers also accept copies and advertise our meetings

Aberdeen & Shire Network

Megan started volunteering with the Aberdeen & Shire Network in January this year and has enjoyed putting her creative and design skills to use on the team's newsletter.

In our quarterly newsletter, we detail the latest news from the Network and from Crohn's & Colitis UK. We include a few key elements to help maximise awareness of local events and activities going on. These include:

- Network updates and achievements - review what has happened since our last newsletter, fundraisers, upcoming events
- 'Dates for your Diary' - tear out and keep section at the end with all up-coming social gatherings, medical talks, fundraisers and other awareness raising events - to make it as easy as possible for people to join in
- News & media updates - links to new publications, research, 'hot topics' etc. like 'Not Every Disability is Visible'
- How your workplace can get involved - 'Purple Friday' or something as simple as lighting up a building in purple during Awareness Week



How do you decide on the newsletter content?

We review what has happened since our last newsletter and include updates on events or activities the Network have taken part in. We keep tabs on the charity website and provide links and information to any articles or national initiatives (e.g. World IBD Day) that local people might find interesting.

How do you encourage the team and local supporters to contribute?

As a team, we are all pretty involved in the content for the newsletter and come up with stories or ideas that could be included. These are discussed at monthly network meetings in the lead up to its release, so we can gauge the relevance for the local community. In the last couple of weeks before it's due to be released I review, edit and format the content of the newsletter to try to make it more visually appealing.

What advice/tips would you give to other teams when putting the newsletter together?

- Keep it relevant within the local community. I think that a good newsletter needs good content. If it isn't valuable to the reader, no amount of design skills can help!
- However, a successful newsletter design generates interest and maintains readability through consistency and contrast.
- Use 'punchy' article headers, and contrast visually stimulating colours to gauge member's interest and entice people to read on. Whilst following brand guidelines too!
- Avoid being too 'wordy' - keeping it short and sweet will keep the articles to the point and stop the reader losing interest.

- Lastly, I would say less is more when it comes to images - keep it to 2-3 per page maximum, so as not to bombard the reader with too many images and not enough written information relating to the image.