

Writing an article for the e-newsletter

Retirees who want to submit an article for the newsletter often ask me for guidance on what to write about, how long it should be, what format it should be in, how pictures should be sent etc. I thought it might be a good idea to put all the information that I send out separately into one document! So here goes:

Topics

The simplest answer is to write about whatever inspired you to enquire in the first place. Did you see a suggested topic in the newsletter? Are you involved in voluntary work? Have you travelled somewhere recently? What are you reading or watching on TV that you would like to recommend (or other otherwise)? Do you have a hobby or special interest? To be honest the list is endless.

Format

If it's a fairly short article, you can put it straight into an email, but Word documents are preferred as email content often requires a lot of editing. The tool I use to produce the newsletter doesn't support complex formatting so please keep your document structure as simple as possible. I can also (usually) use Pages.

Please avoid PowerPoint as I honestly don't have the time to extract the text or images. I am also not able to extract content from PDFs.

Pictures

Yes, please! If you want to include photos within your article – to provide context or to allow titles, that is fine and often helps me decide where to place pictures within the newsletter, but please also submit them separately as jpeg or similar files. Extracting from Word is time-consuming, but more importantly produces low quality images. The usual rules apply – photos should be your own or in the public domain.

Length

Well, that's really up to you. If you have a long tale to tell, then tell it. I can usually split the longer articles into 2 or more instalments if necessary.

Advertising

We do not accept advertising. However, we do accept items on e.g. businesses or organisations in which Retirees are involved, in the context of "what I am doing now", subject to editorial approval.

Contacts & Deadlines

To send in articles or ask questions, please email ann@theretirees.co.uk. The deadline for a particular month is usually the 27th of the previous month (except February), but we are happy to receive items at any time, for inclusion in the next available edition.

You can skip this next section, as it just includes some suggested topics and FAQs.

1. Who are you?

If you have not written for the newsletter before, you might like start with a brief biography. This might cover how long you worked for Amex, when, where and in which department(s). This can be really brief, especially if you are writing a longer piece on another topic, but you can just write a longer piece on your time at Amex,.

2. What have you done since leaving Amex?

Readers would love to have a summary of what you have done since leaving e.g. another job, career or setting up a business, voluntary work, learning a new skill, taking up a new hobby or having more time to spend on an old one, holidays and other travel adventures. We are happy to include articles that just cover 1 and 2.

3. So what else can you write about?

For many, there is likely to be a topic you want to write about in detail, or indeed more than one story you'd like to share. My advice is to stick to one topic at a time, as you may send in multiple articles.

Recent topics include, but are not limited to:

- Travellers Tales
- Gardeners World
- The Great Outdoors
- Going Places
- Books, TV and Films
- Pets
- Quizzes
- Jokes and humorous stories

4. Am I committed to regular input?

No! Though we have some regular contributors, you may submit only one item, ever!

5. Can I write anonymously?

Yes, and no. From time to time, we do include anonymous items e.g. if the topic is highly personal, but you must provide your name to the editor at the time of submission.

6. Are any topics forbidden?

Mmmm! Apart from advertising, we tend to avoid politics and religion, but all articles are subject to editorial approval.