



Rules and Conventions

Thames Valley Alert

Thames Valley Alert is a system using email, voice-mail and text to enable Licensed Information Providers to communicate community safety, resilience, community information and social cohesion messages to registered recipients.

Rules and Conventions

These Rules and Conventions are supplementary to the Administration Access Agreement entered into by all persons authorised to use Thames Valley Alert to create and communicate messages (Information Providers) to registered recipients. The Rules must be followed and the Conventions should be observed.

Rules

Thames Valley Alert must only be used for communications and to provide information in accordance with its core function.

Thames Valley Alert must only be used for lawful purposes and not knowingly be used:

- in any way which infringes any law or regulation,
- to cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to any third party,
- to send confidential information
- in a manner by message or use of language, which is unlawful, threatening, abusive, malicious, defamatory, obscene, pornographic, blasphemous, profane or otherwise objectionable,
- to spread a virus or other hostile computer programme.

Thames Valley Alert must not be used to send any message or information, apart from factual information which is consistent with the core purpose of Thames Valley Alert, which:-

- expresses religious views
- expresses political views
- concerns an activity which relates to personal gain

Thames Valley Alert must not be used for any commercial purpose, other than where such commercial activity supports Thames Valley Alert, through sponsorship, or which is ancillary (e.g. an advert within a separate publication such as a newsletter) unless specifically agreed with TVP Corporate Communications.

An Administrator must keep secure any identification, password and other confidential information relating to the Thames Valley Alert system or database.

An Administrator must inform TVP Corporate Communications immediately of any known or suspected unauthorised use of their account or breach of security, including loss, theft or unauthorised disclosure of their password or other security information.

An Administrator must comply in all respects with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 or any Act of Parliament or statutory modification, re-enactment or extension thereof relating to the disclosure of information.

An Administrator has personal responsibility for any message created and information published on Thames Valley Alert.

An Administrator employed by or representing any agency, organisation or authority participating in Thames Valley Alert as an Information Provider, must in addition to compliance with Thames Valley Alert Rules and Conventions comply with:-

- any obligations, policies and practices required by their own agency, organisation or authority
- any obligations, policies and practices agreed between their own agency, organisation or authority and TVP Corporate Communications and VISAV.

What you can and cannot send out

<p>Send out messages about:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Crime reduction •Neighbourhood information / initiatives •Burglary Dwelling •Autocrime (not aggravated) •ASB •Theft •Criminal Damage •Burglary non Dwelling (Shed breaks, etc) •Bin fire arsons
<p>Messages must be approved and subbed by Corporate Communications before sending out (Subbing mailbox)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Missing Persons (low / medium risk) •Operations / Warrants •Distraction Burglary •ABH •Exposures •Arsons (excluding bin fires) •Burglary non Dwelling (Commercial property) •Crime Figures / Trends •Speed Checks •Crime Series •Arrests
<p>Not to send out, if requested to do these please contact the Corporate Communications HelpDesk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Charges •Convictions (after charge, court appearances) •CCTV images •Wanted Offenders •Robbery •GBH •Murder / Att. Murder / Manslaughter •Sexual Assaults / Rape •Counter Terrorism •High Risk Missing Persons •RTC's – Serious or Fatal

Data handling

Thames Valley Police has a very clear policy that we do not name individuals who have been arrested by the police in connection with an offence.

It is also against policy and against data protection to publish personal details of an individual without their permission.

Your messages should not name any individual or give details of their home addresses, car registrations etc unless this has been agreed by the investigating officer and approved by Corporate Communications.

Even if you are not naming an individual in connection with an offence you must not in anyway imply they are guilty until they have been convicted in a court of law. Details about how they were arrested, what property was found on them etc can be in contempt of court and prejudice any future court proceedings.

All police forces follow a specific formula for arrest releases and that is to simply stick to the basic facts concerning any arrests. For example a 19-year-old man from Newbury was arrested in connection with a theft. It is not appropriate to comment or give an opinion on the suspect or their guilt.

Messages from Members of the Public

As this is a two-way system, there will be times where members of the public will reply to messages with questions. Whilst you may be able to answer the majority of questions, the below guidance shows where replies should come from / be directed to:

- Press related questions – Corporate Communications Help Desk
- Neighbourhood related concerns – Local Neighbourhood Team
- Intelligence – Local Intelligence team on a CID 72
- Freedom of Information and requests for personal information (request for specific information) - Joint Information Management Unit
- Specific system questions – Dan Bowden for guidance on a reply

Conventions

State a clear and concise subject in the message. This will help the recipient identify and recall the message as necessary.

Get to the point – don't drag out your message-- keep it as simple as possible.

Break up messages into short sentences – don't use long paragraphs.

Use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Use a simple clear typeface (e. g. Arial), including in attachments, and keep the formatting simple.

Don't send large messages or include large attachments to emails.

Remember that messages are in different formats – emails, texts and Voice-mail

Include name of the sender and contact details.

Highlight any specific contact or reply requirements.

Use plain English – do not use jargon or acronyms without explanation.

Be careful not to send confidential information.

Don't send personal details unless approved by person concerned (unless authorised in appropriate circumstances e.g. police information about crime)

Stick to known facts or clear advice.

Do not express personal opinions.

It is always good practice to always get your communication authorised/checked for content and accuracy by another person.

Always remember that the principles of treating people with respect and dignity, and awareness of equality, diversity and culture should be observed.

Dan Bowden C7588

23/03/12

User Copy

Neighbourhood Alert Portal

Administration Access Agreement

1) Overview

This agreement must be carefully read and signed by any administrator wishing to gain access to the Neighbourhood Alert administration tools. You are licenced to access the system and authorised to do so by the Licensee..

2) Definitions

Portal address: The domain name of the Neighbourhood Alert portal that gives access to the user database and administrative tools

www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk/admin

Licensee: The organisation who is the licenced owner of the portal.

Thames Valley Police

Licensee's Administrator (LA):

The administrator who has signed this agreement and agrees to act within the principles and restrictions of this agreement.

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____

LA's defined area: the pre agreed defined geographical area that the LA is permitted to view users' details within.

Defined for this LA as: _____

Alert System: Any Neighbourhood Alert administration facility that allows registration and information sharing via the Neighbourhood Alert software. This may be a single administration website, Micro-site or a collection of sites managed through a central Portal.

Users: Registered members of the Neighbourhood Alert database who have agreed to share their information with the Licensee and its authorised administrators.

Licensor: VISAV LIMITED a company registered in the United Kingdom with number whose registered office is SHERWOOD BUSINESS CENTRE 616A-618A MANSFIELD ROAD SHERWOOD NG5 2GA.

Rules and Conventions: Processes and conventions as defined by Corporate Communications for the sending, handling and processing of information on any part of the Neighbourhood Alert system. These are defined and may be updated by written notice at any time by Corporate Communications.

Start Date and Term: This agreement shall commence on the date that the document is signed by all parties and all required vetting procedures have been completed. The LA will be notified in writing that the access is granted and of the access details required. The agreement will continue for a period of **one year** unless extended by separate agreement of the Licensee or terminated in accordance with the provisions of Clause 4 of this agreement.

3) Licence Agreement Limitations

3.1) The Alert Portal must be used only for the Licensee's core activities and as defined in its Rules and Conventions.

3.2) The LA warrants using the Alert system only for lawful purposes. In particular it will not knowingly:

3.2.1) use the Alert system in any manner which infringes any law or regulation or which infringes the right of or causes annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to any third party, nor authorise or permit any other person to do so

3.2.2) use the Alert system to post, link or transmit material which is unlawful, threatening, abusive, malicious, defamatory, obscene, pornographic, blasphemous, profane or otherwise objectionable or contains a virus or other hostile computer programme, or encourages the commission of a criminal offence or which infringes any intellectual property right

3.2.3) fail to keep secure any identification, password and other confidential information relating to the Alert system or database and shall notify the Licensor immediately of any known or suspected unauthorised use of their account or breach of security, including loss, theft or unauthorised disclosure of their password or other security information.

3.3) Data Protection: The LA shall comply in all respects with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 or any Act of Parliament or statutory modification, re-enactment or extension thereof relating to the disclosure of information.

4) Termination of Agreement

4.1) Either the Licensor or the Licensee may terminate this agreement forthwith on giving notice in writing to the LA if the Licensor commits any serious breach of any term of this agreement or it's own rules and conventions and (in the case of a breach capable of being remedied) shall have failed, within 30 days of a request in writing from the Licensee to do so, to remedy the breach.

4.2) In the event of termination of this agreement under clause 4.1 above the LA will return all the Licensee's data forthwith or, if requested by the Licensee, erase the data in a manner to be specified by the Licensee and shall certify that the data has been destroyed.

I have read the above and agree to the terms of this agreement

SIGNED

(Licensee's Administrator (LA))

Print name:

Date:

Authorised for access on behalf of the Licensee

Signed:

Print name:

Date:

Style Guide

Guidance on communicating clearly with the written word

1.0 Introduction - What is a style guide and why does TVP need one?

Clarity of communication is key to the Force's business. Yet while we speak in a largely consistent way, the English language can be neglected at the hands of those putting pen to paper or fingers to keyboard. Police speak, Americanisms and texting, have all had an impact on spelling, grammar, punctuation and acceptable abbreviations.

You want your written message to be clearly understood; we want all written documents produced by the Force to be accurate and consistent in how they say it.

This guide contains a set of pointers to the way TVP uses the written language. To acknowledge that the English language is constantly changing, the Style Guide will be regularly updated.

It should also be used in conjunction with the Force Writing Letters and Reports document available on the Corporate Information Knowzone site.

2.0 Capital letters – why big isn't always beautiful

Capital letters should be used sparingly. They are used to denote proper nouns such as people's names, places, organisations, ranks/titles, etc.

When to use capital letters at the beginning of words:

Ranks/titles

Use a capital letter when referring to a specific individual person – eg **S**uperintendent Brown, but use lower case when the sentence does not make reference to a specific person – “a superintendent” or “most superintendents find...” Again, the same rule applies to police staff posts.

Always write Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable with capital letters when using in the singular as these refer to specific individuals, but write in lower case in the plural, for example “a meeting of chief constables was told...”

The same applies for the Queen and the Prime Minister. Use upper case for job titles when referring to a specific person, e.g. **S**enior **P**ersonnel **M**anager John Smith, but lower case when saying a personnel manager.

Place names

All places found on a map will need a capital letter. The difficulty comes with other locations frequently named.

North West – use capitals when referring to the region of England, but lower case when it is part of a descriptive statement, i.e. “the north west part of the city centre” or “you travel north west from here.” Use lower case for town centre/city centre, except when part of an official name (City Centre Safe Initiative).

Organisations

The proper name of an organisation should always be written in capitals, eg **Oxfordshire City Council**, but when only a part of the name is used, lower case is appropriate, eg the council, the police.
Government is written with a capital letter when referring to Westminster, but in lower case when used in general terms, e.g. local government.
Divisions, departments and branches should use initial capitals when referring to a particular unit – Corporate Information – but lower case when using in general terms, eg all divisions have decided to...
An exception to the rule is that **Force** – when referring to Thames Valley Police – is always written with a capital letter (“The Force will carry out...”).

Publications

When referring to the full title of a book, newspaper, etc, use capital letters, but do not place in quotation marks.

Drugs

Drugs dogs use a capital letter for dog breed names: German Shepherd, Springer Spaniel, Alsatian, Labrador, etc. Use lower case for drugs: cocaine, ecstasy, and heroin.

3.0 Getting it word perfect – making an enquiry about the inquiry

Words that sound similar, but have different meanings, are easily confused.

Advice, advise

Advice (noun) is a suggestion or counsel.
Advise (verb) is to give advice.

Affect, effect

Affect (verb) is to act upon or influence.
Effect (noun) is the result of an action, e.g. he had **affected** the overall **effect** of the operation.

Antenna

Plural: antennas (radio); antennae (insects).

Biannual, biennial	Biannual: twice a year; biennial: every two years. Biweekly means both every two weeks and twice a week! To avoid confusion, use twice a year/month, every two years/months, etc.
Censor, censure	Censor: prevent publication Censure: criticise severely.
Complement, compliment, complimentary	Complement: to make complete Compliment: to praise A complimentary copy is free.
Defuse, diffuse	Defuse is to render harmless Diffuse is to spread about.
Elicit, illicit	Elicit means to bring to light, e.g. "to elicit response." Illicit means illegal.
Eminent, imminent	Eminent means well known or distinguished, imminent is when something is about to happen.
Farther, further	Farther relates to distance; further is used in the sense of additional.
Insure, ensure, assure	Insure: taking out insurance Ensure: to make certain/secure from harm Assure: setting someone's mind at rest
Grizzly, grisly	Grizzly: bear Grisly: gruesome.
Inquiry, enquiry	Inquiry: when a police investigation is under way (also public inquiry). Enquiry: to ask a question generally.
Principal, principle	Principal: head of a college; main objective, e.g. "The principal means of achieving." Principle: rule or standard: principles of teaching
Programme, program	Programme: on television Program: for computers
Stationary, stationery	Stationary: immobile Stationery: pens, paper, etc

4.0 Punctuation!

Apostrophe'

In short, apostrophes are used to denote two things:

- 1) A missing letter or letters: I **can't** (instead of I cannot), **it's** (instead of it is).
- 2) Possession: the dog's bone (as in the bone of the dog), the company's logo. (Note: the possessive form of it does not have an apostrophe. Why? Because you would not have an apostrophe in the word ours, yours or hers. When the subject ends with an s in the plural, the apostrophe comes after the letter, eg the dogs' bone (the bone belonging to two dogs). When the plural doesn't end in an s, add an apostrophe followed by an s (the children's pens, the people's princess). Use an apostrophe in phrases such as two days' time, 12 years' imprisonment. Never use an apostrophe to denote a plural: use **1960s, CDs** (not 1960's, CD's)

Colon:

Use a colon to deliver what has been promised in the preceding words: "a number of emergency services attended the scene: police, ambulance and fire service."

Comma, full stop.

Punctuation has been described as the traffic signs of language. A comma tells you when to slow down and a full stop when to stop. Proper use of punctuation tells the reader when to draw breath, which word to stress, and prevents ambiguity. Avoid peppering sentences with unnecessary commas or using them as a lifeline to rescue sentences that have become too long or unwieldy. It is better to break down a long, complicated sentence into two or three shorter ones. Don't use a comma when you really need a full stop.

Exclamation mark!

Don't use unless you have to! The only occasion when it is acceptable to use is when quoting someone: "Help!"

"Quotation marks"

Use double quote marks for speech, except for quotes inside quotes, eg "He clearly told me 'I was confronted by the burglar' when I asked him last week." Not necessary for names of books, plays etc. Style for punctuation is - ACC John

Smith said: "We are delighted with the success of the operation."

5.0 Abbreviations and acronyms – the curse of the police service

Always write all but the most common abbreviations in full for the first mention (with the abbreviation in brackets), so as not to alienate the one (or more) reader who doesn't know what the abbreviation stands for. Thereafter use accepted abbreviation.

Ranks (police)	Acceptable abbreviations are: PC, Sgt, Insp, Ch Insp, Supt, Ch Supt, ACC. Detective ranks: Det Con, Det Sgt, Det Insp and so on. Special Constable – always write in full. Police Community Support Officers – write in full first and then use PCSOs
Ranks (armed forces)	Write out in full to avoid confusion, eg. Corporal, Sergeant, Lieutenant, etc.
Councillor	Can be abbreviated to Cllr after first mention.
Organisational names	Use capitals for each letter if each letter is pronounced individually, eg BBC, ICI (note: do not place full stops between the letters), but use only an initial capital if it is an acronym pronounced as a word, eg Nato, Unesco. However, true to form, many police terms are the exception: SOCA, ACPO, CID etc.
Units of measurements (Imperial)	Distance: Miles (no abbreviation), yards (yds), feet (ft), inches (in). Weight: Tons (no abbreviation), stones (no abbreviation), pounds (lb), ounces (oz). Volume: Gallons (no abbreviation), pints (no abbreviation), fluid ounces (fl oz). Speed: miles per hour (mph)
Units of measurements (Metric)	Distance: Kilometres (km), metres (m - but write out in full where it could be confused with an abbreviation for millions), centimetres (cm), millimetres (mm). Weight: Tonnes (no abbreviation), kilograms (kg), grams (g). Volume: litres (no abbreviation), millilitres (ml). Speed: Kilometres per hour (kph) For describing area, measurements such as acre, hectare, should be written out in full.

6.0 Spacing

Only one space is needed between a full-stop and the start of a new sentence. Touch typists were taught to put two and it is a hard habit to break but only one is needed and should be used.

In press releases etc there should be a space between paragraphs but this should be a single and not double line space.

7.0 A to Z of most common errors

One important rule: Keep the reader's attention, keep the language simple.

A

about	instead of "in the order of"
addresses	never give house numbers or names when providing addresses, unless for an agreed operational reason. Use in High Street, not on High Street.
Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs)	Write in full first then abbreviate
Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)	Write in full first then abbreviate
adviser	not advisor
afterwards	not afterward
ages	do not put ages in brackets. Style is Det Insp John Smith, aged 36, or 36-year-old Det Insp John Smith. Write aged in first instance, then omit. eg: John Smith, aged 18, Chris Jones, 19, and Sam Evans, 23. 12-year-old boy, but boy who is 12 years old (see also Hyphens); in his thirties, not 30s, mid-thirties, but early thirties and late thirties.
ageing	not aging
agenda	plural: agendas

Aids	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome; no need to write out in full in first instance, or to cap all initials
airgun	one word
alleyway	one word
all right	it is not alright to make it one word
Al Qaeda	Note form of spelling to use
although	instead of in spite of the fact that
altogether	entirely, but all together, all in one place
amid	not amidst
among	not amongst
ampersand &	do not use, except in company names when the company does: P&O.
anti	hyphenate when using anti-social, anti-war
about or approximately	instead of around when talking about sums of money, figures, etc
Army, Navy and Air Force	All capped up when British, but merchant navy
artist	not artiste
ATM	Automated Teller Machine, avoid, use cashpoint
B	
back-up	hyphen as noun eg 'officers from Wantage provided back-up'
back up	two words as verb eg 'The PC said he would back up any court action'
bail	not police bail, also avoid 'he was released on police bail pending further inquiries...' use 'he was bailed pending further inquiries...'
bandanna	handkerchief, usually worn on head, double 'n'

Bank Holiday Monday	but the bank holiday
Barclays Bank	
beer-mat	hyphen
beige	
believe	use rather than the phrase: 'be of the opinion that'
belly-button	hyphen
benefited/benefiting	both words contain only one t
bill	(parliamentary)
blond	(male) blonde (female)
boy	only refer to someone under the age of 18, same for girl, otherwise use man or woman
brand-new	avoid, something is either new or it's not. Also, if writing about launch of an initiative, avoid saying it's new at all, as it's obvious
break-in	hyphen for noun, eg 'there was a break-in'; otherwise two words, eg 'he tried to break in'
breeze-block	hyphen
Britain	United Kingdom also acceptable. Don't use Great Britain unless you mean to exclude Northern Ireland (GB = England, Scotland and Wales only).
Budget	capped up for Government one, but lower case for police budget
bum-bag	hyphen
Burton	clothes shop, no 's'
by-election	hyphen
bypass	one word

byelaw Not bylaw or bye-law

C

call-handling hyphen

cannot one word, not can not

car park two words

Caribbean double b

carjacking one word

cash don't write 'stole £50 cash', just 'stole £50'; don't write 'a sum of £50' just '£50' Consider security issues when disclosing cash amounts; however, impact may be increased in certain cases eg 'a pensioner was robbed for just £5'

cashback one word when referring to the service offered on purchase, but two words otherwise, eg, 'he said he wanted the cash back'

cash card two words

cashpoint see also ATM

Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear write in full, then abbreviate CBRN

chain-saw hyphen

champagne (but capped for the region Champagne)

cheekbone one word

Chief Constable's Management Team (CCMT) see also Abbreviations

Civil Service but civil servant

civilians use police staff

clampdown see rule for crackdown

class A drugs small 'c' cap 'A', same for class B etc

commitment only one t but committal is a double t

common sense	noun, when written as commonsense (one word) it is an adjective (a commonsense approach)
comprise	comprise or comprises, not 'comprise of'
complement	make complete, go together
compliment	praise
consult	not consult with
continual	repeated over a period of time, continuous is uninterrupted or unbroken
co-operate	with hyphen, but uncooperative
co-ordinate	with hyphen
councillor	use Cllr if a title; eg 'including Cllr John Smith', otherwise use 'councillors'
Country Watch	
Crackdown (noun)	there will be a crackdown
crack down (verb)	police plan to crack down
criminal damage	use damage for describing incidents, eg: 'and caused £500 worth of damage'; only use criminal damage if detailing a charge
collective nouns	always treat as singular eg the Government was elected, the Force has established, the committee has voted.
cooperate, cooperation, cooperative, coordinate	no hyphen, but use a hyphen for: co-opt, co- author
Co-Op food shops	capped C and O
coroner	a coroner records a verdict, a jury returns a verdict only cap up when referring to title eg Coroner James Jones
could	could have not could of . Such as "He could have gone home."
court	capitals when referring to a specific court, then lower case in following references eg Slough

	Magistrates' Court...The court...Also note it is Magistrates Court but Slough magistrates. Court of Appeal rather than appeal court.
Crime desk	two words
Crown Court	capped, even if not name of a court; eg 'he appeared before a Crown Court'. But see also Magistrates' Court
Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)	see also Abbreviations
cul-de-sac	
curb check	or restrain eg new move to curb speeding (see also kerb)
currently	avoid, should be unnecessary if describing in present tense what is happening; eg 'Two men are in custody'
custody	not police custody
custom	when referring to the governmental body, use HM Customs and Excise.

D

dates	correct style and order is Wednesday 9 June 2004. Do not use st, rd, th, or commas. If writing about an incident from the day before, use 'yesterday (30/6)' not 'Monday 30 June'; if writing about an incident from three days earlier, use last Friday (27/6) and not full date; if a straight appeal refers an incident several days or weeks old, bury date further down, but not as important if writing fresh angle on a major incident; guidelines do not apply if appeal is marking an anniversary
daytime	one word, but night-time
described as	avoid this in descriptions, instead write 'the man was white, 5ft 6ins...'etc, where there are

	serious doubts, write 'the man is believed to be white, around 5ft 9ins..'etc
defendant	note spelling
dependant	noun
dependent	adjective
descriptions	for heights, no full stops, no hyphens, no 'tall': 5ft 9ins; stocky, not of stocky build
desperate	'er' in middle, but separate
disc, disk	disk: Used for anything relating to computers. Disc: all other uses, eg disc brakes, she slipped a disc.
disabled	always use 'disabled people'; also avoid wheelchair-bound, 'uses a wheelchair' is better
distraction burglaries	consider security implications of these releases; does victim live in tiny cul-de-sac, if so would giving its name increase vulnerability; avoid disclosing values and where specifically valuables were taken from; see also Cash
dreadlocks	one word
drink-drive, drink-driving	hyphens
driveway	one word
drug-user	hyphenated
drowned	Does not need a 'was' unless someone else was responsible. Eg Bill Jones drowned, but the puppy was drowned by its owner.
E	
Earley	in Reading, but Maiden Erleigh Comprehensive School in Earley
eastbound	one word, and westbound, southbound, northbound
effect	(noun)

effectively	to do something well. Do not confuse with 'in effect'
affect	(verb)
E-fit	capped E
embargoes	note plural spelling. Singular form is embargo. On news releases use embargoed.
e-mail	lower-case e
enormity	means horrible beyond description, should not be used to mean huge.
enquiry	is a question, inquiry is an investigation; eg 'in answer to your enquiry, I can confirm that several lines of inquiry are being followed'
en route	sounds formal in statements, avoid where possible
existing	avoid where possible: eg 'there are already two existing police stations on that site'; if they're on the site, they obviously exist
F	
faint	to be unclear; to lose consciousness
fatality	use death in most cases.
feint	pretended movement
fiance	(male), fiancée (female, no accent)
figures	write one to nine out in full, then use figures for 10 and above (if beginning a sentence with a number, then the number should be written out in full eg 'Fifteen thousand offences'. However, a number at the start of a news story is generally discouraged, instead substitute with a phrase such as 'A total of 15,000 offences' or use alternatives such as 'more than', 'at least', etc) Use 2 million or in monetary terms £2m, always spell out 2 billion. Figures only should be used for weights and lengths Use per cent (two words) not % or pc

firearm	one word.
Fire Service	Use firefighter instead of fireman/woman. Ranks of fire officers should always be written in full: Chief Fire Officer, Divisional Officer, Station Officer, Leading Firefighter.
first word	of press releases and statements should not be capped up
flick-knife	hyphenated
fly-tipping	hyphenated
focused	not focussed
foot-and-mouth disease	hyphenated
Force	capped when referring to specific police constabularies, but not when generalising: 'police forces across the country'
Force-wide	capped
Four by Four	four-wheel drive, write as 4x4
front line	'...so officers can be redeployed to the front line." But front-line policing
fractions	write in full and hyphenate eg one-third of the Force
full-time	hyphenated
fundraising, fundraiser	one word with no hyphen
further	not farther
G	
General Election	but election
gipsy	always use traveller
Government	(for national), but 'governments from across the world today joined forces...'
government	(for local)

Grade II listed building

graffiti

plural of graffito, although unlikely will be used in the singular.

Grandpont

area in Oxford

Guinness drink

trade name

H

handbag

one word

harassment

one 'r'

hare coursing

any offence should be referred to as 'illegal hare coursing'

headlines

should not be capped up on press releases, intranet or internet; they should describe release in short, snappy form, followed by a hyphen and the area, eg Police launch drugs crackdown - Oxford; take extra care writing headlines on to intranet and internet, as they will not have been subbed as a matter of course

headteacher

one word

heatwave

one word

helicopter

do not abbreviate to 'copter or chopper

help desk

two words

hi-fi

High Sheriff

capped

high street

avoid the High Street; it's either High Street, or in the high street

hijack

one word. Only use when talking about movable objects: planes, boats, etc. Not embassies or other buildings.

hit and run

avoid, acceptable alternatives include: 'Police are investigating a crash in Newbury yesterday

in which the driver failed to stop', 'Police want to speak to the driver of a Ford Escort after two people were injured in a crash yesterday afternoon....' and use next para to describe driver not stopping; use these examples only where clear driver was aware of incident; always make clear if police believe a driver may not have been aware of incident

horsebox

one word

hospitals

titles in caps including 'hospital', eg Royal Berkshire Hospital; exception is John Radcliffe Hospital (in Oxford) which uses more common title JR2 hospital

hub-cap

hyphenated

hyphens

needed for compound adjectives. His hair was dark brown, but he had dark-brown hair; James Smith is 21 years old, but he is 21-year-old James Smith (see also Ages)

Humour, humorist, humorous

note spelling

I

incident

acceptable in many circumstances to describe an occurrence requiring a police response, but be aware about using where its use could appear to trivialise as "incidental". Incidence refers to amount, eg a high incidence of mistakes.

indict

to accuse of indictable offences

-ise

as a suffix, use rather than -ize: sympathise, surprise (exception: capsise).

industrial tribunals

haven't existed since 1998, when they became employment tribunals

inflame

not enflame

internet

lower case

inquiry

see enquiry

into one word, but on to

intranet lower case

iPod lower case i, capped P

J

jail not gaol

judge capped up when in title, otherwise lower case;
eg Judge John Jones but 'the judge added...'

judgment no 'e'

job titles always lower case eg crime reduction adviser
(but see also Ranks)

joyrider do not use

Jewellery Note spelling.

Justices of the Peace Use JPs.

K

Keble College in Oxford, pronounced Keeble

kerb edging of stone on pavement (see also Curb)

kids slang - don't use. Preferred words are children
or young people.

knifepoint one word

L

Lambourn area in West Berkshire, not Lambourne

launches Note spelling

Land Rover type of car

lamppost	one word
laptop	one word
lawsuit	one word
learn	learned is past tense, learnt is the past participle: She learned, she had learnt
less, fewer	less means smaller in quantity, eg less money, less crime; fewer means smaller in number, eg fewer coins, fewer crimes. Simple rule: if it is a plural, use fewer
Lexus	type of car
licence	licence is a noun, license is the verb
licensee	publican
lifelong	one word
lifetime	one word
lightning, lightening	lightning: electrical discharge from storm cloud lightening: getting lighter
linesmen	one word
literally	avoid using. Means something has actually occurred – but often misused by journalists to describe something that hasn't happened: "Oxford United literally came back from the dead."
Lloyds Bank	no apostrophe
local	try and avoid; for example, if writing about residents in a town helping fight crime, it's obvious they are local
M	
mackintosh	abbreviation is mac
Magdalen College/Hill/Street	in Oxford, pronounced Maudlin

magistrates' court	lower case, apostrophe after 's'; but capped up in title: eg: Oxford Magistrates' Court. But see also Crown Court
male	try and avoid use man or men, same for female, use woman or women
May Day holiday	
McDonald's	not Mac, and with apostrophe
medication	note spellings and initial capitals: Temazepam, Diazepam, Prozac
medieval	not mediaeval
media	is plural and includes TV, radio and newspapers.
mid-March	hyphen
middle-aged	hyphen
middle class	two words
Millennium	capped if referring to the event of 1999/2000, lower case if referring to period of a thousand years in general
million	£7 million in text, £7m in headlines
minibus, minicab, miniskirt, minivan	one word
minister	(government) minister (religion)
Minuscule	not miniscule
Mitsubishi	type of car
money	abbreviate £2.50 – no full point at the end - and 50p - no full point after p
motorway	style is M4, M25, M40, M1 Junction 5 in capitals, always try and use a place name to identify the location
motorcycle, motorbike	one word
Mr, Mrs, Ms, Miss	No full stop after title. Use after first mention of full name: "That man is John Smith. Mr Smith

said..." Don't use for convicted criminals, sports people, or actors. For women, establish which title the woman prefers. If not possible, use Ms.

N

nationwide	one word
Nation Insurance	capped, although national insurance number - lower case
naught, nought	naught: nothing. Nought: the figure 0
new	avoid over use of this word in releases to the media. All news releases should by definition contain something new.
Neighbourhood Watch	
neighbourhood policing	not capped
newsdesk	one word
New Year's Day	Initial capital letters, but new year is lower case.
nightclub	one word
night-time	hyphen but daytime
no-one	one word and hyphenated
none	is singular; eg there is none available

O

occur, occurred	note spelling
offhand, offside	one word, but note: off-licence
OK	capped, not okay
on duty,	but on-duty officer, same for off duty
on to	two words, but into
oriental	avoid, use Chinese, Vietnamese etc if known

outpatient	one word
over	when talking numbers, use more than instead: “damage valued at more than....”
P	
parka	coat, not a trade name – lower case
park and ride	lower case when used in general, no hyphens; capped when a title and no need for hyphens because it's a title, eg: 'I use the Oxford Park and Ride scheme...'
party	use capitals when referring to a specific organization, eg Labour Party
passer-by	hyphen
per	in most cases 'a' is better than per eg 12 a day. But if per is used, it is generally followed by another Latin word, eg per annum, per capita
pedlar	of drugs, he used to peddle, but pedellar of bikes
persons	avoid, use people instead
pendant	ornament hung from necklace etc
pendent	adjective: hanging, overhanging
per cent	spelt out, not %
Philips	electrical goods, one 'l' and two 'p's
photofit	one word
PIN	Personal Identification Number
Po Na Na	chain of bars
police area	lower case, use Milton Keynes police area, NOT Milton Keynes police
Police Enquiry Centres (PECS)	see also abbreviations
Police Community Support Officer	write in full, see abbreviations

Portakabin	is a brand name, use mobile building unless certain it is this brand (see also Trade Names)
post-box	hyphen
Post Office	use capitals when naming the organization, but the local buildings are post office, lower case
Porsche Boxter	type of car
post-mortem	hyphen, an examination, so avoid post-mortem examination, just use post-mortem, abbreviation is PM, capped
practice	noun, practise verb
press conference	all lower case
pressurise	is to enable something to withstand pressure. A person is put under pressure
principal	chief, most important, headteacher
principle	moral rule
Prison Service	capped
proactive	one word
Probation Service	capped
protester	'er' not 'or'
Pub Watch	
Puffa	trade name, use padded jacket unless certain it is a Puffa (see also Trade Names)

Q

quotes	all are in "double marks" except for quotes within quotes which are in 'single marks'. Do not use around books, films, play titles etc, use Caps instead. Quotes are completed with full stop, then close marks, unless quoting part of a sentence; eg the judge also praised the "excellent work of the officers". Quotes should be used to add emphasis or emotion, eg "It
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beggars belief that these cowards could attack an elderly woman..." They are not for information that can be included in straight text, eg "...please call us now with information on 0845 8..."

queue, queuing

note spelling

questionnaire

note spelling

R

racecourse, racehorse

one word

racegoers

one word

ram raid

avoid

Range Rover

type of car

Ray-Ban

sunglasses, official trade name; see also Trade Names

re - (words beginning with)

Use re (no hyphen) when followed by the vowels a, i, o or u (when pronounced as "yu"), or any consonant: rearm, rear range, reinforce, rebuild. But use re- when followed by e or u: re-examine, re-urge

reassure

double s

receive injuries

avoid - people sustain injuries they do not receive them

recently

try and avoid, better to be specific about dates or omit

restorative justice

not capped

retrial

one word

ringleader

one word

Rolls-Royce

car

Rose Hill

an area of Oxford

Rosehill	area of Henley
round	adverb, eg 'he turned round to see', not 'around'
round-up	noun, as in 'area news round-up', but round up for verb, 'I will round up the news tomorrow'
Royal	cap if UK Royals, Royal Family etc
RTA	avoid; also avoid road crash if it's obvious; eg: 'police were called to a (road) crash on the A34,' does not need word 'road'. Avoid 'accident' altogether as it may be inaccurate; use 'crash'

S

Sainsbury's	
St Giles'	in city centre, Oxford
St Aldates	in Oxford
St Clement's	in Oxford
scene-watch	hyphen
schoolboy, schoolgirl, but school-leaver	
schoolchildren	one word, also use pupil but avoid schoolgirl/schoolboy
schoolmaster	use headteacher or schoolteacher
seatbelt	oneword
seasons	spring, summer etc, use lower case
seize	note spelling
separate	'ar' in middle, but desperate
shadow Minister	capped
shoplifting	one word
shortlist	one word

shotgun	one word, sawn-off shotgun
Shrievalty award	capped
singulars	collective nouns are singular; eg 'Thames Valley Police is...', 'Slough Borough Council is...' Exceptions are sports teams and pop groups; also 'police are...' not 'police is...'
some time	as in 'some time between...' two words
sometimes	occasionally, one word
Special Constabulary	capped
spicy	no e
spiky	no e
start	not commence
stationary	not moving, as in a vehicle
stationery	pens, pencils etc
storeroom	one word
storey	of a building eg three storey
Subaru	make of car
Summer Time	as in British Summer Time (one hour advance of GMT), but summer-time as in the season of summer
summoned	called upon
summonsed	legal, issued with a summons
suing	to take legal action
swap	not swop
sweatshirt	one word

T

target, targeting, targeted	note spelling
taxi driver	two words
take-away meal	hyphen
tattoo	
Tesco	
Thames Valley Police	is singular, so 'Thames Valley Police is launching...', not 'are launching...' See also Singulars
time	3am not 3.00am, avoid noon, use midday or 12pm; if you write 7.45am, there is no need to also write this morning, as it's obviously the morning - therefore 7.15am today; likewise, 2.30pm yesterday, not yesterday afternoon; exception is 10.45pm last night, as it can add more immediacy than yesterday. Avoid 12pm or 12am as it can cause confusion, instead use midday or midnight
timepiece	use clock or watch
tracksuit	one word
trade names	take care. Newspapers have been forced to pay substantial damages to the trade name owner following inappropriate use. Only use trade names when you are certain the product was involved and always use initial capital letter. Examples of common trade names and acceptable alternatives are: Sellotape – use sticky tape; Outward Bound – use outdoor centre; Portacabin – use portable building; Rollerblades – use in-line skates; Dictaphone – miniature tape recorder; Biro – ball-point pen; Hoover – use vacuum cleaner
T-shirt	hyphenated and with initial capital T
TV	is fine as abbreviation for television

U

unique	it's the one and only – so can never be qualified as 'almost' or 'very' unique.
uniform	uniform inspector should only be used as a term if necessary to define the officers involved
union flag	not union jack, which describes the flag pole.
up to date	no hyphens as in the files are up to date, but hyphens in the adjective 'up-to-date methods'
use	not utilize

V

vigilant	keeping watch
vigilante	person enforcing law without authority

W

Waterstone's	book shop
website	one word
withhold	one word
wheelie bins	note spelling
while	not whilst
whisky	Scotch and Canadian
whiskey	Irish and bourbon
whose	belonging to. Note: "who's" is an abbreviation of "who is"
workforce	one word
woolly	double o and l
worthwhile	one word
Woolworths	shop

woman

not lady

WPC

use PC

X

X-ray

cap X only and hyphenated

Xmas

avoid using, instead use Christmas

Y

Yarnell's Hill

in Oxford

Corporate Communications Copy Neighbourhood Alert Portal Administration Access Agreement

1) Overview

This agreement must be carefully read and signed by any administrator wishing to gain access to the Neighbourhood Alert administration tools. You are licenced to access the system and authorised to do so by the Licensee..

2) Definitions

Portal address: The domain name of the Neighbourhood Alert portal that gives access to the user database and administrative tools

www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk/admin

Licensee: The organisation who is the licenced owner of the portal.

Thames Valley Police

Licensee's Administrator (LA):

The administrator who has signed this agreement and agrees to act within the principles and restrictions of this agreement.

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____

LA's defined area: the pre agreed defined geographical area that the LA is permitted to view users' details within.

Defined for this LA as: _____

Alert System: Any Neighbourhood Alert administration facility that allows registration and information sharing via the Neighbourhood Alert software. This may be a single administration website, Micro-site or a collection of sites managed through a central Portal.

Users: Registered members of the Neighbourhood Alert database who have agreed to share their information with the Licensee and its authorised administrators.

Licensor: VISAV LIMITED a company registered in the United Kingdom with number whose registered office is SHERWOOD BUSINESS CENTRE 616A-618A MANSFIELD ROAD SHERWOOD NG5 2GA.

Rules and Conventions: Processes and conventions as defined by Corporate Communications for the sending, handling and processing of information on any part of the Neighbourhood Alert system. These are defined and may be updated by written notice at any time by Corporate Communications.

Start Date and Term: This agreement shall commence on the date that the document is signed by all parties and all required vetting procedures have been completed. The LA will be notified in writing that the access is granted and of the access details required. The agreement will continue for a period of **one year** unless extended by separate agreement of the Licensee or terminated in accordance with the provisions of Clause 4 of this agreement.

3) Licence Agreement Limitations

3.1) The Alert Portal must be used only for the Licensee's core activities and as defined in its Rules and Conventions.

3.2) The LA warrants using the Alert system only for lawful purposes. In particular it will not knowingly:

3.2.1) use the Alert system in any manner which infringes any law or regulation or which infringes the right of or causes annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to any third party, nor authorise or permit any other person to do so

3.2.2) use the Alert system to post, link or transmit material which is unlawful, threatening, abusive, malicious, defamatory, obscene, pornographic, blasphemous, profane or otherwise objectionable or contains a virus or other hostile computer programme, or encourages the commission of a criminal offence or which infringes any intellectual property right

3.2.3) fail to keep secure any identification, password and other confidential information relating to the Alert system or database and shall notify the Licensor immediately of any known or suspected unauthorised use of their account or breach of security, including loss, theft or unauthorised disclosure of their password or other security information.

3.3) Data Protection: The LA shall comply in all respects with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 or any Act of Parliament or statutory modification, re-enactment or extension thereof relating to the disclosure of information.

4) Termination of Agreement

4.1) Either the Licensor or the Licensee may terminate this agreement forthwith on giving notice in writing to the LA if the Licensor commits any serious breach of any term of this agreement or its own rules and conventions and (in the case of a breach capable of being remedied) shall have failed, within 30 days of a request in writing from the Licensee to do so, to remedy the breach.

4.2) In the event of termination of this agreement under clause 4.1 above the LA will return all the Licensee's data forthwith or, if requested by the Licensee, erase the data in a manner to be specified by the Licensee and shall certify that the data has been destroyed.

I have read the above and agree to the terms of this agreement

SIGNED

(Licensee's Administrator (LA))

Print name:

Date:

Authorised for access on behalf of the Licensee

Signed:

Print name:

Date:

