



## Press and PR Policy

March 2022

<b>Company</b>	Thirteen Group
<b>Lead Manager</b>	Emily Potts
<b>Date of Final Draft and Version Number</b>	March 2022
<b>Review Date</b>	March 2025
<b>Officer Responsible for Review</b>	Emily Potts

### Policy Review History

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Changes to Document</b>	<b>Changes Authorised By</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>
1	New policy	HS	March 2015
2	Anniversary Review	HW	March 2019
3	Anniversary Review	EP	March 2022

## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 As well as celebrating our successes, relaying the messages and priorities of the organisation and raising our profile, it's important that we protect and promote the reputation of Thirteen. This means ensuring we have an effective system in place, so we're fully aware of any potentially damaging news items and can proactively manage them with the media.
- 1.2 The media can be a significant influencing factor in the reputation of any organisation and so it's important that colleagues across Thirteen understand how we deal with the media and publicity, so we safeguard our reputation and mitigate negative news stories, while identifying and maximising opportunities to promote our organisation.
- 1.3 We're open and honest and we welcome working with the media and so we'll support colleagues in dealing with the media and helping promote Thirteen's activities through media and publicity. Using the media means we can communicate even more widely with colleagues, customers, partners and other stakeholders. This policy helps us:
  - Make all members of staff across Thirteen aware of what to do when we get a media enquiry.
  - Ensure our full range of news and positive stories is publicised and a positive, though truthful, response can be given to negative stories wherever possible.
  - Ensure we maximise PR opportunities with a planned, proactive approach.
  - Ensure a consistent approach to all media enquiries and understand the key role of the communications team in this.
  - Ensure each leadership team member, service director or manager knows what steps to take to respond to media queries and knows to contact their communications specialist or the head of communications as a priority when being made aware of a media issue.
  - Protect and build the positive reputation of Thirteen and ensure we publicise our success stories.
  - Ensure all colleagues know what to do when being asked to be quoted or involved in another organisation's press release.

## 2 REFERENCE MATERIAL

- 2.1 The communications team members have a wealth of journalism and public relations experience, including issuing positive press releases, dealing with potentially damaging stories, providing responses to media enquiries and arranging broadcast interviews, TV programmes and documentaries.

The communications team constantly reviews our media contacts within the sector, regionally and nationally, and has a range of positive relationships that are continually maintained and built on.

The team members also regularly review Thirteen's list of media experts and promotes this to media organisations, so we are a go-to organisation for comments.

### 3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Proactive media** means actively creating information to generate media interest and promote the good work we're doing, such as creating a media release or holding a press conference.
- 3.2 **Reactive media** is when we need to respond to media enquiries, which can come in from a range of media organisations and on a range of subjects. Examples could include 'Single mum of seven faces wait to be rehoused' or questions around a public planning committee document. These requests can come from TV, radio, online or print media.
- 3.3 **Special media requests** include things like taking part in a live radio or television debate, or a TV documentary. This type of request needs to be carefully considered to weigh up the impact of taking part and any associated risks.

### 4 POLICY CONTENTS

#### 4.1 Proactive Media

The communications team plans in media and publicity opportunities around services, events or activities in advance to help us maximise any promotional opportunities with the media. This is mainly achieved utilising news releases, media photo calls and interview opportunities.

The communications team has a forward plan of PR activity aligned to our strategic priorities but welcomes additional activity that can be added and pre-planned.

#### 4.2 Reactive Media

If we're not careful, reactive media can affect the reputation of Thirteen and can sometimes lead to a negative opinion of the services we deliver, or a poor image of the organisation as a whole.

It's important that reactive media is well-managed to limit the potential effect on our image and reputation. Enquiries need to be responded to quickly and in full and the communications team will always lead on this, seeking sign off from the relevant directors. As part of responding to media enquiries, we are sometimes asked to take part in radio or television interviews, which can be live. We need to gauge this type of request carefully, evaluating the pros and cons of taking part, and make sure we're well prepared if we do decide to take part.

#### 4.3 Special Media Requests

Television production companies sometimes ask for us to take part in programmes or documentaries.

These can be of benefit but we need to consider these carefully as they can also have a negative effect, such as enhancing a damaging view of an area or reinforcing stereotypes of social housing.

## 5 GOVERNANCE INFORMATION

<b>Equality and Diversity</b>	This policy does not prevent anyone from receiving equal access
<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>	There are no environmental or sustainability issues as a result of this policy.
<b>Customer Involvement and Consultation</b>	Consultation has been completed with the Leadership team as well as customer consultation.
<b>Monitoring and Review</b>	The policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required by the author, legislation or regulation.
<b>Responsibility</b>	Emily Potts, Head of Communications is responsible for overall implementation of the policy.