



Artarmmon

PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

ABN 77 319 108 019

ARTARMON GAZETTE POLICY AND STYLE GUIDE

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1 EDITORIAL POLICY

1.1 Background and general principles

- The core purpose of the Artarmon Gazette is to publish high-quality, independent, public interest news and information for the Artarmon community.
- The Gazette focuses on local issues, community interests and supporting local business.
- The Gazette Editor and contributors commit themselves to honesty, fairness, respect for the rights of others, and independence.
- The Gazette supports a high ratio (60% or more) of news and information to advertising material.
- The Editor aims to publish four issues per annum – typically in March, June, September and December.

1.2 Relevance and readability

- Articles must be about activities or events that affect (or involve people from) the Artarmon area.
- Contributions from all groups and individuals in Artarmon are welcome. Contributions may include news, special interest stories, cartoons, photos, ads, advertorials and Letters to the Editor. Advertorials must be accompanied by an ad (advertising rate is based on the combined size of the advertorial and ad).
- Typically, contributions are received from the APA Executive team, advertisers, community groups, local businesses and Willoughby City Council.
- All contributions must be readable, including coherent writing, good spelling and grammar.

1.3 Accuracy, fairness and balance

- The Gazette seeks to ensure that its factual content is accurate, objective and not misleading, is fair and balanced, and provides different perspectives.
- If an error is made, a correction (and apology where appropriate) will be made in a subsequent edition.
- Items may be excluded from publication for any reason, including (but not limited to): defamatory, hostile or one-sided content; lack of relevance to the community; using inappropriate or sensitive information; pushing a political agenda; potential for commercial gain; lack of space.
- Personal interest, beliefs, gifts or benefits must not influence accuracy, fairness or independence.

1.4 Privacy

- Writers should not unduly intrude on the privacy of individuals and should show respect for the dignity and sensitivity of people being referred to or interviewed.

2 ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRODUCTION

2.1 Gazette sub-committee

- The APA delegates the operational elements of compiling, publishing and distributing the Artarmon Gazette to a team of volunteers comprising: Editor, Gazette Coordinator, Advertising Coordinator, Distribution Coordinator, Publisher and Treasurer.
- Information and messages sent to the editor (see the Gazette page of the APA website for the email address) are distributed to the Editor and Gazette Coordinator.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Editor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 'boss' of the Gazette. The Editor determines the size of articles, makes final decisions on content and layout, and is responsible for the Gazette's editorial voice.• Reserves the right to edit content to maintain accepted standards of language, probity, and respect for other points of view.• May refer articles to the APA Executive team for further review.• Liaises with the writer if any queries.• Liaises with the designer and publisher.• Signs off final proofs.• Advises the designer that it is okay to send the print file to the printer.
Gazette Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plans content for each edition in consultation with the APA Executive Committee (particularly in relation to the lead articles) and Editor.• Tracks the progress of contributions and advertising material to ensure the Editor receives all copy by the deadline.• Regularly keeps the Editor informed of progress.• May write content (but not routinely).• Maintains the advertising pricing list (subject to approval of the Treasurer and APA Executive Committee).• Ensures all advertising artwork has been signed off by each advertiser.• Liaises with the printer about changes to pricing or production numbers.• Liaises with the printer about the expected delivery date.• Informs the Distribution Coordinator when to expect delivery (about two weeks' notice).• Maintains the production timetable.

Role	Responsibilities
Advertising Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaises with existing and potential advertisers. • Maintains a list of existing advertisers and contact details. • Makes sure advertisers send artwork requests to the designer before the deadline. • Advises the editor of committed advertisers (and size) as early as possible to permit management of space. • Ensures all final advertisements and advertorials are with the designer by deadline. • Informs gazette coordinator whether advertising goals are being achieved.
Distribution Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages a team of volunteers to deliver copies of the Gazette to residents and businesses in Artarmon. • Maintains a list of volunteer distributors, allocated routes, delivery addresses, phone and email contact details. • Provides the Gazette Coordinator with a delivery schedule.
Publisher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically, the President of the APA. • Ensures the publication contains no defamatory material. • Provides the final sign-off to publish.
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for advertising pricing in conjunction with the Gazette Coordinator (and subject to approval by the APA Executive Committee). • Prepares and sends out tax invoices for each advertisement. • Manages collection of trade debtors.

*Proofreading refers to checking for errors in a text before it is published or shared, as per the agreed style guide.

2.3 Editorial production process

- The APA committee and the Gazette sub-committee decide the key topics and who will write them, for page 1, bottom half of pages 2 and 3 (APA designated pages). Content of all other pages is at the discretion of the Editor.
- Gazette Coordinator liaises with Advertising Coordinator about potential advertising and advertorials and deadlines.
- Advertising Coordinator advises Editor and Gazette Coordinator of expected advertising.
- Gazette Coordinator to liaise with the Editor regarding any requests for advertorials (other than Artarmon Village Inc agreement).
- Four weeks before the deadline, the Advertising Coordinator emails advertisers to advise of the deadline.
- Three weeks before deadline, the Editor emails contributors advising deadline and the number of words required and reminding writers to email their contributions to the Editor (see Gazette page of APA website for this email address)
- One week before the deadline, the Editor sends reminder email to contributors.
- One week before deadline, the Advertising Coordinator sends reminder email to advertisers.

- Gazette Coordinator liaises with Editor and Advertising Coordinator on the flow of copy and advertising received.
- From Wednesday deadline to Sunday, Editor edits copy and liaises with Gazette Coordinator on progress.
- Sunday, the Editor sends layout plan, copy and images to the Designer.
- Monday to Thursday, Designer fits copy and images to the layout plan and advises shortfalls, overmatter etc. Returns the first draft to the Editor on Thursday.
- Thursday and Friday, Editor proofreads. Advises amendments or additions to the Designer not later than Sunday.
- Designer makes corrections, adjustments and returns to the Editor on Tuesday.
- Editor checks changes; Wednesday sends to President for sign-off.
- Thursday, the Editor sends approved artwork to the Designer.
- Thursday, Designer sends approved artwork to the Printer.
- Gazette Coordinator advises Distribution Coordinator that the Gazette has gone to the Printer and when to expect delivery.
- Eight days later (Friday) Printer delivers to the Distribution Coordinator.
- Nine days later (Sunday) Gazette delivery completed.

3 STYLE GUIDE

3.1 General points

- The tone of the Artarmon Gazette is professional, impartial and informative
- Keep language clear, direct and simple.
- If there is a shorter alternative, use it – don't use two words when one will do.
- Use Plain English – don't use a big word when a short one will do.
- Use active voice rather than the passive voice. This is easier to read and usually shorter
 - e.g. 'Transport for NSW will plant trees along the rail corridor', not 'Trees will be planted along the rail corridor by Transport for NSW'.
- If it is possible to cut out a word, do so.
- Spelling: use British/Australian English rather than American English
 - i.e. favour not favor
 - colour not color
 - organise not organize
 - adviser not advisor etc.
- Images should be sent in high resolution (300dpi saved in JPG or TIFF format) and separate from the text (i.e. not embedded)

3.2 Plain language suggestions

The following are some preferred plain language substitutions.

Instead of this	Try this
accordingly	so
additional	more, extra
adjacent	next to, nearby
ahead of	before
amend	change
amidst	amid
amongst	among
appropriate measures	steps
approximately, around	about
as, due to, as a result of	because
at a later date	later
beneficial	better
by means of	by
commence	begin, start
comply with	follow
consensus of opinion	consensus
consequently	so
currently	now

Instead of this	Try this
despite the fact that	despite
determine	decide
during the time that	while
due to the fact that	because
following	after
formulate	work out, devise, firm up
future plans	plans, now
Impact, impact upon	affect
implement	start, apply, install, do
in accordance with, in regard to, in respect of	as, in line with
in excess of	more than
in relation to	about
in the absence of	without
in the near future	soon
in the vicinity of	near
in view of the fact	because
it is possible that	perhaps
it is probable that	probable
majority	most
modify	change
no later than	by, before
notify	tell
notwithstanding the fact that	although
numerous	many
on account of the fact that	because
on behalf of	for
pertaining to	about
prior to, previous to	before
provide advice	advise
reach a decision	decide
reach out	contact
regarding	about, on
reach a consensus	ask, agree
request	ask
requires	needs
signage	sign
subsequently	later
therefore	so
track record	record
undertake	carry out
utilise	use

Instead of this	Try this
whilst	while
with a view to	to
with the exception of	except

3.3 Some tips for writing

- **Acronyms** – Look horrible and stop the flow because they’re hard to read and comprehend. Spell out the name of the organisation on the first use and then say e.g. the company, the department, the hospital etc.
- **Capital letters** – As with punctuation the trend is to minimise their use. Use the NSW government (not the NSW state government) and after that the government. In the Gazette there is little risk of ambiguity about which government we mean. Use NSW premier Gladys Berejiklian. Do not use upper case for a title for a person who is dead or no longer does that job e.g. former prime minister Gough Whitlam, former premier Barry O’Farrell.
- **Dates** – It is not necessary to include the year if the event happened less than a year ago.
- **Figures** – Never start a sentence with a figure – write out the number. Use words for numbers one to nine and figures of 10 or more.
- **Headlines** – The editor will usually write the headline but if you write your own, bear in mind that it may need to be changed for layout reasons. Only the first word in the heading should be in upper case unless it involves names.
- **Names** – Check the spelling of names of people and businesses. Use the person’s full name the first time, then the surname e.g. Liberal MP for Willoughby Trent Zimmerman, then Zimmerman. When referring to people in the Artarmon community, first names can be used on the second reference.
- **Overused words:** access, outcome, provide, impact/ing/ed; support; community.
- **Punctuation** – The trend in publishing is to minimise punctuation, especially commas and hyphens. But sometimes they are necessary to make the meaning clear e.g. resign versus re-sign, resent versus re-sent, recreate versus re-create. The same can apply with commas and, when naming people, if you have a comma after the person’s title, you also need one after their name.
- **Quotes** – Use double quote marks when reporting a direct quote from a person, when writing conversation or quoting from another publication. Every word inside the double quotes should be exactly what was said. Otherwise paraphrase it or use partial quotes. Single quote marks are used for quotes within quotes. For full quotes put a colon and a space before the first quotation mark and a full point before the second quote mark. If it is a partial quote, put the full point outside the second quote mark. For example, with a full quote: John said: “I shall urge the minister to take account of the community’s concerns.” In a partial quote: John urged the minister to “take account of the community’s concerns”.

3.4 Some words/terms to watch

- **Criterion/criteria** – one criterion, two or more criteria
- **Fewer/less** – fewer is for things you can count; less is for things you can measure or weigh
- **Forego** – means to go before; forgo means to go without
- **However** – at the start of a sentence should be followed by a comma, in the middle of a sentence should be replaced by 'but'
- **Learned** – means knowledgeable; use learnt
- **Local** – not needed with residents or community
- **Moving/going forward** – do not use; if you are talking about the future, it is forward
- **Number/amount** – *number* is for things you can count, *amount* is for things you can weigh or measure
- **Over/under** – more than (more than refers to number; over/under to height or age)
- **Period of time** – period or time but not both; also not a 10-year period but 10 years
- **Proved/proven** – it *proved* (verb) a good decision but it is not a *proven* (adjective) formula
- **Residents** – not local residents
- **That or which** – *that* defines something and *which* describes it, or adds more information; you usually need a comma before *which* e.g. 'This is the car that John bought' but 'This car, which John bought from Mary, is yellow'.
- **Their/there/they're** – e.g. 'The boys left *their* books in the park. *They're* likely to be gone when they go *there* tomorrow'.
- **Time** – 9am not 9.00am
- **Which/that/who** – people are who, not which. Governments, companies, charities and organisations are which and occasionally that, but not who, and they take the singular verb e.g. Transport for NSW is ... Lendlease is ... the Artarmon Progress Association (APA) is ...
- **With** – is a preposition but is often used as a conjunction to join two ideas. Use *and* instead or start a new sentence. e.g. 'The fair was a huge success *and* 1400 residents attended', not 'The fair was a huge success with a crowd of 1400 residents attending'.

3.5 Some basic rules about writing stories

- When reporting an event or interviewing a person, over the telephone or face to face, always identify yourself and make it clear you are doing an article for the Gazette.
- Writing a story involves research and asking questions, most of which should start with 'why', 'what' and 'who' and, perhaps 'how much', 'how big', 'how long'.
- You can report your own observations but do not report what anyone says without permission unless they are speaking publicly.
- Do not rely on memory, make notes and give an accurate report of the event or interview without embellishment or bias. Use a tape recorder or your mobile phone when interviewing to get an accurate record of your interview. Always ask for permission to record an interview. Keep your notes and recordings for 12 months in case there is a dispute about the interview later.
- Always acknowledge the source of your information e.g. "according to ..." or "... reports, shows". If possible, provide a web link.

- If a source seeks anonymity, do not agree without first considering the source's motives and any alternative attributable source. If confidences are accepted, respect them in all circumstances.
- Do not suppress relevant available facts. Do your utmost to give a fair opportunity for reply.
- Do not place unnecessary emphasis on personal characteristics including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, family relationships, religious belief, or physical or intellectual disability.
- Disclose conflicts of interest that affect, or could be seen to affect, the accuracy, fairness or independence of what you write. Do not improperly use your position for personal gain.
- Do not let advertising or other commercial considerations undermine your accuracy, fairness or independence.
- Do your utmost to ensure disclosure of any direct or indirect payment made for interviews, pictures, information or stories.
- Do not plagiarise.
- When writing the story, use past tense unless it is a feature, in which case present tense is preferred.
- Keep sentences short and write one sentence per paragraph. Each paragraph should add new information.

3.6 Interviews

- Before the interview, do some research and think what people in Artarmon would like to know about your subject.
- Prepare some questions and focus on anything new, different, important or unusual. But be flexible if the interview takes you somewhere you do not expect. It could make even more interesting copy.

3.7 Introducing a main idea

- Do not use 'not' in the intro.
- We are reporting events, not non-events. In case of a widely expected event that is not taking place, say something such as 'Willoughby City Council had to cancel the earth hour celebrations in Artarmon because of torrential rain.' (Not: 'The earth hour celebrations did not take place because of torrential rain').