

Guidance Notes for Northern Ceramic Society Newsletter Articles

Issued 24 August 2019

Brief Guide

- Contributions are welcome in electronic and hard copy format. There are few essentials!
- We need images and text to be available as separate files.
- Text in electronic format should be in Microsoft Word, but hard copy - typed or hand-written is fine. It will help us if the Word automatic footnote or endnote facility is **not** used for electronic documents.
- Photographs in electronic format should be sent as image files (eg JPEG), but prints on photo quality paper are also acceptable. If images are cropped, we prefer them not to be cropped too tightly to the object.
- Articles and images may be sent by email, file transfer systems, CD, DVD, or letter package.
- There is no minimum size for the length of article, but we prefer it not to exceed an upper limit of 12 Newsletter size (A5) pages.
- Consider that material sent to us will always have to be reorganised to fit the A5 page (available area 12 x 19 cm). This places restrictions on the size we can reproduce tables and photographs.
- Articles that have been published previously in other ceramic publications are not usually accepted.
- Permission to reproduce third party material in printed and electronic format is required.

More advice and answers to questions we have received on a range of topics listed below:

Format; Length of articles; Text options; Image options; Taking photographs of ceramics; Processing images; Image quality; Sending images; Identification of images; Appearance of articles; Proof copies; Return of submitted material; Copyright and the Data Protection Act; Copy deadlines are detailed in the following pages.

If there are any other queries please do not hesitate to contact us. Our details are shown inside the cover of each Newsletter.

Format

For formatting the Newsletter, we use desktop publishing software. The material sent to us will always have to be reorganised to fit the page size (A5) of the Newsletter. To do this we need images and text to be separate. We therefore request that electronic text and images are sent as separate files and **not embedded** in one document. Whilst it is usually possible for us to perform this separation, the final image quality may not be good. For text, the original size and style of print font does not matter as these will be changed by using presets to Arial 10 point for the main paragraphs. We prefer to have endnotes, rather than footnotes on each page, as we find it is a more efficient use of space with A5 size pages. It will help us if you **do not** use the Word automatic 'Insert Endnote' facility.

Length of articles

To provide members with a varied selection of articles, together with all the regular features such as Museum News and Diary, we have to limit the length of individual contributions. We therefore prefer a **maximum** of twelve A5 pages. As a rough guide a Newsletter page equates to 500 words (*without* any images, captions, tables and main title). How much space images will occupy depends very much on the layout and the size they will need to be, but to estimate, add on pages at the rate of 4 images per page. There is no minimum length - a single page is fine.

Text options

- *Typed in Word format [.doc or .docx]* and sent by any of the following:
 - 1 as an email attachment;
 - 2 on a CD or DVD via the post;
 - 3 as a paper copy via the post.

The electronic versions (1 & 2) can be imported directly and are the quickest for us. The hard copy (3) can be scanned using OCR (Optical Character Recognition). OCR is not a perfect process and the resulting text will require correction, but it is generally quicker than re-typing.

- *Typed as an email*

We can 'cut' and 'paste' relevant text, but this is only suitable for brief items.

- *Hand-written* and sent via the post

This will be typed as a Word document prior to importing.

Image options

Digital images as JPEG [.jpg], PNG [.png], TIFF [.tif], or BMP [.bmp] files (other formats, please ask) and sent by the following:

- 1 JPEGs, PNG files as email attachments or on a CD or DVD via the post;
- 2 TIFF or BMP files on a CD or DVD via the post if too large for emailing;
- 3 File transfer systems, such as WeTransfer, OneDrive, Dropbox, etc.

- *Paper copy on photo grade paper* sent via the post

We can scan images printed on photo grade paper to convert them into electronic form. Images printed on non-photo grade paper can give poor results as the colours get absorbed into the paper and the image is likely to be less sharp.

- *Photographic Slides (transparencies)*

We can photograph slides to convert them into digital images and will return the slides to you.

Taking photographs of ceramics

- Make sure the image of the object is in sharp focus
- Be careful not to cause a distorted image by positioning the camera too close to the object
- Avoid camera wobble by using a tripod or placing the camera on a firm surface such as books; presetting the exposure by using an automatic timer will also avoid camera shake
- Use plain backgrounds and, to avoid colour casts, do not use brightly coloured backgrounds when photographing pale-coloured shiny items
- Adjust camera for appropriate lighting conditions if AWB (auto white balance setting) is not available

Processing images

Many people have software for editing images. Generally for Newsletter images, we would prefer to receive images that have not been processed because some of these changes lead to loss of pixels (see below) which will affect the quality of reproduction. There is also no need to trim images as this can be done directly in the desktop publishing software and sometimes it is useful to have a bit of extra background to fit a particular space or to display a group of images in the same size frames.

Please do not add text to the images as any information will most likely be unreadable at the size we can display the picture. If required, it is a simple matter for us to add on information and we can ensure that a standard style and suitable size of font is applied.

Image quality

A number of factors affect image quality:

- Image resolution, this describes the amount of detail in an image and is expressed as the number of pixels (picture elements) per inch, shown as horizontal x vertical values. The greater the amount of detail in the object, the larger the number of pixels will be required to produce a good image
- The dimensions of picture required
- For printing, the printer used will make a difference depending on the number of dots printed in a linear inch
- For on-screen viewing, the resolution of computer screens vary, so that too will affect the appearance of an image

Images viewed on a modern computer monitor often look better than the corresponding printed images. Therefore viewing your images on screen can only be regarded as a guide to how they will look in print. Similarly, images printed by professional printers are likely to look better than those printed at home. Also consider that the dimensions of the Newsletter page will limit the size of images that can be displayed and therefore might be unsuitable for an article that requires several large illustrations.

Sending images

The higher the image resolution, the larger the file size, expressed in megabytes [MB] or kilobytes [KB] will be and this is a factor when deciding how to send the images [1 MB=1000 KB].

Most cameras produce digital images in JPG format – these have been compressed to reduce the file size (usually by a factor of 10 or more). For example, the size of a 10 megapixel image is about 30 MB, reducing to about 3 MB after compression by the camera software. If your images are stored on a computer, the file size and number of pixels will be displayed on screen when you select an image.

If the JPEG image files are attached to emails, then some consideration needs to be given to the total file size of the images attached, otherwise the transmission over the internet will be slow or they may be too big to send successfully and 'crash'. The latter can be avoided by sending multiple emails with fewer images attached to each. It is impossible to be prescriptive as to what constitutes 'too big', as there are so many factors involved, but a rough guide would be to avoid a collective file size of over 10 MB in one email. The file sizes are displayed at the top of the email when you attach the images. If this sounds like too much hassle, then the 'try it and see what happens' approach will tell you if your files are too large to send, but this can be frustrating if several attempts are needed.

Some members prefer to use TIFF and BMP format images. These are uncompressed images and because they have large file sizes, they are usually more suitable for sending on a disc.

Identification of images

Clear identification of images is important to help us to avoid errors with figures. Here are some suggested options:

- 1 If you store the image files on your computer, right click on the mouse to 'rename' with either the figure number and/or a brief descriptor;
- 2 Provide a key that links the image number with the figure and/or caption;
- 3 Provide a picture key using small images with identification;
- 4 For printed photographs, please stick a label on the back.

Appearance of articles

As articles are submitted from different authors, there will be different styles of layout including punctuation. As stated previously, formats are changed to fit into an A5 page size and also to give a coordinated appearance to the Newsletter. We may make very minor amendments to text to adjust to the space. For anything significant, we would consult with the author.

Where possible, we aim to have images close to the relevant text, ideally on the same page or the facing page and also try to place items for comparison adjacent. Where there are references to several figures close together, the images will have to be more remote from the text. Sometimes, space restrictions may mean that the ideal layout is not feasible.

Proof copies

Owing to the relatively short time we have to prepare Newsletters, we do not routinely send out proof copies to authors unless requested. An article that has been hand-written would be an exception. If for any reason, an article needed to be amended (other than minor edits referred to earlier), we would ensure that the author was shown the changes.

Return of submitted material

With the relatively high collective cost of postage to the Society, we do not routinely return discs and hard-copy photographs to authors unless requested, but if individuals wish to have items returned, please let us know and we shall be happy to do so.

Copyright and the Data Protection Act

Please ensure that permission is sought for us to reproduce images or documents that are subject to copyright (from institutions, books and other published material) **both in printed and electronic format** and that the preferred style and location of acknowledgement is obtained. Some institutions like to have an acknowledgement under every image rather than a collective reference in the text and may request the use of the © symbol. Please also ensure that sources of information are included and where relevant that authors are acknowledged.

In addition, please be aware that images of people are subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which controls the processing of personal data, that is data relating to an individual and from which the individual can be identified. On many occasions the taking of the photograph is fine, but it is the publishing of it that may be subject to restrictions, so please check with individuals that they consent to have their images shown in the Newsletter.

This is a convenient place to clarify the position regarding NCS copyright with respect to the Newsletter. The author of the article retains the copyright, however, the Society holds the copyright for the layout, so that an article should not be reproduced in exactly the same layout and format as it appears in the Society's Newsletter without agreement with the NCS and the addition of a note stating that the article first appeared in the NCS Newsletter.

Copy deadlines

The Newsletter is issued at the beginning of April, August and December. The Newsletter needs to be ready to send to the printers at the end of February, June and October, respectively. We therefore require all material (except Diary entries) by the middle of those months. As Diary entries need to be as up-to-date as possible, these will be accepted up to the third week. The deadline for Diary submissions for the next issue is printed in each Newsletter.

There would clearly be a problem for us if everyone sent in their material close to the deadlines, therefore, the earlier the better. Also, when there is a plentiful supply of material, earlier submissions are more likely to get published in the next issue.

We do not know ahead how much space will be used for the Diary and Museum News and some other topical items that arrive during the end phase of the production process. We therefore can only estimate the space for these types of items. When we reach the deadlines stated, we may then re-allocate any unused space. As the Newsletter is a stapled publication, the numbers of pages have to be in multiples of 4 to avoid blank pages. Thus if information is received late, even if the Newsletter has not have gone to the printers, there may no longer be space.