

# Andrew Fielding

Communications Specialist - available immediately.

Curriculum Vitae last updated March 2022



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*Award-winning communications professional.  
Extensive experience in media relations, social media production,  
campaign planning and internal communications.  
Innovative, inquisitive and distinctive!*

## Skills and Experience

**Twenty years experience of communicating** with a wide range of audiences in the public and charity sectors

During my career in communications, I have written for public and internal audiences as diverse as primary school children; central government funders; frontline police officers and property developers. I am a communications generalist - equally at home dealing with a crisis, writing for an internal audience or campaigning across both online and offline channels.

In my final two years at Surrey Police I had a strategic role developing processes to embed the [GCS OASIS communications model](#) within the organisation. I particularly focused on ensuring all communications activity was evidence-based and evaluated; and that the senior managers had an "at-a-glance" overview of the team workload, resourcing, output and outcomes.

I also took responsibility for planning and managing the social media content for both Surrey and Sussex Police as part of our joint response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Media relations experience** in proactive, reactive and crisis scenarios - including 24 hour on call duties

For two years I managed the day-to-day running of the Surrey Police media relations desk - a team of four responsible each day for:

- writing press releases and social media appeals for witnesses to crimes
- responding to media enquiries and preparing "if asked" lines for investigations
- promoting positive news stories about Surrey Police via the media and directly to the public.

A [six month review showed that over half of our appeals generated new leads from the public](#) as a result of targeting our appeals to specific outlets for the audience we wanted to reach.

During the pandemic, when confidence in Surrey Police was falling, I was tasked with increasing the number of positive news stories. I introduced a daily review of local court listings; arrest and charge records; and daily operational tasking meetings. This increased the number of proactive packages released by 66% despite the courts not working at full capacity.

I personally oversaw the media strategies for many high profile criminal investigations including murders, rapes, road deaths and fraud - balancing the media's demand for information with legal and ethical constraints on what was appropriate to release.

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I managed reputational risks such as protests and legal action against Surrey Police; criticism by inspecting bodies; poor performance in service delivery and inappropriate staff behaviour.

My experience of major incidents included evacuations due to heathland fires, unexploded bombs and property flooding; an illegal rave planned the night before the Queen's 2015 Magna Carta celebrations; and the alleged abduction of a 11-year-old boy.

Despite changing roles, I continued as a member of the on-call rota and would frequently issue urgent press releases or media appeals at the weekend or in the early hours of the morning.

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**Social Media** - skilled in both strategy and the creation of social content that performs strongly

In 2011 I developed Surrey Police's overall social media strategy - ensuring that the accounts were audience focussed and evidence led, and paving the way for the organisation to be one of the first forces in the country to accept crime reports via social media.

I also created specific social strategies for major events including the policing of the 2012 Olympics in Surrey, the 2019 worldwide gathering of Hells Angels in Surrey and enforcement of the regulations surrounding the 2020 pandemic.

Throughout my tenure at Surrey I was responsible for training colleagues across both the communications team, and the wider organisation, in our online tone of voice; how to write for social media and how to use it in a crisis situation. I was also responsible for measuring the account performance and advising account owners on ways to improve their reach and impact.

Key to the many viral social media posts I have written is ensuring that the key message for my client is reflected in the post. Examples include:

- A [Twitter thread outlining how Surrey Police had identified and arrested a man](#) who was about to leave the country on a plane to Ethiopia after having sex with a 14-year-old girl received media interest after a previous press release had been ignored.
- My cheeky [tweet offering Harry and Meghan a job](#) when they wanted to become private citizens increased visits to the Surrey Police recruitment page by 1400%.
- I warned of the perils of driving on black ice with a pastiche of Vanilla Ice's "Ice Ice Baby" ([#IceIceSurrey](#)). The post contributed to Surrey Police winning the best use of Twitter, and the grand prix, in the [2013 Drum Social Buzz awards](#)

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**Campaigning** - demonstrable experience of developing and delivering behaviour change campaigns, working with both internal and external agencies

In the summer of 2020, following the first Covid-lockdown, there was a concern that there would be a spike in alcohol-fuelled violence in town centres across Surrey. In response [I created the #LessenTheSession campaign](#) - using tongue-in-cheek images of young people enjoying a night out while wearing face masks and rubber gloves to highlight the changes. The whole campaign was created in-house, in less than two weeks, using staff as models. The message reached over 450,000 people in the target age range, and was picked up on local radio and shared by partners.

I planned, executed and created (including design work using Photoshop and Indesign) the "wary little Christmas" campaign which highlighted crimes that increased at Christmas and enabled the public to protect themselves from

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pickpocketing and distraction theft while shopping; and injury or assault on a night out. This was a cross-channel campaign using media, media advertising, outdoor, events, in-venue advertising and digital content.

Before working for Surrey Police I ran the National Walk to School Campaign encouraging primary and secondary school pupils (and their parents) to travel sustainably to school. Each year I coordinated two national awareness weeks ('Walk to School Week' in May and 'Walk to School Month' in October), and a year-round active travel reward scheme (Walk Once a Week - rewarding children with badges if they walked to school every Wednesday for a month). The campaign reached 2 million pupils annually, through local authority partners and our promotional activity, and during my time at the charity I grew the WOW scheme tenfold to over 100,000 monthly participants.

For Walk to School week I coordinated activities with schools and local authorities across the UK, and ensured all partners were following the national theme. A substantial part of this role involved working with our suppliers to design and distribute campaign materials in time for my national media launch.

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**Internal Communications** - experience of creating new internal channels and utilising existing channels to best support the workforce

During my career at Surrey Police I was heavily involved in the scoping, design and writing of two intranets (the second being a shared site between Surrey and Sussex Police). As a joint project between ICT and Communications (across two separate forces) this required a clear brief and understanding of the project aims in order to succeed.

One of the biggest internal communication challenges I faced was "death in service". When a well-known officer took his own life in 2017, I wrote the message to staff from the Chief Constable; and coordinated the tributes, flags at half mast and books of condolence across the estate. I had to protect his brother and partner from intrusion while sensitively dealing with the rumours and unease across both the organisation and the wider policing family.

I ran an internal communications campaign across Surrey and Sussex police to embed a new shared software package to track seized property. This was complicated by both forces starting from different places; with radically different systems and cultures; but sharing many of their internal channels. I had to manage the flow of information to the two workforces to ensure success.

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**Influencing and advising** internal clients, at all levels of the organisation

I regularly advised senior leaders (including the Chief Constable) on the best course of action to take around communications issues – particularly where there was a reputational risk (to the police or one of our partner organisations).

The nature of policing means I have had to develop my ability to respond quickly - rapidly assimilating situational information, applying my knowledge to suggest a solution (and explaining my reasoning), then carrying out the officer's demands once they have made a decision. Often this involved preparing them to appear on camera – either filming myself, or in front of a press conference.

In my portfolio work I built longer term relationships with senior officers – attending regular senior management team meetings, reporting social media engagement and performance (in an easy to digest fashion) and advising them on strategy as well as tactics.

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**Supporting development of colleagues** through mentoring and training

One of the most rewarding parts of my role as lead communications officer was mentoring and training colleagues.

When running the four-person newsdesk I was responsible for managing the day-to-day workload of the four staff on the desk - frequently having to balance judgements about priorities, development of staff skills and individual needs against a pressurised backdrop of incoming media and officer enquiries.

I used my extensive crisis handling experience to develop "Op Praxis" – a day-long training course in crisis management (focusing on social media use) that I presented to police forces and other emergency responders. The morning was an intensive discussion of disaster and crisis communications (including preparation and recovery); and the afternoon was an interactive training experience with multimedia injects. This training won two separate training industry awards for its innovation and effectiveness.

In my last role I was also responsible for developing the social media "tone of voice" across the whole organisation. I regularly presented at team days and created an internal newsletter with a weekly blog on "how to write like a human". The email was highlighted (unprompted!) by the Deputy Chief Constable as one of the few emails he would always read every week - because he found it "both insightful and entertaining"!

Every new officer joining Surrey Police, as well as new Detectives and new Family Liaison Officers, would receive input from the communications team. I was responsible for reviewing the syllabus, creating the slide decks and I would also regularly present. The course covered "what makes an incident newsworthy?", "how to manage the media at a crime scene", "the legal aspects of police communications" (so as to not influence a court decision), and "how to write great social media".

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**Digital Production skills**, combined with an ability to "get things done" with the tools and software available

As a digital developer at Surrey Police I frequently used the Adobe suite (Indesign, Photoshop and Premiere) to create video and print collateral - including streamlining the copy-writing and design of 123 different editions of a neighbourhood newsletter delivered to every household in Surrey.

I have experience of commissioning videos (I conceived a video showing a custody meal as "food porn") and creating my own (I personally animated some singing Amazon boxes for a campaign about parcel theft).

When I moved into a more media-focused role I continued to create digital collateral, but used KineMaster (Android video editing app) and Canva (layout) as I no longer had access to the Adobe Creative suite.

I pride myself on my ability to "get things done" using the tools available to me - for instance creating [kinetic typography using PowerPoint](#), writing Visual Basic for Applications to create multiple personalised versions of an email or writing a web game that was used to educate the public about when to call the police and when to call another agency.

I developed a number of tools to support the work of the department, many of which are still in use today:

- I built a web-tool to quickly generate social media imagery to support media appeals - adding a descriptive frame to photos of people who were "wanted", "missing" or "convicted"; or creating a map to show the location of the crime.
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- I developed an Android quiz app based on "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" that could be used internally to challenge officers thinking about crime recording (an immensely tedious and dull subject where officers believe they are right because they don't think that the recording rules have changed since they originally learned them!). While the game was anonymous, I could see which questions were being answered wrongly most frequently and could then tailor communications to reinforce the correct answers.
- I created small tactile buttons to gather data in the contact centre about the number of calls that should have been made to other agencies (they pressed the button each time a misdirected call came in). The counts from these buttons allowed us to demonstrate that our campaign (which used radio advertising, social media advertising and a web-based game that I programmed) had halved the number of non-police calls.
- I created a channel planning Excel spreadsheet (hosted in SharePoint) which gave an "at a glance" view of each of our social media channels up to three months in advance. This integrated with a wider sharepoint site I built that gave senior managers oversight of what was being worked on, by whom, for which audience and how effective it had been. The tools attributed each piece of work to a specific portfolio and a specific campaign within each portfolio. Each campaign aligned with both the organisational corporate plan and the communications plan, allowing us to quickly assess the value and volume of new demand.

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## Employment History

Surrey Police	<i>Lead Comms Officer (Resourcing &amp; Measurement)</i>	<i>Sept 2019 - Jul 2021</i>
	Responsible for demand management, channel planning, tasking and measurement of the 30-strong communications department. I personally created tools in SharePoint and Excel to give senior managers oversight of what was being worked on, by whom, for which audience and how effective it had been.	
	<i>Lead Media Relations Officer</i>	<i>Jul 2016 - Sept 2019</i>
	One week I managed a four-person responsive newsdesk, the next week I worked on a portfolio of reputational issues, department development and publicity campaigns. I also worked a 24-7 on-call media rota.	
	<i>Digital Development Officer (then Lead)</i>	<i>Jun 2011 – Jul 2016</i>
	Responsible for developing and maintaining the Force's communication channels, my specific focus was on emerging social media tools, development of a comms toolkit and the evolution of the website.	
Surrey Police (continued)	<i>Neighbourhood Communications Officer</i>	<i>Aug 2009 - Jun 2011</i>
	In-house agency support to 29 neighbourhood teams across Surrey. Twice a year we produced 126 different newsletters using InDesign. I improved the writing process to substantially reduce errors and increase efficiency.	
	<i>Internal Communications Officer</i>	<i>Mar 2009 - Aug 2009</i>

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Communications business partner to North Surrey Senior Management Team. I communicated the centralisation of HR and ICT functions to the wider division, and ran a campaign to improve investigative standards.

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Living Streets (The National Walk to School Campaign)	<i>National Walk to School Campaign Coordinator</i>	<i>Jul 2006 - Mar 2009</i>
	I coordinated promotional events to reach 2 million children annually, including national "Walk to School week". I grew the "Walk Once a Week" WOW scheme tenfold to 100,000 children participating each month.	
A2 Housing Group (now A2Dominion Housing Group)	<i>Customer Insight Manager</i>	<i>Jun 2005 - Jun 2006</i>
	I managed a team of three, responsible for research, complaints and service improvement within a large housing association.	
	<i>Senior PR and Marketing Officer</i>	<i>Mar 2002 - Jun 2005</i>
	I supported the Director of Communications in providing a full PR and Marketing service for the group. I held specific responsibility for resident communications (writing, copy editing and designing quarterly newsletters, annual reports and other publications).	

## Education and Training

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Harlow College	<i>NCTJ Postgrad Certificate: Magazine Journalism</i>	<i>Jan 2001 – Jun 2001</i>
	The course covered media law, feature writing, copy editing, digital photo editing and magazine design. I still regularly use all these skills in my day to day work.	
Royal Holloway College, University of London	<i>1st (Hons) BSc Science and the Media (Biology)</i>	<i>Sep 1997 – Jul 2000</i>
	Three quarters of my degree was science modules (including botany, evolution, ecology and statistics) and one quarter was practical communication skills (video production, radio and written journalism).	

## References on request