Wolverhampton Photographic Society

Preparing Photographs for Projected Digital Image Competitions

When you join a photographic club or society there appears to be a puzzling range of skills you need to learn and one of those is how to prepare your photographs so you can enter them into a range of photographic PDI competitions.

As with many situations in life, a new skill or technique seems hard to understand until you receive a little help and guidance and only then discover it isn't so difficult after all. This is definitely the case when preparing your photographs for projection in local, national or international competitions because it isn't possible to simply capture an image, edit it to create your 'winning' photograph then save and submit it in the hope you do well. Before you enter, there are four basic rules you must follow and this means your digital photograph must:

1. **be saved as a JPEG (.jpg) file with the quality set to the highest setting**
2. **have specific pixel dimensions - 1600 pixels wide (landscape) or 1200 pixels (portrait)**
3. **use the sRGB colour space in common with most digital cameras, projectors and the Internet**
4. **contain at least the title and your name in the hidden data embedded within the image**

If photographs you submit to competitions, including those at WPS, do not follow these rules your entries will not be eligible and may be disqualified. At first this seems somewhat harsh but the rules exist to ensure entries are in a standard format to allow the judges to compare entries to a common standard. Specifying the specific pixel dimensions and the *sRGB* colour space, for example, means your image will match the display capabilities of the projector, be viewed at its clearest and sharpest and with colours as close as possible to those you intended. Insisting the title and your name is included in the hidden EXIF/IPTC data means display software during judging can read your title and name and a photograph is then always marked as being yours.

What is in this guide

The information here covers what you need to know to prepare your photographs for PDI competitions using a range of software titles including *Photoshop*, *Lightroom*, *Photoshop Elements* and *Affinity Photo.* As you'll see, the process is relatively similar for all the titles included so if the software you own isn't covered you should still be able to see what's needed from the instructions given here. There is even a section included on how to insert your photo title and name into the IPTC data using the facilities provided by Windows on a PC. Finally, this guide explains how to submit your entry into WPS competitions.

Each section can be printed independently if needed so you'll find figure numbers repeated in each section to allow for this.

Page 2 *Helpful Background Information*
Page 3 *Preparing Your PDI Photographs Using Adobe Lightroom*
Page 4 *Preparing Your PDI Photographs Using Adobe Photoshop*
Page 6 *Preparing Your PDI Photographs Using Photoshop Elements*
Page 8 *Preparing Your PDI Photographs Using Affinity Photo*
Page 9 *Using Windows to Add Your PDI Title, Name and Copyright*
Page 10 *How to Submit your PDI photos to WPS Competitions*

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Helpful Background Information

A Few Relevant Terms

Pixel: The smallest unit of a digital image that can be displayed and represented on a digital display device.

JPEG file: Pronounced jay-peg, this is a popular image file format commonly used to store photos since it supports 16 million colours and can have varying levels of compression. This makes it ideal where storage space is limited or for faster-viewing of web sites which include a high number of digital images.

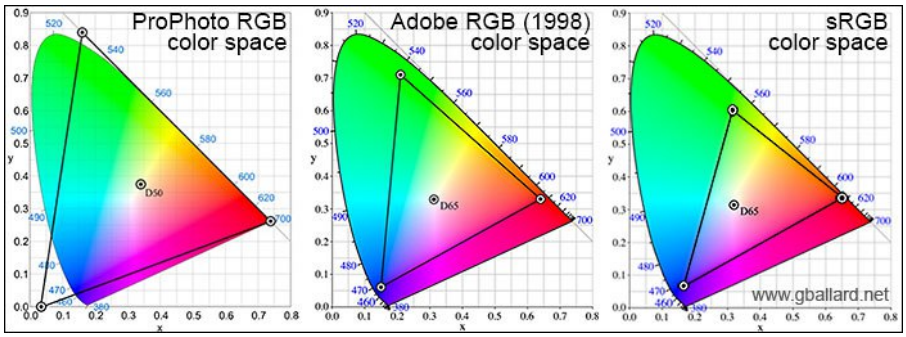
EXIF/IPTC data: A standard way of tagging image files with additional information and is most commonly seen in JPEG images captured with digital cameras. EXIF data, such as exposure settings, date/time or GPS location, is written to the file by the camera whereas IPTC data, such as a title, copyright information or search key-words, are added using image cataloguing or editing software. EXIF/IPTC data is also referred to as *metadata*.

Colour Space: A system for describing colour numerically. The most widely used colour spaces are *sRGB* for scanners, cameras and displays, *CMYK* for colour printing and *YUV* for TV and video. Devices using the same colour space should display specific colours similarly and with the same tonal range.

More About Colour Space

When an image is captured by a digital camera, colours are converted to dots (pixels) and each of these is stored as a number which specifies its colour. In order to ensure a digital image will look the same on different display devices an agreed standard was created which specifies that a particular shade of green or yellow, for example, will display the same whatever is used to show the image. This first agreed standard was known as 'Standard Red Green and Blue' or **sRGB** and even today this is still the standard used by a wide range of devices including the Internet, digital projectors and, therefore, PDI competitions. Printed photographs use a different colour space.

Other display colour spaces have since been defined which have a wider colour range (*gamut*) than *sRGB*. These diagrams use triangles to indicate the range of colours each can represent.



Many digital cameras give a choice between using *sRGB* and *Adobe RGB* to capture an image so if *Adobe RGB* allows the camera to record a greater range of colours, is this the best camera setting to use? If you are displaying your photos on a phone, on a screen or projector or uploading them to a web site or social media platform it would be best to stick with *sRGB* because that is the colour space they use.

Understanding and managing different colour spaces can be tricky, especially when dealing with what happens when one colour space is converted to another. Colours will look wrong if you incorrectly mix and match colour spaces so that, for example, colour will look dull and flat if you display an image which uses *Adobe RGB* on a device which uses *sRGB*. The upshot of this is it's probably wise to ensure your camera and editing software use *sRGB*.

It really is important you save your PDI using the *sRGB* colour space otherwise the colours may look dull and flat when projected. If you want to know more about colour spaces a quick *Google* search will provide all you need!

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Preparing PDI Photographs Using Adobe Lightroom Classic

The information provided here is based on Lightroom CC for Windows but the way in which you prepare your photographs hasn't really changed so these instructions will also work for earlier versions of the software.

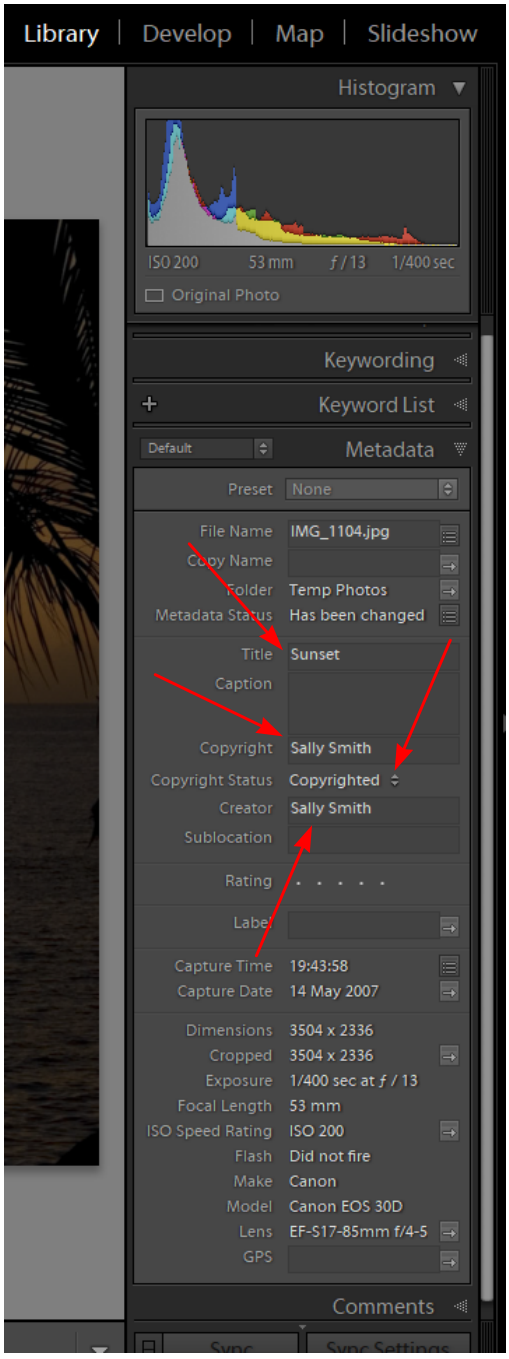

Fig.1 - the Metadata panel

Adding a Title and Your Name to the Photograph

This is done in the Library module and is a good thing to do even if you don't intend to submit an image to a PDI competition. Look in the right-hand panel and expand the section entitled **Metadata**, which is an alternative way of referring to the hidden data within an image file. Figure 1 shows the places where you enter the title of the photograph and your name. You may also like to set whether of not the image is copyright and enter the name of the copyright holder … which of course will be you. Setting the copyright information is recommended.

Setting the Correct Image Size and Colour Space

Unlike most other image editors, everything else you need to set is done when you export (save) your photograph. Select the image you want to export and from the *File* menu at the very top of the Lightroom window, choose *Export…* or press *Ctrl-Shift-E*. Next, and using figure 2 as a guide, make sure you set the ***File Settings*** as shown to ensure the best image quality and correct *sRGB* colour space.

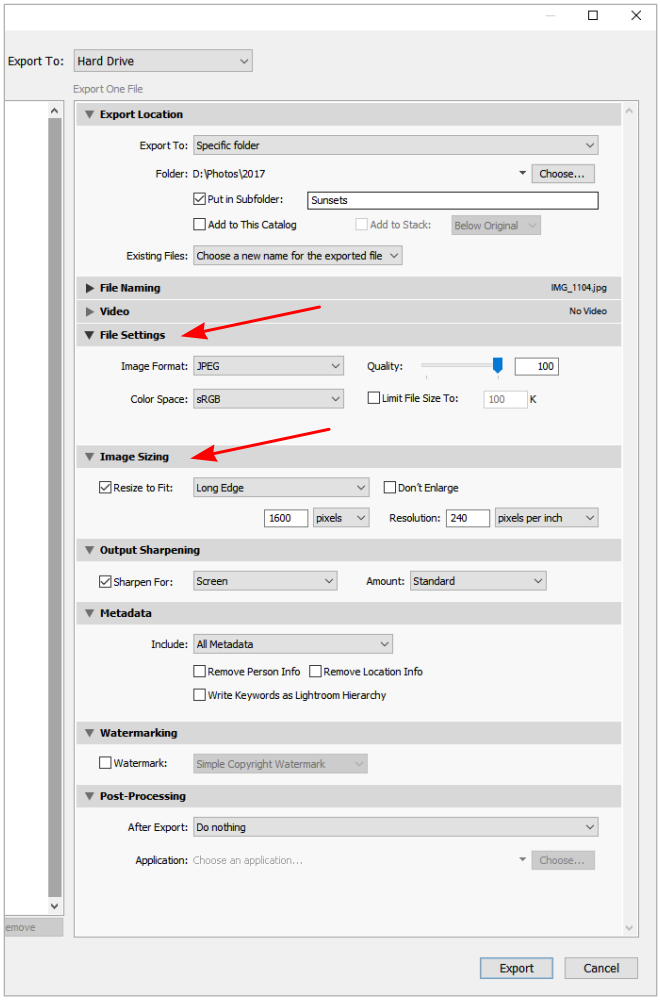

Fig.2 - the Export dialogue

In the ***Image Sizing*** section tick the *Resize to Fit* box and for the 'Long Edge' enter either 1200 for portrait format images or 1600 for landscape format. Always check the tick box is set correctly when exporting images because Lightroom will not alter the state of the box until you change it.

Finally, click the Export button to create your PDI image as set within the ***Export Location*** section.

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Preparing PDI Photographs Using Adobe Photoshop

The information provided here is based on Photoshop CC for Windows but these instructions are still a useful guide for other versions of the software.

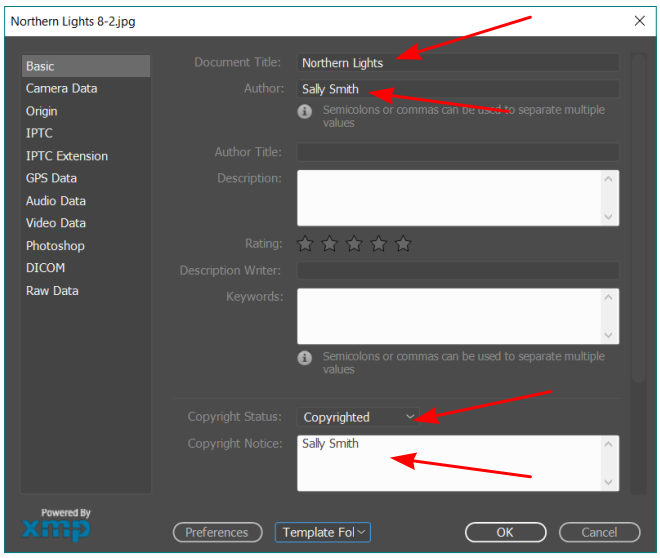

Fig.1 - the File Info window

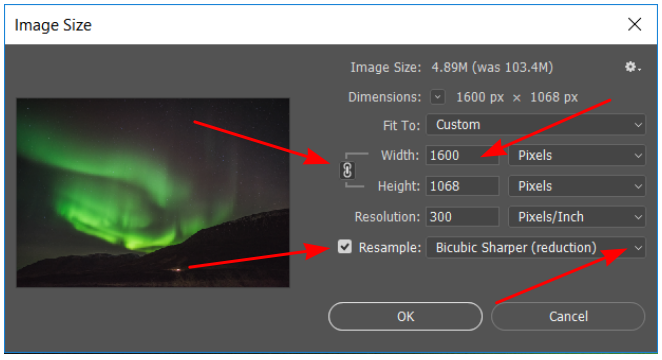

Fig.2 - the Image Size window

Adding a Title and Your Name to the Photograph

Click the *File* menu at the top left of the Photoshop window and choose *File Info* to open a new window (figure 1) where you type the title and your name, as well as your copyright information. Entering these details is is a good thing to do even if you don't intend to submit the image to a PDI competition and you can add other information of course, but it isn't required for competition entries.

When you have finished click the OK button.

Resizing Your Image

WARNING: Resizing your photo will permanently alter your image so be careful not to save it such that it overwrites your original copy. If your original file is in JPEG format always use the *Save As* option when saving the file after resizing.

Having got the warning out of the way, to resize your image by open the *Image* menu at the top of the Elements window then follow the *Resize* entry and choose *Image Size...* or press *Alt-Ctrl-I*. Either way, the Image Size dialogue window will open, as shown in figure 2.

Make sure the tick box is set as shown and the resampling type is also set as shown so Photoshop will optimise your image as its size is reduced. In other words, *Bicubic Sharper (reduction).*

Before you set the pixel dimension make sure the little chain-link icon is set as shown in figure 2 and if not, click it to make sure the proportions of your image are preserved. Next, if your photo orientation is landscape set the Width to 1600 or for portrait set the Height to 1200. Enter only one dimension because the other is calculated automatically. When you have finished click the OK button.

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Preparing PDI Photographs Using Photoshop

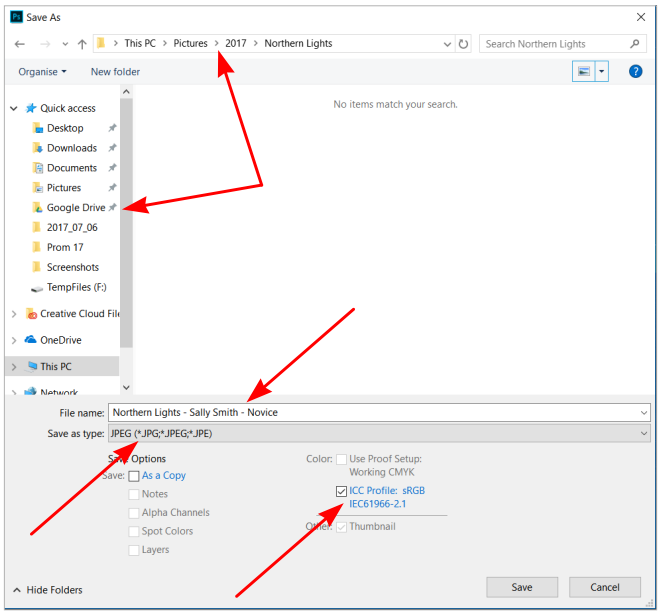

Fig.3 - the Save As dialogue window

Setting the Colour Space and Saving Your PDI

WARNING: If your original image is in JPEG format and you have resized it you **must** follow these instructions to avoid overwriting and destroying your original file.

To create your finished PDI JPEG image use the *File* menu at the top-left of the Photoshop window and choose *Save As...* or type *Shift-Ctrl-S*. This will open the Save As dialogue window as shown in figure 3.

- Choose the location where the file is to be saved
- Enter the file name of your image
- Make sure *Save as Type* is set to JPEG as shown
- Make sure the ICC profile is set to *sRGB* and is ticked. If the ICC profile does not indicate *sRGB,* as in figure 3, please see below

When you have done this and you are sure you are not going to overwrite your original image, click the Save button.

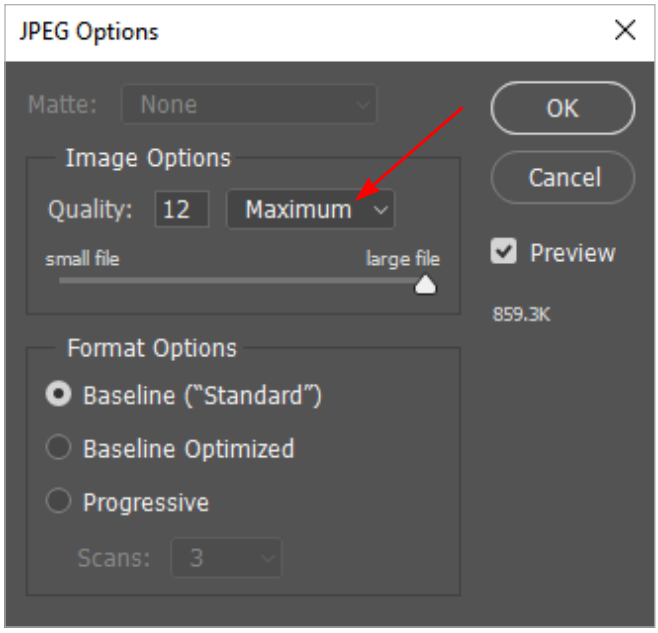

Fig.4 - the JPEG Options window

Setting the JPEG Quality

A new window will open which allows you to choose the quality used when the JPEG file is created. Use the settings shown in figure 4 to ensure your PDI is saved at the highest quality.

When you have finished click the OK button and your PDI will be created.

What if the ICC profile is not set to sRGB?

You will need to change this before you save your image because PDI entries must use the *sRGB* colour space.

To fix this, click the *Cancel* button then open the *Edit* menu at the the very top of the Photoshop window and choose *Assign Profile...* A small window will then open and using the drop-down menu, choose the sRGB IEC61966-2.1 profile then click OK.

You may now follow the instructions on this page to save your PDI.

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Preparing PDI Photographs Using Photoshop Elements

The information provided here is based on Photoshop Elements 10 for Windows but these instructions are still a useful guide for other versions of the software.

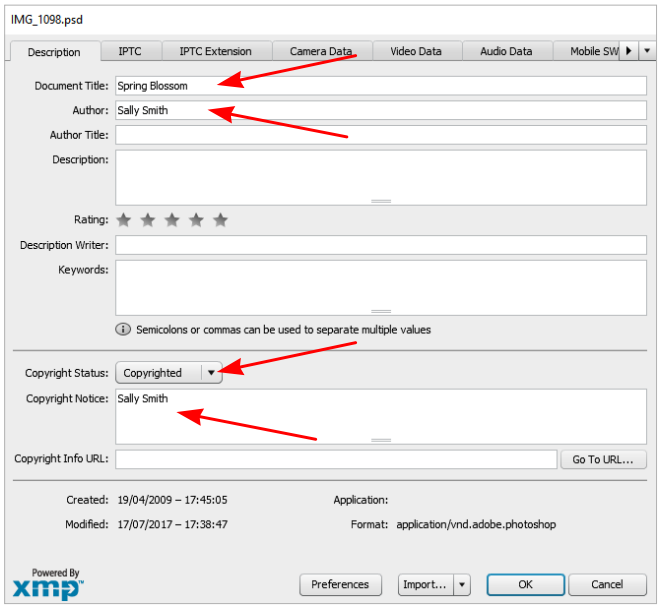

Fig.1 - the File Info window

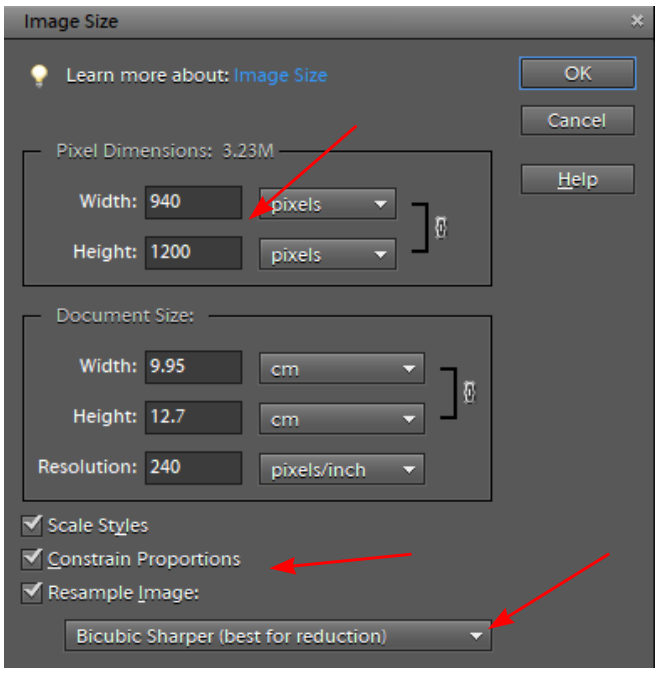

Fig.2 - the Image Resize window

Adding a Title and Your Name to the Photograph

Click the *File* menu at the top left of the Elements window and choose *File Info* to open a new window (figure 1) where you type the title and your name, as well as your copyright information. Entering these details is is a good thing to do even if you don't intend to submit the image to a PDI competition and you can add other information of course, but it isn't required for competition entries.

When you have finished click the OK button.

Resizing Your Image

WARNING: Resizing your photo will permanently alter your image so be careful not to save it such that it overwrites your original copy. If your original file is in JPEG format always use the *Save As* option when saving the file after resizing and use a different file name.

Having got the warning out of the way, to resize your image open the *Image* menu at the top of the Elements window then follow the *Resize* entry and choose *Image Size...* or press *Alt-Ctrl-I*. Either way, the Image Size dialogue window will open, as shown in figure 2.

Make sure the tick boxes are set as shown and the resampling type is also set as shown so Elements will optimise your image as its size is reduced. In other words, *Bicubic Sharper (best for reduction).*

Having ticked the boxes now set the pixel dimension, so if your photo orientation is landscape set the Width to 1600 or for portrait set the Height to 1200. Enter only one dimension because the other is set automatically.

When you have finished click the OK button.

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Preparing Your Photographs Using Photoshop Elements

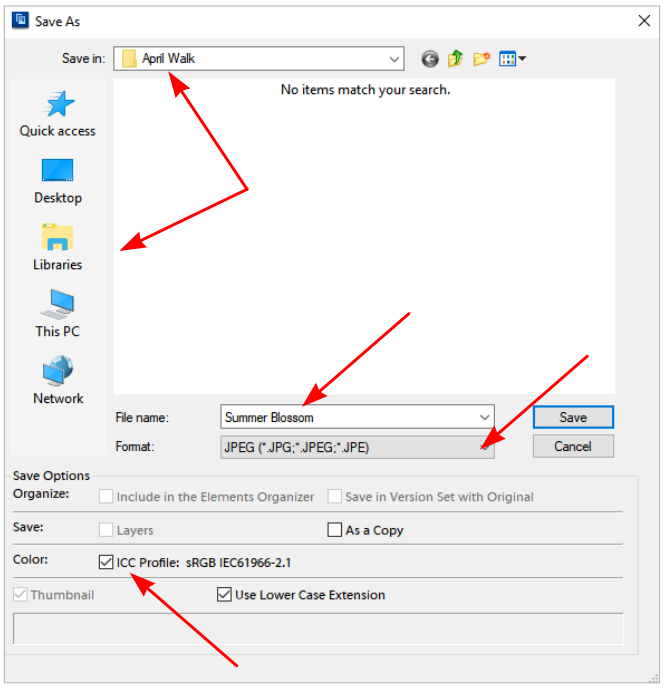

Fig.3 - the Save As dialogue window

Setting the Colour Space and Saving Your PDI

WARNING: If your original image is in JPEG format and you have resized it you **must** follow these instructions to avoid overwriting and destroying your original file.

To create your finished PDI JPEG image use the *File* menu at the top-left of the Elements window and choose *Save As...* or type *Shift-Ctrl-S*. This will open the Save As dialogue window as shown in figure 3.

- Choose the location where the file is to be saved
- Enter the file name of your image
- Make sure Format is set to JPEG as shown
- Make sure the ICC profile is set to *sRGB* and is ticked. If the ICC profile does not indicate *sRGB*, as in figure 3, please see below

When you have done this and you are sure you are not going to overwrite your original image, click the Save button.

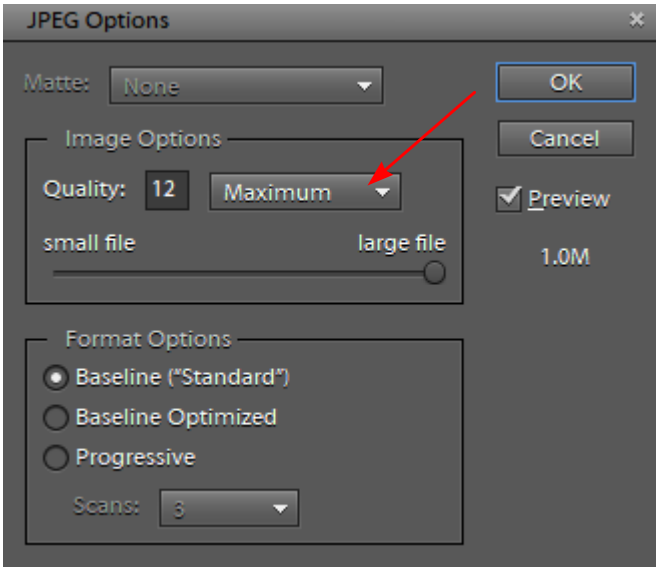

Fig.4 - the JPEG Options window

Setting the JPEG Quality

A new window will open which allows you to choose the quality used when the JPEG file is created. Use the settings shown in figure 4 to ensure your PDI is saved at the highest quality.

When you have finished click the OK button and your PDI will be created.

What if the ICC profile is not set to sRGB?

You will need to change this before you save your image because PDI entries must use the *sRGB* colour space.

To fix this, click the *Cancel* button then open the *Image* menu at the the very top of the Elements window. Follow the *Convert Color Profile* and choose the option *Convert to sRGB Profile*.

You may now follow the instructions on this page to save your PDI.

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Preparing PDI Photographs Using Affinity Photo

The information provided here is based on Affinity Photo version 1.5 for Windows .

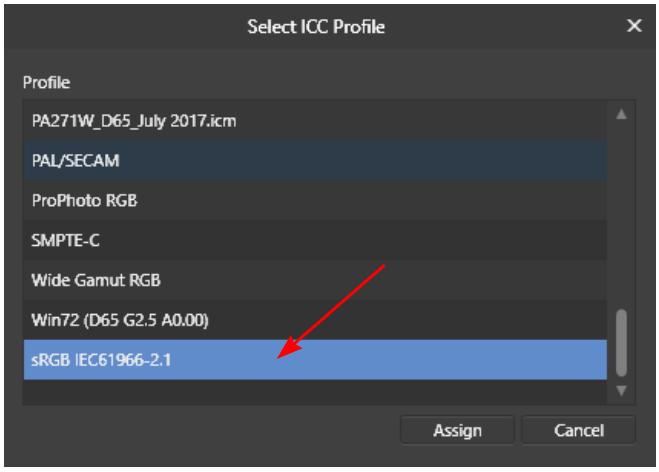

Fig.1 - selecting the correct colour profile

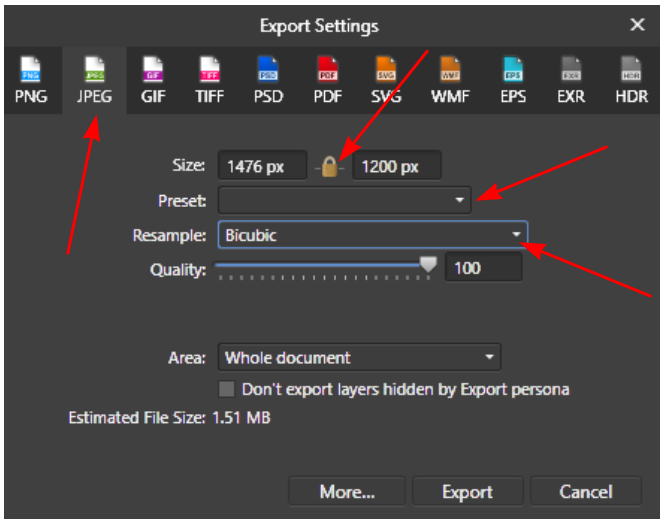

Fig.2 - the Export Settings window

Adding a Title and Your Name to the Photograph

As of July 2017 Affinity Photo allows you to view EXIF/IPTC information in your image but doesn't give the option to alter it. Future versions may address this but in the meantime you must use the facilities offered by Windows to add your title and name. Details of how to do this are given on the next page.

Setting the Colour Space

To ensure the *sRGB* colour space is used, open the *Document* menu at the top of the Affinity Photo window and choose *Assign ICC Profile...* which will open the window shown in figure 1. The profile currently in use will be highlighted with a blue bar so make sure the selection is as as shown then click the Assign button, or Cancel if nothing needed to be changed.

Setting the Correct Image Size and JPEG Quality

The size and quality of your PDI is set when you export your image, rather than when saving it, and means there is no risk of overwriting your original file.

Open the *File* menu at the top-left of the Affinity Photo window and choose *Export...* which will open the Export Settings window shown in figure 2. Choose the green JPEG icon at the top and use the settings shown to ensure your PDI is saved at the highest quality. In other words, select the preset *JPEG (Best Quality)* from the drop-down menu and *Bicubic* as the resampling type.

Before you set the pixel dimension make sure the little padlock icon is set as shown in figure 2 and if not, click it to make sure the proportions of your image are preserved. Next, if your photo orientation is landscape set the left-hand box to 1600 px or for portrait set the right-hand box to 1200 px. Enter only one dimension because the other is calculated automatically.

Click the Export button to save your PDI.

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Using Windows to Add Title, Name and Copyright

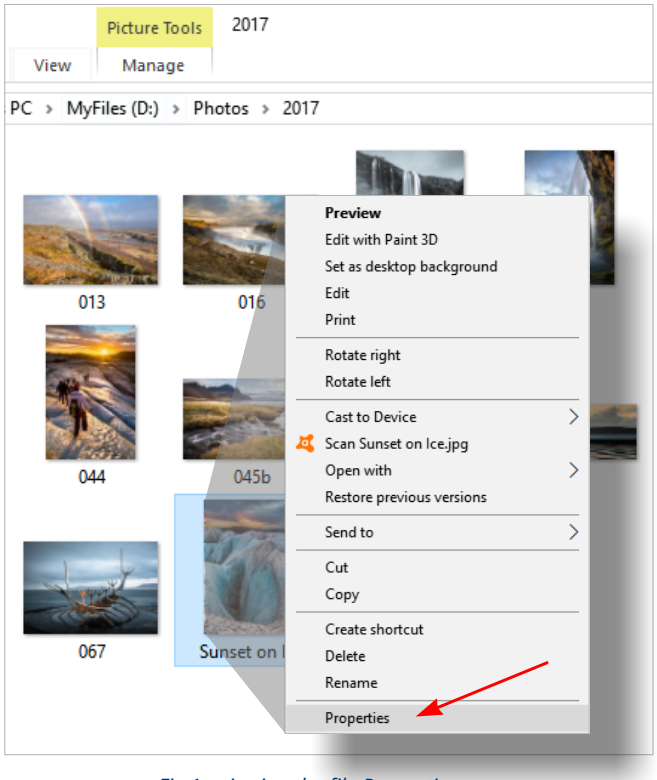

Fig.1 - viewing the file Properties

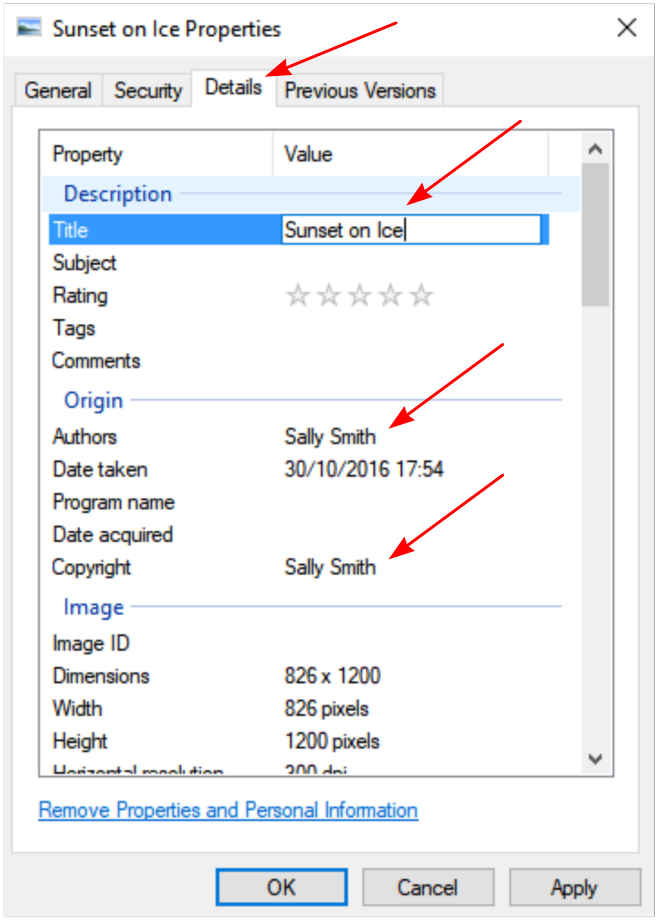

Fig.2 - the file Details window

The information provided here assumes the use of Windows 10, but these instructions are the same for other versions, including Windows 11. If you are still using the earlier versions of Windows, it really is time to upgrade because you leave your PC at risk of virus or malware infection and the potential loss of your files and photographs.

Adding a Title and Your Name to a Photograph

Use File Explorer* to find your image by clicking the right mouse button on the Windows logo at the bottom-left of the screen, then choose *File Explorer* from the menu that opens. Figure 1 shows a typical file window showing a folder containing a selection of photos. One of these has been renamed to be more meaningful than simply being an image number, like the others in this folder. The file name could be the title of the photograph but what you choose is up to you - the file name on your computer is not used when you submit your PDI entry via the WPS website. There may be specific file naming conventions for other competitions however, so it is always wise to check.

Place the mouse pointer over the relevant photo then click the right mouse button to open the menu and choose *Properties* - as in figure 1. A Properties window will then open which has four tabs at the top: click onto the Details tab which is represented by figure 2.

You can now change the IPTC data by clicking in the relevant fields as shown. As a minimum you should enter the Title of your photograph and add you as the Author. You can also enter yourself as the Copyright holder, which is recommended. Other information can be added, such as a star rating or key words (Tags) to help with searching, but this isn't required for competition entries.

When you have finished click the OK button and the information you have entered will be written to the file.

- also known as Windows Explorer

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How to Submit PDI photos to WPS Competitions

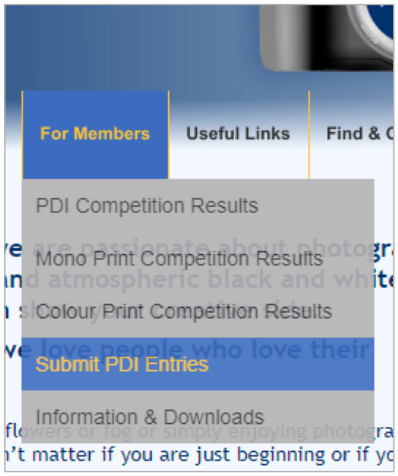

Fig.1 - enter up to three images using the PDI submission page

Before entering an image into PDI or print competitions you must ensure you can tick all of the following criteria:

- ☐ **The image is landscape format: the width is 1600 pixels**
- ☐ **The image is portrait format: the height is 1200 pixels**
- ☐ **The image IPTC metadata has been updated to include (as a minimum) the entry title and your name**
- ☐ **The image uses the sRGB colour space**
- ☐ **The image is saved as a JPEG file (.jpg) with the quality set to maximum**
- ☐ **The file size of the image is less than 2Mb**

Regarding the file size, in the unlikely event it is greater than this limit you can reduce its size by re-saving it using a slightly lower setting for the JPEG quality. Using 90%, or 10 instead of 12, will reduce the size but will have little impact on perceived image quality. Of course, the highest quality is always best if possible.

The WPS PDI Competition Page

Using the menu link shown in figure 1 you will arrive at the *WPS PDI Competition* page where you can submit your entries for any of the three rounds. You don't have to submit all your entries in one go of course, but you will need to submit entries for any given round by the closing date for that round. You will find all the information you need on this page including general information, submission and competition dates, WPS competition rules and the PDF version of this document.

Submitting Your Entries

The form on the page allows you to send your photos for entry into PDI competitions. It is straightforward to use but you will need a valid **Entry Code** to prove you are a full member of *Wolverhampton Photographic Society*. When you are given this code please keep it secret and do not pass it on to others.

Most fields on the form are mandatory so you will not be able to **Submit Your Entry** unless you have provided relevant information in the fields shown in figure 2, indicated with an arrow.

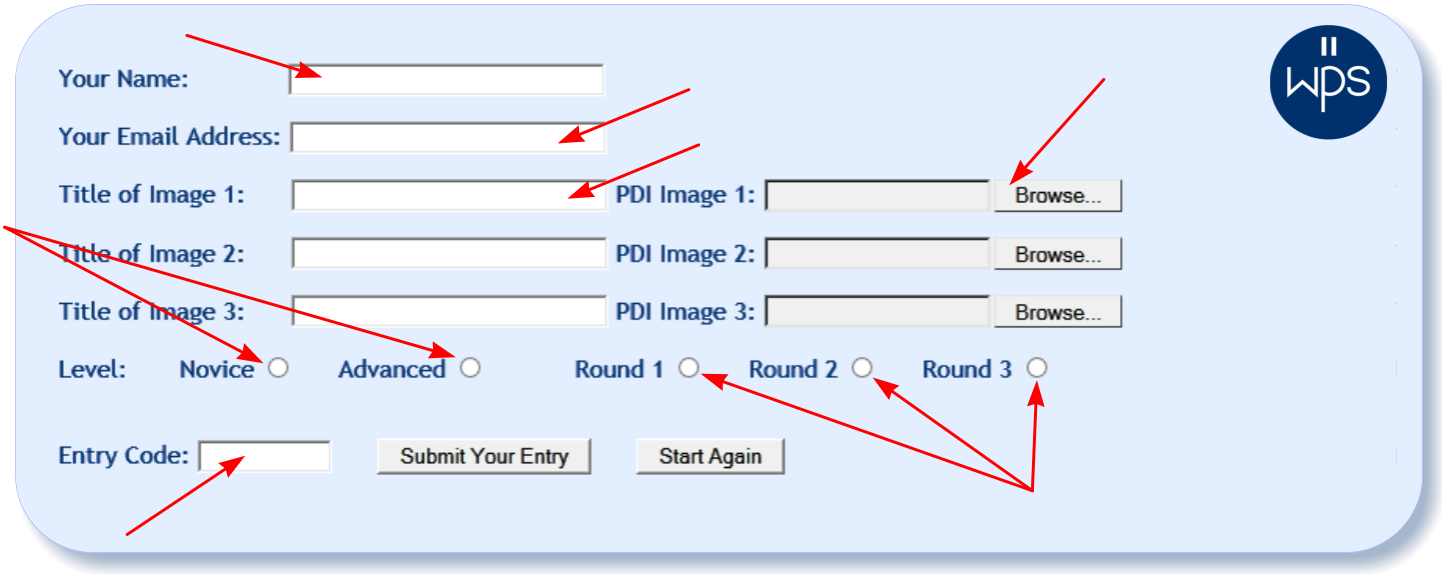

Fig.2 - you must complete the fields shown - Novice and Advanced may be appear as League 2 or League 1

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How to Submit PDI photos to WPS Competitions

Figure 2 shows a typical view of the form but it may look slightly different depending on the Internet browser you use. It has been tested using *Chrome, Microsoft Edge* and *Firefox* and has also been tested using an *iPad* with *Safari* and *Chrome*. There is therefore no reason to believe it won't work with other Apple systems.

Notes on Completing the Fields

As mentioned above, most of the fields are mandatory and must be completed but you only need to submit one image to successfully submit the form. The following fields must therefore be filled-in:

Your Name:	Enter your first name and surname eg: **Sally Smith**
Your email address:	So that you will be sent an email to confirm your entry
Title of Image 1:	Your image title of 30 characters maximum eg: **Sunset on Ice**
PDI Image 1:	Use the button to browse your computer and select the image for submission
Level:	Select whichever level applies to you
Competition Round:	Choose which of the three rounds you would like to enter
Entry Code:	Enter the **Entry Code** you have been given … it is not case sensitive

If you want to clear the form of all your entries, click the **Start Again** button.

When completing fields only use normal characters and/or numbers and do not include punctuation or symbols. You **must not** use **\ / : * ' " ? , < > |** because your entries will be stored as computer files and those characters are not allowed in *Windows* file names. If you do use characters which aren't allowed in a given field, or do not complete a mandatory field, then when you submit your entry the system will list any errors you have made and ask that you go back and make corrections. If your entry is submitted successfully the system will confirm this and send you an email summarising your entry. It will also copy the email confirmation to the Competition Secretary and to the Technical Officer responsible for projecting the entries on competition night.

How do I remove an entry after it has been submitted?

Please email *competitions@wolverhamptonps.co.uk* to request your entry be removed.

I only submitted one image. How do I submit the rest?

Simply go to the *WPS PDI Competition* page and use the form again to submit your other entries. The maximum is strictly three images per round and if you submit more than this your three images will be chosen at random.

I have successfully submitted an image but want to replace it with an improved version

Submit your entry again using exactly the same title you used before then your previous version will be overwritten, but note the information you enter is case sensitive so the title *Northern Lights* is treated as a new entry if you then call it *northern lights*.

Can others see the images I have submitted?

No. It is impossible for anyone to see competition entries other than those who have administrative access to the WPS website. Currently, that is the Chair and the Technical Officer.

When I submit the form I am shown an error page saying 'Server Error'

A ***Server Error*** is most likely caused when you try to submit an image file which exceeds the size limits set by the company hosting the WPS website. Individual PDI images must be less than 2Mb.

I have tried submitting my images using the website but can't get it to work

You need help. Please email *pdi@wolverhamptonps.co.uk* giving as much detail as possible about the problem you are experiencing.

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