

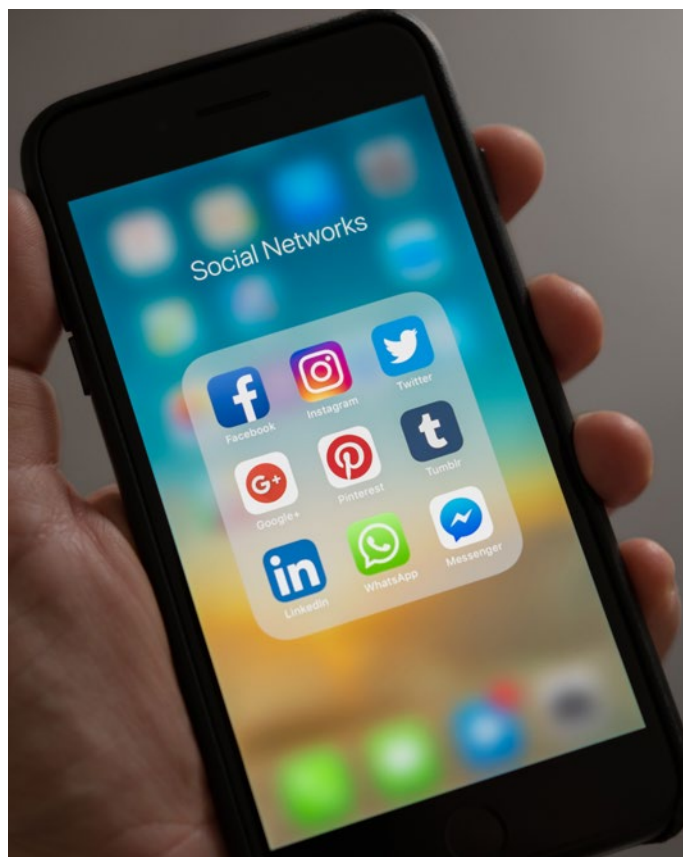


# How to Make Social Media Work for You



Social media is an essential tool in your communications kit. It gives you the opportunity to share information directly and quickly, build your base of supporters and take them on a journey with you. Social media is also the means by which many people, including journalists, get news and information.

This short guide gives you useful tips on what social media platforms might work for you and how to maximise the reach of your content.



## I Social media platforms

Social media platforms come and go and some are more popular than others depending on the age, location and interest of the users. However, the most useful players for community projects at present continue to be:

**Facebook:** this is the largest communication space on the planet. For some small projects, having a Facebook page is preferable to building a website. Having a presence on Facebook for your project allows you to post information to keep your supporters up to date and have conversations with them.

You will need to create a Facebook profile for your project. Use an email address linked to your project with the contact details of the person who will be looking after the content. Once you have set up your Facebook profile you can then set up a Facebook Page which is where you will post all your information.

Use the Help Centre on Facebook to help guide you through the process. <https://www.facebook.com/help>

If you need a little inspiration, here are some examples of other community pub Facebook pages:

The White Swan, Gressenhall

<https://www.facebook.com/saveourswaningressenhall/>

The Kings Arms, Shouldham

<https://www.facebook.com/thekingsarmsshouldham/>

**Twitter:** this may not have the most users, but it punches above its weight in terms of influence and is a great way to get the attention of local politicians and media. It is also a good platform for recruiting support for campaigns. The key to success on Twitter is to post timely and engaging messages broadly related to your project in a conversational style.

Here are some good examples of community pub Twitter accounts:

<https://www.saveourswan.co.uk>

(Hannah to add other Plunkett funded community pub Twitter feeds)

**YouTube:** setting up a YouTube channel is simple and gives you a platform to store and share your video content with ease.

**Instagram:** this platform is visually based and good for projects with a rich supply of good images that can tell a story (see the 'How to Create Great Content' guide).

**LinkedIn:** this is a networking platform used by professionals, businesses and organisations. It can be a great way to attract investment from local business and to raise your profile among those with skills and experience you may need.

## I Planning a social media campaign

Make sure you read our 'How to Plan and Deliver an Effective Communications Campaign' guide for hints and tips on planning communications generally.

Before you start using social media, make sure you know why you are doing it and that you have the resource to do it properly. Social media is a hungry beast and eats up content and time!

Use the 'Communications Planner' to plan your social media posts, using progress on your project, themes, national days and events for ideas for content.

Post content regularly, updating your Facebook post a couple of times a week and more frequently for Twitter if possible.

You can prepare and schedule your posts in advance to save time, but bear in mind that social media is not just a 'broadcast' tool - you need to monitor your platforms at least once a day to be aware of likes, retweets, comments or questions to your posts.

Use a social media management tool such as Hootsuite, Later or Socialoomph to keep track of activity across all your social media platforms at a glance. There are lots to choose from and some offer a free package.

## I Building a following

There is little point being on social media if you have no followers. Here are some simple ways to start building your followers:

- Put your social media details on all your printed material, email signature, and in newsletter articles etc.
- Ask your existing supporters to follow you and to share your posts with their followers.
- Create and use your own hashtags # so your content can be easily found – and use hashtags created by others if they are relevant.
- Use the Search function on social media platforms to find and follow people and organisations that are relevant or important to your project such as local businesses, interest groups, MPs and councilors, funding bodies and community groups. You will find that some will return the favour and start following you.
- Join and interact with Facebook groups that are relevant to your project.
- Post links to news and information that are relevant to your project – this is a good way to keep your social media feeds populated when you don't have anything specific to say about your own project.

## I Using metrics

One of the great things about social media is that it is easy to monitor and you can quickly see the impact of your activity, which helps you to focus your efforts on what is working best.

You can use the social media monitoring tools mentioned already, but many social media platforms also have built in analytics tools. These will help you see which posts generated most interest, likes, comments and replies.

Remember, it is not just about getting Likes, it is also about getting people to do what you need them to do e.g. invest or volunteer. Compare the dates of your social media activity to the dates of when people visited your website or took action.

GoogleAnalytics allows you to see how people reach your website, including which social media platforms they have used to link through to your site. It also helps you see which pages are most visited and for how long, which again gives you a good idea of what information and content your followers are most interested in.

## I Boosting the reach of your content

Social media is free to use, but with a just a few pounds you can significantly boost the reach of your content and target it at specific audiences.

On Facebook and Twitter you can choose to boost a particular post to other users based on their location, age, sex and interests. You can decide how much money you wish to spend and you can stop or extend the activity easily.

### Example:

A community pub project in Norfolk used a series of videos to announce fundraising targets. One in particular proved popular with followers and was viewed several thousand times.

The team wanted to see if it would appeal to even more people by paying to boost the post. Targeting Facebook users within a certain radius of the village and with an investment of just £10, the post reached more than 17,000 people!



Wherever you are in the UK, if you are interested in starting or developing a community pub please contact the Plunkett Foundation - **01993 810730**, [info@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:info@plunkett.co.uk) or visit [www.plunkett.co.uk](http://www.plunkett.co.uk) to find out how we can support you.

The Plunkett Foundation helps rural communities UK-wide to tackle the issues they face by promoting and supporting community business. In addition to developing and safeguarding valuable assets and services, community businesses address a range of issues including isolation, loneliness, wellbeing, work and training.

If you share our vision for a vibrant rural economy with rural community business as its heart, why not join Plunkett as a member? Find out more about our membership packages [here](#).

This resource has been made possible through the More than a Pub programme, funded by Power to Change and the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government.

