

# LGA Independent Group Social Media Guide

There are many ways to engage with your residents and get your message across, including social media channels. Here are some useful top tips if you're just starting out.

## Embracing social media

People are increasingly turning to social media as their first source of information. You can tell a lot about someone's beliefs, character, and goals by taking a look at what they post and share on their social media accounts. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are the most widely used platforms and easy to use. There are few better ways to stay in touch with your constituents than to use the sites they access daily for relevant information.

If you are considering signing up for a social media account or want to develop those you have, we encourage you to take a look at the social media guide available on the LGA Independent Group website's Campaign Corner. Here you will find advice about what to-do and not-to-do as well as handy hints on using the three major social media sites. You can also contact the Group Office if you have any questions by emailing [independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk](mailto:independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk).

### Six top tips for social networking:

1. Social media takes time

While the major draw to social media platforms is the instantaneity of sharing information, creating a wide reaching and effective social media page *takes time*. It can also take over, so make sure you make social media part of your day but also have time away from it.

2. Keep at it and be consistent

Don't let your social media page slide from your tasks, when things get busy. You should be consistent with your online activities. Consistency strengthens the relationship you are building with your constituency. You should also be consistent in the tone you use and the messages you share – any contradictions will soon be flagged up by your followers!

**3. Don't be selfish**

Social networks are all about the communities. In order to ensure that people promote your content, you have to be willing to do the same. 'Like', 'Share', 'Retweet', and comment on posts to let others know that you are interested and engaged.

**4. Trust is essential**

People only follow and share content from trustworthy accounts. Ensure that you only post or share content that is factual and verifiable to maintain your credibility. Even if it's not your own words, if it's on your page, it's associated with your name. If you make a mistake, own up to it and correct it quickly.

**5. Keeps things separate**

It is good practice to have a separate page set up on social media sites for personal updates. Constituents mainly follow you for content pertinent to your role as a councillor. Having a separate account for council purposes can heighten your credibility. You may also want to create a group page, if you belong to a group or party within your council.

**6. Know what to avoid**

Social media is all about conversations and the majority are very positive, however sometimes you may receive abusive comments. In those instances it is usually better not to engage, and if you feel threatened or concerned in anyway, do contact the police.

**Social Media Do's and Don'ts:**

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use your own name &amp; image</li><li>• Distinguish personal accounts from official</li><li>• Respond positively to comments</li><li>• Use images &amp; videos more than words</li><li>• Resist posting only for 'likes'</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oversell yourself</li><li>• Make promises you can't keep</li><li>• Get dragged into arguments</li><li>• Forward or quote information you cannot verify</li></ul>