

FACTSHEET – SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media and simple design tools can help community groups and small charities share their message, celebrate their work, and reach new supporters. You don't need specialist skills or a large budget, just a clear approach and the right tools. This factsheet provides an easy-to-follow guide to using social media effectively, responsibly and managing your posts with Buffer's free features.

Getting Started with Social Media

Social media is one of the most accessible ways for small organisations to connect with their community. Platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, allow you to share updates, promote events, and highlight the impact of your work. Start by choosing one or two platforms that your audience already uses. Keep your posts simple, friendly, and relevant to your local area. Sharing photos, short videos, and real stories helps people understand what you do and why it matters. Consistency is more important than posting every day, even one or two updates a week can help keep your group visible and engaged.

Social media can be a hugely positive tool for charities. It can help to:

- increase profile
- drive fundraising opportunities
- provide a way to respond to key issues as they happen.

Building communities online helps create opportunities for conversation, sharing and learning, especially among hard-to-reach audiences.

For further details on this area, please visit the NCVO [‘Social media guidance for charities’](#) guide

Setting a Social Media Policy

Creating a social media policy is an important step for all organisations, regardless of their size or how they intend to use social media.

Creating a policy is an important step to help meet your responsibilities. [The Charity Commission guidance](#) says charities should *‘have internal controls that are appropriate and proportionate for your charity’s needs and which are clear to everyone at the charity using social media.’*

You should tailor the content of the policy to meet your charity’s needs. How detailed your policy is and how much resource you will need to develop it should match the level of risk presented by how your charity uses social media. It will also depend on the other activities your charity is carrying out. You should work with whoever manages your charity’s social media channels, to understand what is required for your charity and to help you develop and implement the policy.

Using the [Charity Commission Checklist](#) can help you think about what to include in your policy.



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A number of organisations provide social media policy templates which may help you develop your own policy. For example, [CharityComms](#) has developed a template based on policies from across the charity sector.

Planning Your Content

A bit of planning can make social media feel far more manageable. A simple content plan keeps you organised, supports your goals, and helps you stay consistent even on busy weeks. Aim for a mix of practical updates and more personal, community-focused posts. Scheduling tools like Buffer also make it easy to prepare content in advance.

Ideas to include in your plan:

- Event announcements and key dates
- Volunteer stories or spotlights
- Behind-the-scenes moments
- Service reminders and useful information
- Community highlights or feel-good updates

Creating Accessible and Inclusive Content

Accessibility is a key part of effective communication for small charities. When your social media posts are easy to understand, more people in your community can connect with your work. Simple language, readable design choices, and small adjustments like alt-text or captions help ensure everyone can access your content.

Practical ways to make your posts more accessible:

- Use clear, straightforward language
- Break long text into shorter, easy-to-read sections
- Choose high-contrast colours that are readable on all devices
- Add alt-text to images so screen-reader users aren't left out
- Include captions on videos to support people who are deaf or hard of hearing

Useful resource: [Gov.uk Accessible Social Media](#)

Managing Your Posts with Buffer (Free Version)

Buffer is a straightforward social media tool that helps small charity teams stay organised by scheduling posts in advance. The free plan lets you connect to three accounts and queue ten posts at a time, making it easier to plan your week, stay consistent, and save valuable time. You also get basic analytics to understand what content resonates with your audience.

Key benefits for small charities and community groups:



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- Schedule posts ahead of time to reduce pressure on busy days
- Connect up to three social media accounts for free
- Queue up to ten posts at once
- Use simple analytics to see what's working
- Stay consistent without adding extra workload

Useful resource: [Buffer free plan information](#)



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