



Social Media – The Basics

Social media is a valuable communications tool as it enables us to create a community environment in which to share information and celebrate success. It offers a vital communications channel for making a story come alive using video and photographs, and while it provides considerable opportunity, at the same time, it requires vigilance and careful management.



FACEBOOK

The first-place people look to find something online is Facebook.

Opening a Facebook account

To run a business Facebook account first you need your own personal account.

To open a Facebook account, go to www.facebook.com and enter your name, email or mobile phone number, password, date of birth and gender.

Click 'Create an Account' – this provides you with a personal profile page.

The screenshot shows the Facebook sign-up process. It includes fields for 'First name' and 'Surname', a field for 'Mobile number or email address', and a 'New password' field. Below these is a 'Birthday' section with dropdown menus for day (10), month (May), and year (1993), and radio buttons for 'Female' and 'Male'. A small note asks 'Why do I need to provide my date of birth?'. At the bottom, there is a green 'Sign Up' button and a line of fine print regarding terms and conditions.

What is the difference between a profile, a page and a group?

A profile: page is your own personal page where you can add friends and post your own text and images. Set up your security settings so that this page is private and posts limited only to your friends.

A page: sits alongside your personal profile page and is open to the public. A page is recommended for a business. A page also has analytics where you can find out information about who is viewing your page, likes and trends which will help you build engagement. You need a profile to set up or administrate a page.

A group: sits within a page or profile. It can be set as public or private. A person would have to join a public group and this can be a barrier to new membership.

Creating a Business page

We recommend you open a business page for each of your churches.

From your Facebook profile page, click the Pages header in the left-side navigation. Next, click the Create a Page button, and select the type of page--Local Business or Place, for example, or Brand or Product. You'll see many fields to fill out, such as your business category, name, and address.

Alternatively, your church may already have a Facebook business page and you will need to gain administration rights to manage content onto it.

Building your Church Business Page

We recommend you have a Business page per church. If you have lots of churches (five or more) in a benefice where the churches are located closely together it may be beneficial to have a single benefice page.

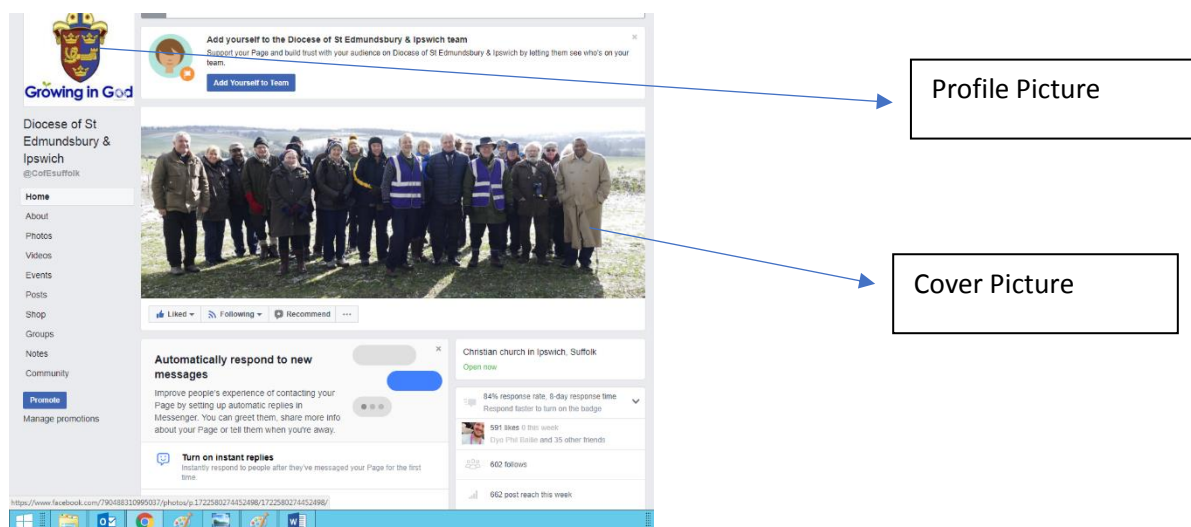
Church name: First, think of an appropriate name for your church page. This is important as it will help people find you.

- Try not to use abbreviations as these are difficult for others to understand.
- Think of something easy to remember – often this is as easy as your church or Benefice name
- Think of what people outside the church will understand.
- There may be more than one church with similar names so make sure you are clear.

Profile picture: this is where we would place a logo for your church.

Cover picture: we suggest you use a picture of a group of people in this slot.

- This could be a picture of a recent event or group at a service.
- The picture should be representative of your congregation.
- You could change this picture seasonally or when new events happen.
- The picture should be inviting and welcoming.
- Do not use an empty church building!



The story

You can add in some information about your church. Who you are? What is on offer? This text is important so please use good English, no jargon – speak to those who have never stepped into a church. Give as much information as you can in a few paragraphs: services, missional activities, who is welcome (all!). Read it aloud to check it or ask someone without a church background to read it!

Promoting your page

Once you have set up a page invite people to join it!

- Email to your friends.
- Message your Facebook friends.
- Ask your congregation to follow your page in a service.
- Add the name to posters and leaflets.
- Add the link on your website.
- Advertise Facebook on Twitter and advertise Twitter address on Facebook!

Call to action

It is important that you have a clear instruction on what you want people to do with your site. Provide your address, office hours, an email address, telephone number and detail when it is manned.

Administrating your page

It is recommended you have several people running your pages. Administrators have full access to changing the page and you should have two administrators (this is to have oversight, in case you leave and need to hand over to someone else) however you can have several editors who can add posts and pictures.

Don't forget you can schedule posts in advance.

You can share posts in one Facebook page with your other pages to save you time.

The news feeds

Facebook likes your news feed to be busy. This shows to the public that you are an active and busy church.

- Post regular updates – 3 – 4 a week.
- Don't just post about activities on a Sunday.
- Post about all the church things going on during the week too.
- Use the analytics to check when you visitors are online – and post when it is most busy.
- Post video, text and pictures – mix it up a bit to be interesting.
- Mix the content – Messy Church, mid-week lunch, service times, re-post Church of England posts, re-post Diocese posts and other churches posts.
- Share content from other people!

- You can pin important stories to the top if you want them to stay visible for longer – remember to unpin afterwards.
- Ask a question – don't just broadcast information and instructions.
- Consider running a poll/survey.
- Use live streaming of video – give your film a name, post in advance letting everyone know you are going to live stream film at a certain time, the video will get saved into your news feed.

Add an event

Upcoming events		Share Events	
JUN 16	World Mission Conference Sat 10:00 · Sally is interested	Bury St Edmunds Bury St Edmunds	Promote Event More
SEP 29	Gather Sat 18:00 · 2 friends are interested	Diocese of St Edmundsbury ... Ipswich	Promote Event More
Past events			
APR 6	Deviate 6 April-8 April · by Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich	Streets Park Activity Centre Chelmsford	
MAR 15	Building Online Success Thurs 10:00 · Tracey was interested	Diocese of St Edmundsbury ... Ipswich	
JAN 20	Illuminate: Youth Leader Training Sat 9:15 · 2 friends were interested	The Mix Stowmarket	
APR 23	Ministries Fair Sat 10:30 · by Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich	St Edmundsbury Cathedral Bury St Edmunds	
JUL 5	Picnic & Praise Sun 16:00 · 5 friends went	Christchurch Park Ipswich	

Adding events to your page is a good way of advertising what you are doing. It also gives your community the opportunity to show their interest and sign up to events. This can encourage others to join up.

Include dates and a description of your event and a clear method of booking to attend the event.

How to advertise a page

You can get a good response by advertising a post – even with just £3 or 4 budgets. This may be a specific post you wish to promote or an event.

To advertise an event:

- Post the event details two weeks in advance
- Book a £4 boost for 36 hours in advance of the event.
- Select a location such as town or postcode.
- Target the boost using key words such as:
 - Kids events - Parents, kids age under 10, disco, kids, church, CBBC.
 - Environmental event – gardening, environment, climate change.
 - Church Service – Church, faith in god, prayers, exclude atheists.
- The dial on the page indicates whether your criteria is too narrow or too broad – aim for the green area.
- Pay for your boost with a credit card.
- Once your budget money is spent, Facebook will encourage you to spend more. Facebook may tell you have successfully you have been to encourage you to commit to more spending. So be clear about your budget!

After the campaign don't forget to analyse the results afterwards! Did you get new likes, comments? If you have a new person writing a comment – like on the post or like and message them to follow your page.

Remember you are buying space competitively – Facebook will charge more for popular key words such as Royal Wedding.

Managing lots of Business pages

If you are managing several Facebook business pages and you have two or three administrators you may want to consider using Facebook Business. Facebook Business enables you to manage all your Business Pages from one page. It also enables you to monitor insights and traffic through your sites.



TWITTER



Twitter is considered a more middle class and middle aged social media!

Consider it if you have the resources to support the time needed to post to Twitter.

To create an account for your church – you will need to give be an editor and administrator to run the account. Unlike Facebook you do not need a personal account to run a business Twitter account.

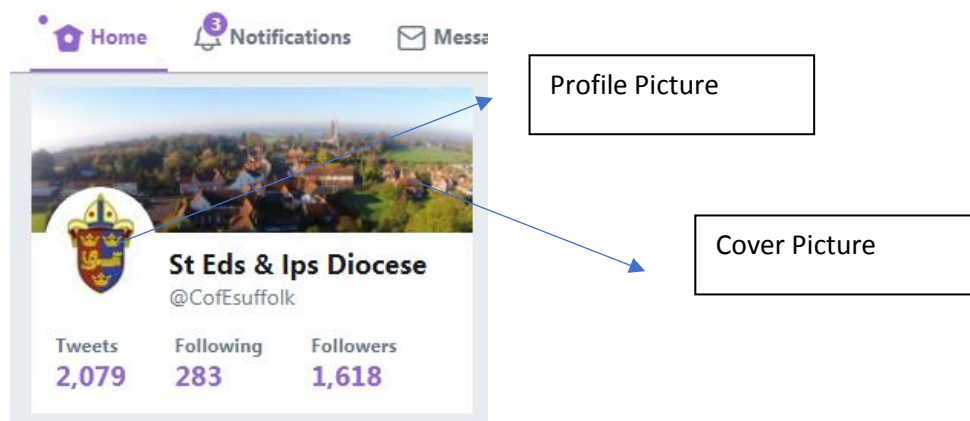
Like Facebook you need to add content to your page:

Profile picture: this is where we would place a logo for your church.

Cover picture: we suggest you use a picture of a group of people in this slot.

- This could be a picture of a recent event or group at a service.
- The picture should be representative of your congregation.
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Biography: This can be a shorter version of your Facebook description. Finish with “All welcome” and link into your ‘a Church near you’ page.



Content:

Twitter is traditionally newsier in content and therefore relates to trends and happenings across the world. In comparison Facebook is more local and community based.

The # marks a trending word or collection of words. By using a hashtag, you can join conversations together and enable you to reach audiences that would not normally reach.

- Be creative create your own # but check if it is being used by others first.
- Keep a #short and snappy.
- Aim to post 1 – 2 tweets per day.
- Don't forget you can private message too – send longer messages to individuals.
- Check your inbox for any messages.
- Follow other users and re-tweet their content.
- Bounce off a National campaign by using the same # i.e #suffolkday #environmentday
- Create a conversation thread by replying to another person's tweet.



INSTAGRAM

Instagram is part of the Facebook family. Instagram has a younger profile for example younger people may look at Facebook but post on Instagram! By younger we mean younger than 50-60 years old! Instagram also has the biggest growth in users.

This is a good platform to consider if you have the time resource, you like taking photographs or someone in your PCC likes photography. This is because Instagram is picture-based - using pictures and a caption to tell your story. This may work for you if you are less of a 'wordy' person.

Setting up an Instagram account is like Twitter. However, it is all completely run by your mobile phone.

Content:

Use pictures to show off your beautiful church – in summer, winter, architectural features, the tower with a rainbow over it, the stain glass window with sun rays shining through. The church at dawn, the church yard dew, the church at sunset – you get the idea!

Instagram is the place to show picture without people in too!

Show pictures of events happening in your church – show reality – who comes, when they come – show activities.

Pictures that work well show light, people's faces and height.

Whereas using the # - on Twitter you may want to only include 1 – 2 hashtags, on Instagram use loads!

Using the @addresses of other organisation to link content together.

Follow other users on Instagram and repost, like or love posts to improve engagement.

Don't automatically link content to Twitter and Facebook.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND DEALING WITH NEGATIVE IMPACT

- Do not respond to negative comments – this encourages engagement.
- You do not have to respond.
- Use the reporting tools on the social media.
- Ban or mute an abusive user.
- De-friend someone if they consistently post content you do not like.

USING CONTENT SOFTWARE

If you are regularly posting on social media you may want to consider using Hootsuite or equivalent. These allow you to manage all your social media from one page. There are usually monthly fees attached to these programmes however they may save you time in the longer term. Link: <https://hootsuite.com/>



TEN TOP TIPS

1. Link to an @ address or create or follow a #.
2. Ask a question – to start a conversation.
3. Follow us at: @cofesuffolk @bishopscofesuffolk.
4. Promote your social media links on your website, notice boards, posters and leaflets.
5. Advertise your website address on your social media page.
6. Use photographs or video - caption pictures.
7. Answer comments or questions on your feed or messages in your inbox, be interactive with your audience.
8. Like, follow and share other pages and re-post complementary posts.
9. Keep it short and simple, you do not want to *bore* people.
10. Post regularly, that way people have more chance of seeing your posts and know you are an active user.