



Neighbourhood Watch & Social media

Guidelines and recommendations for managing your Neighbourhood Watch group social media accounts

Hampshire & IoW NW Association (HINWA) recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to join interactive discussions and share information on topics relevant to our work, using a wide variety of social media.

Remember that social media is never private. Members should act respectfully, lawfully and with integrity at all times while representing NW.

Please refer to the '**Code of Conduct for all NW communications**' produced by HINWA and found on their website at :
www.hinwa-nw.org.uk

General points

You are responsible for the security settings of any social media sites you use and should ensure they are set to the appropriate level if you wish to limit who can see your information

You are responsible for the use of any images ensuring that they can be reproduced without infringing copyright.

Appoint two or more administrators to the page so that you can stay on-top of what page 'followers' are doing.

Delete negative comments that disparage the police, the justice system, criminals or Neighbourhood watch

Do not 'name and shame' any individual by posting pictures, addresses, names, or other identifying information.

1. Start with an "About us" section.

For example:

- "Neighbourhood Watch is all about building safe and inclusive communities; strengthening the partnership between Hampshire Police and the community to prevent crime and improve safety".
- "Improving community awareness and participation in keeping ourselves safe, monitoring and reporting incidents that effect community safety.
- "Helping to deter criminal behaviour".
- "Helping to build caring communities"
- "Being actively involved in your community to promote crime prevention and the flow of information".

2. Who is your audience? Who are you trying to reach?

When it comes to creating content focus upon the people you want to engage with and publish your posts at the right time of day with topics that you know they will find interesting.

For example if you are targeting young mums it is best to post after 8pm and base your content around safety and security for youngsters.

3. How often to 'post'?

Posting frequently is of great value. Posting just 2 or 3 times a week will not get your message noticed amongst all the other social media traffic.

The accounts that generate the most following are those that share relevant information right across the day and do so frequently.

To make it easier to post often, you can schedule your posts to be sent at set times over the week – as long as you remember to check if your posts are receiving comments

4. Think like a publisher

Think about your favourite magazine or newspaper (even a radio programme) there is always a lot of variety to keep things interesting. A magazine may have an editor's column, a feature story, some jokes or puzzles, some short breaking news.

When running a social media account, you need to think like a publisher and try to find a balance of different styles of posts to keep people interested, informed and engaged.

5. Examples of what (and what not) to post

Crime information:

Never post personal details of victims or witnesses or the address of the scene of crimes.

Only post specific details such as descriptions of suspects, vehicle registrations or other information about a crime if this has been given to you by the police with agreement it can be made public.

Cut & paste an Alert message creates a FB post with an image – it's quick and easy and looks professional

Warning:

You need to remind your audience social media is not where to report crime.

For emergency attendance by police, fire or ambulance call 999.

Information in relation to a crime please call either the Police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

Numbered lists:

The top 3 crime prevention strategies you have taught your children.

Ask questions:

What is the best crime prevention tip you have ever heard?

Run polls: Why are you following Neighbourhood Watch?

Make jokes:

Just because we are dealing with what can be a serious subject you can still have fun around light-hearted issues

Stay on top of trending news:

Connect your message to (positive) trending news

Be Local:

Post information about other local groups and about what is happening locally – schools, clubs, events. Demonstrate your local knowledge by sharing street names, park names etc.

Events: Promote upcoming events and take photos so that you have material to post after the event.

Video:

Whenever possible produce short video grabs – it may be at a NW event, or just you talking to camera to share some crime prevention hints/tips. Video will cut through greater than any other interaction.

Educate:

Whenever there is a crime report add a 'solution', crime prevention or safety message so that your viewers are educated and left with something positive.

Your Newsletter: If you are a group that produces a hard copy or e-newsletter, re-purpose individual tidbits of content from that Newsletter to create posts/tweets.

6. How to increase your audience

Set objectives - As with any activity that you undertake for your Group it is important to set objectives for example:

- Grow your online/digital membership by (X) followers in (X) space of time.
- Have your post shared 100 times over a month.
- Increase the number of 'real world' volunteers/followers from those who you have engaged with online.