



# USING SOCIAL MEDIA



London Cycling  
Campaign  
Guides

# CAMPAIGNING GUIDES: USING SOCIAL MEDIA



Facebook and Twitter are great tools that can help you spread the word, recruit new members, get the latest news and share campaign updates or actions. They are worth investing time and energy in.

You can find more information online: <http://lcc.org.uk/pages/activism>

## GETTING STARTED: FACEBOOK



Facebook is the worlds' largest social networking site, with hundreds of millions of users/visitors. If you don't already have a profile, sign up for a one using your own name and details at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com). It only takes a moment. Facebook works through 'likes' - you connect with others by liking their page.

Once you are signed up, search 'London Cycling Campaign' and 'like' our main page to get regular news and updates. <https://www.facebook.com/LondonCyclingCampaign>

**Make sure you create Facebook Page not a Group.** Groups work well for small private groups of friends to discuss topics, but generally a page will be better for broadcasting info and hosting discussions.

1. Create your own 'Page' at [www.facebook.com/pages](http://www.facebook.com/pages)

Pages are for businesses, organisations and brands to share their news and stories and connect with people. Like your own profile, you can customise Pages by posting stories, hosting events and more. People who like your Page and their friends will get updates in their News Feed.

You can create and manage a Facebook Page from your personal account.

2. There will be 6 categories to choose from: select **Cause or Community**.
3. A text box then appears. This is where you write the Facebook page name you want – for example 'Lambeth Cyclists'
4. The next screen will ask you to **upload a profile picture** – this will be used everywhere on Facebook to represent your page. It should be your groups' official LCC logo. Contact [campaign@lcc.org.uk](mailto:campaign@lcc.org.uk) if you need a copy of this. Using the official logo will help people familiarise your group with LCC.

## 5. In the *about* section, add a **short description about your group**.

For example the LCC Facebook Page uses this: *London Cycling Campaign: "Your voice for a cycling city"*. Please read our Facebook page guidelines: [www.lcc.org.uk/pages/forum-rules-and-faqs](http://www.lcc.org.uk/pages/forum-rules-and-faqs)

In the final screen you will be asked to set your pages' URL. We recommend you use your group name so that your Facebook URL becomes [www.facebook.com/groupname](http://www.facebook.com/groupname) e.g. [www.facebook.com/lambethcyclists](http://www.facebook.com/lambethcyclists)

Once published you can add a large cover image and start posting. Ask your group members to like the page so that they receive all of your updates into their newsfeed.

## TOP TIPS!

- Engage and grow your audience by **posting regularly**. You can add content to your page in seconds by posting links or photos. You can repost links from our page if you are struggling for content. Do this as often as you can.
- It's best to **vary the type of updates you post**. Try to post a mix of news, links or videos from LCC or other sources. Always try to include a photo or an image. We find that more people see and share posts if a photo is included.
- If people comment on your posts, try and **reply** where necessary and if they say something good, you can 'like' their individual comments.
- Your Facebook **cover image** is a great advert for your local group – you can show people who you are and what you work on. Do think carefully about the images you use and try to think about how you represent your group to be all inclusive and approachable to new potential members from a variety of backgrounds. For example, a cover photo with a group of lycra-clad young males with their road bikes may put off new cyclists or women from getting involved. Try to include a mix of people / cyclists in your imagery if you can. If you need images to use, you can always use images from the LCC website [www.lcc.org.uk](http://www.lcc.org.uk) (using any relevant copyright) - contact [campaign@lcc.org.uk](mailto:campaign@lcc.org.uk) for more help.
- We recommend you use **Facebook's Page feature** i.e. post updates and pictures as "Lambeth Cyclists" rather than as your personal Facebook identity. You can make this happen automatically in your personal account settings. This makes it much easier to keep supporters involved as they are speaking to a consistent person, rather than have the name changing in line with committee members. You also get valuable information showing how well your page is working for you if you use it this way. For example, you can see how many people a post has 'reached'.
- You can add more **administrators** from your group, who can then post as the page, rather than as their own name – click *Admin Panel* then *Edit Page* in the *Manage* menu. We recommend you always have 2-3 members of your group as administrators, so you don't lose access if someone leaves the group.
- If your local group already has a 'Group' on Facebook **move to a 'Page'**. Facebook don't provide any tools to convert your group to a page unfortunately but you could create a new 'Page' and notify your group members about it and ask them to make the transition over a set period. You might lose members short term but are likely to grow long term.

## PUTTING EVENTS ON FACEBOOK

You can **create specific event pages on your Facebook Page** to promote group meetings, rides or other social events. Click on the events tab under your cover image and then 'Create Event'. You can then invite the people who 'Like' your page to attend. It's an easy way to keep people informed and let them know the details of events you organise.

# GETTING STARTED: TWITTER



Twitter is a service that allows people to communicate and stay connected by broadcasting and exchanging short messages – tweets are limited to 280 characters - roughly the size of a text message. People can choose to follow you to receive your tweets directly, but almost all messages are searchable and can be viewed by the general public.

## What's so good about Twitter?

- It's totally free and very easy to use
- You only learn it once because it doesn't change (unlike Facebook)
- 99% of content is written by real people
- The best content floats to the top, making it meritocratic
- You can post any type of content: words, links, pictures, video
- It's massive (there are 1.6 billion Twitter searches every day)
- It's easy to find communities with shared interests
- You can engage with decision-makers very easily
- It's the fastest way to spread news (often real-time)
- It's almost entirely unaffected by advertising

## How could I use it for local campaigning?

- Broadcast stories on your website to more people
- Share an article you like that's on another website
- Advertise an protest ride in your borough
- Recruit volunteers for a stall at an event
- Hear the latest news before anyone else
- Find out who's talking about cycling in your area
- Ask people what they think about a street or junction
- Have conversations with your local councillor or MP
- Create a spoof account to attract media attention
- Photograph a car blocking a bike lane and publish instantly
- Make lists of local politicians and monitor their conversations

Twitter is a great way to keep your group members and other interested people involved. It's also a great news source. Visit [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) and find the sign up box, or go directly to <https://twitter.com/signup> and follow the instructions.

You will be asked for your full name, email and a password. You should enter the name of your group rather than your own name, for example "HFcycling". It's a good idea to use a group email address too, so that other people can access the account. This email address isn't publicly available to anyone on Twitter.

Once completed, you can select a username (usernames are unique identifiers on Twitter), it will begin with an '@'. For example @hfcyclists. This will appear on your profile page along with your name. Your username is the name your followers use when sending @replies, mentions, and direct messages. It will also form the URL of your Twitter profile page.

**LCC's Twitter account is @london\_cycling [https://twitter.com/london\\_cycling](https://twitter.com/london_cycling)**

You can change your username in your account settings at any time, as long as the new username is not already in use. Usernames must be fewer than 15 characters in length and cannot contain the words "admin" or "Twitter".

Change your profile picture to your **local groups' logo**. Contact [campaign@lcc.org.uk](mailto:campaign@lcc.org.uk) if you need a copy of the logo. In your profile bio, include something about you and state that you are a branch of LCC or part of LCC, e.g.

*Waltham Forest Cycling Campaign promotes cycling and campaigns for better conditions for cyclists in the borough. We're part of the London Cycling Campaign.*

You should also add in something in this bio that says *"Thoughts and opinions often our own"* so that people are clear that you are not always speaking on behalf of all LCC members.

## THE BASICS:

**Replies and mentions:** You can mention or reply to a user by putting @ in front of their user name, e.g. @London\_Cycling – to send a Tweet to us. If you start a tweet with an @, only people following both you and the other user will see it.

**Direct Messages – DMs:** Once you follow someone, they can send you private messages. This can be useful for sharing private information such as names, addresses, phone numbers or emails with other Twitter users, where you only want that person to see the details.

**Retweets – RT:** This is the best way to share interesting tweets from other Twitter users. If you like a tweet by someone else you can click on the retweet link. Doing so posts the original tweet to your followers. This is always a helpful way to find content and you may find that the user you retweet follows you in return!

## TOP TIPS

**Lists** are a vital (but underused part of Twitter). You can create lists of users in Twitter (either public or private) and use these to follow batches of conversations. You can subscribe to other people's lists too, such as this one of London:

<https://twitter.com/#!/digitalclaritys/london>

or this one about cycling:

<https://twitter.com/#!/allpartycycling/cycling>

or this one of our Local Groups:

[https://twitter.com/#!/london\\_cycling/lcc-local-groups](https://twitter.com/#!/london_cycling/lcc-local-groups)

**Follow other accounts providing good cycling content.** You can use Twitter to search for interesting ones. Many LCC Local Groups are already on Twitter, so start by following them! You can also see who we follow by checking out our profile @london\_cycling.

Here is a list of LCC Local Groups you may want to follow:

@BarnetLCC  
@BexleyCyclists  
@BrentCyclists  
@bromleycyclists  
@camdencyclists  
@CroydonCyclists  
@EalingCC  
@EnfieldCycling  
@GreenwichCycle  
@hackney\_cycling

@hfcyclists  
@HaringeyCyclist  
@HarrowCyclists  
@HaveringCyclist  
@HounslowCycling  
@IslingtonCycle  
@RBKC\_cycling  
@KingstonCycling  
@LambethCyclists  
@lewicyclists

@newhamcyclists  
@RedbridgeCC  
@southwarkcycle  
@cyclinginsutton  
@THWhealers  
@wfcycling  
@Wandscyclist  
@Westminster\_LCC

## How do I find tweets relevant to me?

- **Following hashtags** e.g. #space4cycling
- Searching keywords/topics at <https://twitter.com/#!/search>
- <http://www.google.co.uk> – search to find people/topics simply by including 'twitter' in your search
- <http://tweetminster.co.uk> - find your politicians
- <http://www.twazzup.com> – follow trends/topics (“trending” refers to topics that are hottest on Twitter)

## Other useful tips

- Twitter has a short memory so you can repeat messages a few times on different days, particularly if it is something important, like publicising an event, meeting or action.
- If you see a tweet you like, you can **add it to your favourites**. If you don't, it's not that easy to find it again so use this feature whenever you want to find a tweet later.
- Hashtags, such as **#space4cycling** are used as an easy way for people to search, organise and track discussions on Twitter based on the key words (hashtags - #). You can click on a hashtag to see all the posts that mention the subject. Where relevant, you should include one so people can see what you are saying on particular topics. Use the designated hashtag when tweeting on key LCC campaigns for greater exposure.
- Twitter is a tool that needs time and attention. It works best if you post or retweet several times a day.
- Make sure several people in your committee know your username and password, so the account isn't lost if someone resigns. It also means a few of you can help to maintain the account.

**TIP: Tweets are public, and can be picked up by journalists and anyone else on social media. Avoid being rude, confrontational, libellous or inaccurate when you tweet. Treat your social media content with the same respect as you would content on your website.**

## TWEETDECK

Tweetdeck (<http://tweetdeck.com>) is free software you use to manage your Twitter account more easily than the standard Twitter.com page.

You can arrange different feeds by columns, create filters, schedule tweets to suit your audience, and stay up to date with notification alerts. It's an easy way to monitor and manage your Twitter account and each person with your login can use it to manage the same account.

## OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA

### Instagram/Pinterest

Social media is a growing sphere, with new ways of broadcasting and engaging audiences appearing all the time. If you already use Instagram, Pinterest, or one of the other tools, then go ahead and get involved!

**Instagram** is a fun and quirky way to share pictures. You can snap a photo with your mobile phone, and then choose a filter to transform the image and then publish it. <http://instagram.com/>

**Pinterest** is a pinboard-style photo-sharing website that allows users to create and manage theme-based image collections such as events, interests, and hobbies. Users can browse other pinboards for images, "re-pin" images to their own pinboards, or "like" photos. <http://about.pinterest.com/>

## COMMENTING ON BLOGS AND NEWS STORIES

There are many other outlets for online discussions, not just Twitter and Facebook. Nowadays, many online newspaper stories have comments beneath them. Don't be afraid to comment there as an individual or on behalf of your group or your campaign (*you can read our **Working with Media** Guide for more information: <http://lcc.org.uk/pages/activism>*)

Blogs that cover your local area, cycling and transport issues, etc. also usually have comments sections beneath them. You can use these to put your point across, and to publicise events and campaigns that you're running.

## ONLINE FORUMS AND MESSAGE BOARDS

Other online activity can often be helpful in order to communicate your campaign messages or promote debate. Joining local forums or commenting on blog posts and news stories can often be a great way to engage in debate on cycling issues.

**Keep an eye out on key cycling blogs and cycling news stories and be prepared to comment.**

Local forums often appear in google searches, so seek them out and become involved. This type of engagement is often more effective if you engage over a sustained period of time. Get to know the other people writing on the forums, and discuss your ideas with them. Don't expect to just post a link to a press release and for everyone to take notice.

**For any questions, help or advice on any of the above contact us: [campaign@lcc.org.uk](mailto:campaign@lcc.org.uk)**