



THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH
BELL RINGERS

Social Media Guidelines

This guidance provides supporting information for the use of social media for the promotion of bellringing to ringers, parochial church councils and clergy including external factors that may affect the ringing of church bells. It does not set out to provide guidance on how to use each social media platform.

As most of the ringing towers in the world come under the jurisdiction of the Church of England, it has been produced with this in mind. However, most of the principles addressed will apply to Churches of other denominations and those outside the UK and secular rings of bells. It is recommended that, if needed, more specific local advice should be sought.

The widespread use of social media applications brings the opportunity to communicate with ringers, potential recruits, and wider audiences with ease.

The extent of penetration of social media into everyday life means that all levels of ringing from the Central Council to individual towers should consider their presence on social media in relation to the achievement of their objectives.

Platform	% of UK internet users aged 16-64 that access the platform (Q3 19)
YouTube	78%
Facebook	73%
Instagram	49%
Twitter	45%
Pinterest	25%
Snapchat	25%
Reddit	16%
Tumblr	11%
TikTok	8%

(Data source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/284506/united-kingdom-social-network-penetration/>)

The use of social media platforms differs most significantly between age groups so when targeting new recruits do research the most appropriate platform to use. For example, 72% of 15-25-year olds use Instagram compared to 21% of those aged over 56 (Data from Q3 2019).

This technology should, however, be used responsibly ensuring that individuals, ringing societies and the Exercise as a whole are not compromised nor that legal responsibilities are infringed.

Anyone using social networking sites and tools should be aware that statements or assertions about named individuals or organisations can have an adverse reputational effect on those

so named and could also lead to actions for libel or invasion of privacy. Use of electronic media in a damaging way carries the same penalties as the written word and may result in fines, prosecution and imprisonment. Personal attacks and harassment are covered by the Protection of Harassment Act 1997, Malicious Communications Act 1988, and Communications Act 2003. In order to avoid such situations, the following safeguards are recommended:

- Do not openly criticise, discredit or allude to individuals or organisations on networking sites or other internet forums generally publicly accessible.
- Do not use the public network sites to raise grievances, complaints, or problems against individuals which should be dealt with by available and private channels.
- Within ringing organisations the use of society websites, forums, and Facebook groups should be professional and not used for personal comment. Those responsible for controlling such sites, e.g admins and webmasters, have a responsibility to exercise vigilance over postings and moderate where necessary.

Speaking for your organization

Often as the administrator of social media accounts on behalf of a ringing organisation you will have a corresponding personal account on that platform. It is important that any content and interactions made on your organisation's account is solely ringing related to ensure consistent messaging to your followers who may not be interested in your personal activities, and to give a degree of professionalism and integrity to your organisation.

As you will be the voice of your organisation when posting on social media do not let your personal opinions influence your content. It is best to get the backing of senior members of your organisation (chairman, executive committee etc) before expressing support for a cause or taking a position on a topic via social media particularly if it is a divisive one.

To reflect the fact that you are speaking for your organisation do use plural pronouns in posts and messages (we and us).

Costs

Social media on the whole works on the basis that it's free at the point of use with their business models based around advertising so funding is not a barrier to successful promotion. However, money can be spent on 'boosting' posts specifically on Facebook and Twitter. These boosted posts will then be made visible to more users and can be targeted to specific demographics including by age and interests.

Young Ringers, Social Media, and Safeguarding

Young ringers' groups are likely to use social media between them to communicate, this should not be discouraged. The favoured apps will change from time to time, with the most popular in 2020 being Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat and Messenger. The nature of social media gives potential for bullying which in itself is a safeguarding issue.

Leaders of young ringers' groups should stress that bullying in the context of ringing groups will not be tolerated and that such actions risk their group being disbanded. Any social media bullying which you become aware of must be reported to the safeguarding officer of the organisation from which your young ringers are drawn straight away, or you will not be fulfilling your responsibilities as a leader.

Police and other competent authorities can recover extensive social media history so you can assume all social media correspondence is being recorded and can be found, even from Snapchat.

Leaders are not advised to participate in social media groups used by young ringers. If you do, and there is an accusation of bullying in that group which you do not report as a safeguarding issue you place yourself at risk. This could even result in being suspended from working with children and investigated by the police and other authorities. If do you decide to be part of a young ringers' social media group you must be alert to and act upon any online abuse or bullying that occurs.

You are not at risk of investigation or suspension yourself if there is a report of bullying within a young ringers' group of which you are not aware. This does not mean that you should turn a blind eye to the risks, and you should make reasonable efforts to ensure social media is used responsibly by the children and young adults you are leading.

Copyright of images

You shouldn't use any material on a website that you either haven't generated itself or obtained explicit permission directly from the copyright owner. Being unaware of the existence of an image being copyrighted is not a defence.

The fact that an image is widely available online does not make it acceptable to use freely - this is still infringing someone's copyright. It does not mean, for example, that the owner of the image doesn't care about its widespread use and the image is fair game.

A number of images that have been freely released for reuse can be found on Wikimedia.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Belfries_in_England

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Church_bells_in_England

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Change_ringing

However copyright infringement is a civil (not criminal) matter, any damages that may be claimed against you should reflect the actual loss that the copyright owner has experienced. Please connect the Central Council for advice if you are sent a copyright claim against an image you have used.

Social media image size guide

Each platform presents images in different aspect ratios and resolutions. Here's a guide to the resolution that the images are displayed.

Facebook

- Sharing images: 1,200 x 628 pixels
- Sharing Stories: 1,080 x 1,920 pixels

Instagram

- Sharing square images: 1,080 x 1,080 pixels
- Sharing horizontal images: 1,080 x 566 pixels
- Sharing vertical images: 1,080 x 1,350 pixels
- Sharing Stories: 1,080 x 1,920 pixels

Twitter

- Sharing a single image: 1,200 x 675 pixels
- Sharing links with an image: 800 x 418 pixels

Contact

For further information, contact the Central Council through our social media channels or by email.

- <https://www.facebook.com/CentralCouncilCBR/>
- <https://twitter.com/ccringing>
- PRO@CCCBR.org.uk