



Guidance on Accessing Politics Easy Read Part 6



**Inclusion
Scotland**

Disabled People's Organisation

Our voices ■ Our choices

Access to Politics

Part 6



Online campaigning.





Inclusion Scotland made this guide:

- to show disabled people how to get involved in politics.
- to show how to make politics accessible for disabled people.



It is in 8 parts:

1. What are my rights? What can change to make it easier for me?
2. Who represents me?
3. Petitions.
4. How to take part (1).
5. How to take part (2).
6. Tips for campaigning.
7. Election day.
8. Accessibility checklist.



We hope this guide is useful to you.

Get in touch with us at:

civicparticipation@inclusionscotland.org

to tell us what you think of the guide or if you need advice and support.



Top Tips for Campaigning



- **Be Prepared.**

Think about what could happen when campaigning and what you would do.

If you look like you are not sure about what you are saying, or you are not prepared, voters will not be impressed.



They will think you are not good at your job and will not vote for you.



Think about getting someone who is good at organising to help you plan and manage your campaign.

They can help you work out all the important things you need to do.



- **Be Yourself.**

Be honest and be yourself.

Voters are more likely to change their minds if they believe you are telling the truth.



- **Do what you are good at.**

Campaign in a way that is comfortable for you.

Find your own style of campaigning.



In the past people thought you were a good candidate if you delivered lots of leaflets and knocked on lots of doors to speak to voters.



This kind of campaigning can be difficult for disabled people.

Doing it that way does not mean you are the best candidate.



- **Pace Yourself.**

Do not do too much.

Take regular breaks.

Plan your time well.



Look after your health.

Make sure you have a balance of campaigning and the rest of your life.



The internet can be a good way to campaign.

Social media is quick and easy to use. You can share information very quickly and be creative.



There are also things that can be difficult when you are using it.

If you make a mistake people will know about it straight away.

You will have to deal with it as soon as possible.



Anything you have said or done online in the past can also be used by the media or others to make a story.



Remember that not everyone has access to the internet or will use it to find information about election candidates.

Online campaigning should be one of many methods you use.

Rules for using social media.



Some basic rules to follow are:

Be Professional.

You are representing your campaign, and representing yourself as a candidate.

Be the same online as you would be in real life.



Be Responsible.

Make sure anything you post is fair and true.

Stick to what you know about.



Be Accountable.

You are responsible for what you say online.

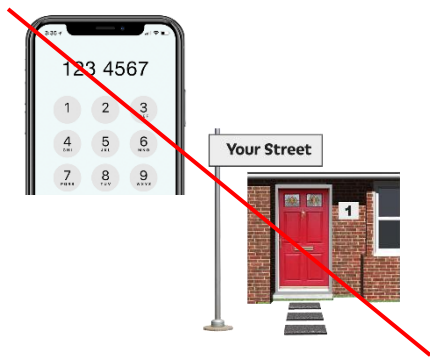
You cannot cover up mistakes, you can only be honest about them and say sorry.



Be Respectful.

Stop and think before you post anything online.

If you do not agree with someone's opinion be polite.



Be careful.

Never give out personal details like your home address or phone number.

Only give out campaign links and a way for people to get in touch with you.

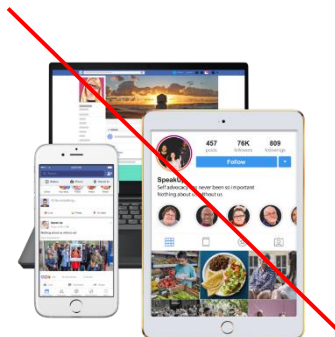


Remember everyone can see it.

It is not just seen by people who support you.

People who do not agree with you will also look at your social media.

If you would not say it in real life, don't say it on social media.



Before you press 'send.'

Would you be happy to say this on the television, radio or in a newspaper?

If the answer is 'no' then do not say it on social media.



Anything you post online is there forever.

Other people could repost it.

Professional or personal use?



When using social media, you should know the difference between professional and personal use.

Professional use is when you comment on or post something as a candidate running for election, or as your party's representative.



For example, as a candidate running for local council you may give your opinion on local parking charges.

This is a professional statement because you are writing about an issue you could change if you were elected.



Personal use is when you comment on or post something personally and not in your party or campaign role.

For example, your opinion on the last film you saw, or your local football team.

Accessibility



Social media is a great way to communicate and reach more people with your message.

It is not always accessible for disabled people.



Facebook



Twitter



Inclusion Scotland's [Accessible Social Media Guide](#) gives you advice on how to make your social media more accessible.

Facebook can help you link with voters. You can use a group, page, or your personal profile to update people.

You can tell people news about your campaign on a regular basis. You can have talk with your supporters and followers.

Twitter lets you share short bits of information with the world. It is easy to talk with other Twitter users.

You can 'follow' people or organisations to find out what they are doing. They can 'follow' you.

Set a target for your Twitter campaign so you have a plan of what you want to achieve.

This can be things like:

- Building up the number of people or organisations that 'follow' you.
- Get people to sign up to a campaign newsletter. This gives you a mailing list.

- Post links to information on your website so more people visit it.



Once you have decided what you want to achieve in your Twitter campaign take time to look at how well it is working and how you can make it better.

Website



A website is your space to express your candidacy, policies, beliefs, and identity.

You can use pictures, audio, and video to make the site interesting to people.



Put your manifesto on the website and things like printable posters and leaflets.

A manifesto is a document that says what you and your political party believe in and what work you want to do.



Writing a blog for your website is a way to tell people about your ideas and what you are doing.

A blog is a type of online diary. It is a good way to tell people about your campaign and what you are doing.



Aa

Follow these tips to make the most of your blog posts:

1. **Title.**

A good short title attracts people to the blog, makes it easy to find and tells people what to expect.

2. **Text.**

Use one font.

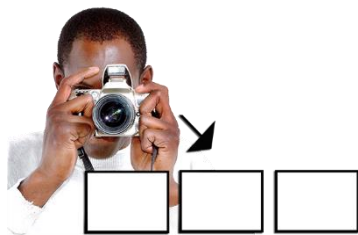
Split up your text using paragraphs and keep them short.

3. **Pictures.**

Use pictures when it adds something to the blog.

Make sure you have permission to use the picture. If you do, make sure you say who took the picture.

Do not use the picture if you are not sure.



4. **Links.**

People often look over web pages quickly.

Links stand out and can be used to draw someone's attention to something.

Do not just copy and paste the link – explain what it links to.

Do not put 'click here'.



Party website



If you are standing for a political party, they may put your information on their website.

This is another way voters can find out information about you.

It is a good place to add links to your information in other places on the internet.

What to do if you make a mistake.



You might post something you should not on social media – it happens.

This could be because you made a mistake, or because your account has been hacked.



If this happens when you are posting as part of your campaign or party activity, your political party will have guidance on what to do.

If you are an independent candidate or your party does not have guidance, follow these important steps:



- Tell your party or election contact immediately.
- Say sorry straight away.
- Explain what happened and delete the post if possible.
- Say what you are going to do to stop it happening again.



To prevent mistakes:

Use strong passwords.

Do not tell others your account password or send it by e-mail.



Check you are logged into the right account before posting.

Remember your responsibilities when you are posting.



Be careful of strange links sent via social media accounts.

Do not click on links if you do not know what they are.

Check your privacy settings.

Privacy settings let you decide how much information people can see about you on the site.



Decide if you want everyone to be able to see your contact and profile information, videos, photos, and other posts, or if you want it to be more private.



Every public message you post on social media can be spread around the world in seconds.

These messages could affect your safety or your identity.



They might affect your future jobs or volunteering.

They might just be embarrassing.
Always post with care.

