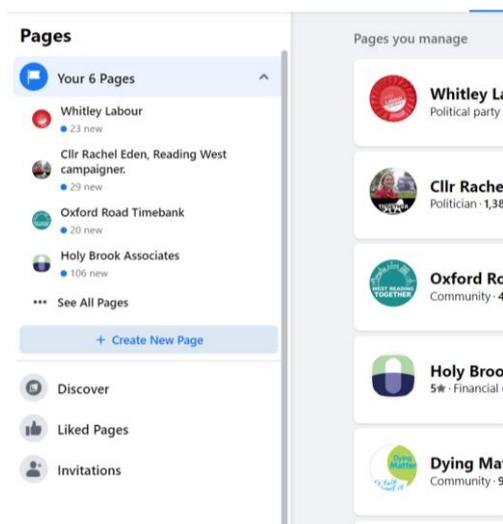


## LGIU – Tips and how to for a Councillor Facebook page

### Ward or individual

This is a personal preference, there are pros and cons of both. Evidence is that engagement and likes are more common for pages that are related to an individual and have a person in the profile image, but there is also a benefit to having a page that can be more generic to the ward team as you can share the responsibility for keeping it up to date.

To Create a page follow Facebook’s instructions:



1. Go to “Pages” part of the left hand menu and click ‘create new page’

### Decisions on set up

#### Chose a name

Make it something that will be easy to search for within Facebook. If you have a common name or represent a ward with a common name e.g. North, Central or Church Ward Councillors may want to include the town name. E.g. “North Ward, Anytwon councillors” “Clr Richard Davies, Caversham”

*This isn't a once and for ever decision as you can edit the name later, but Facebook has an approval process, so it's best to try to be careful here. For example you can change it if you run for parliament or change council role (for example become leader, serve as deputy mayor, mayor etc) or if you just change your mind, but it is down to Facebook to approve it.*

#### Category

Likely to be ‘Politician’ or if council department type in the service area or ‘local service’

#### Description

Complete this as it may affect search results etc. Include your local area, what you do, and something about you. This can be changed later.

### **Once the page is created:**

#### @username

Facebook gives you the option to link name, make it something as short and easy to remember as possible.

#### Add other admins/owners

It is always a good idea to have multiple admins for a page as it means that if one of you is away, ill or just gets fed up of doing it all there are others who can take the page on. A ward page might be administered by the councillors, your ward organiser and/or party branch secretary. Even if it is your own councillor page you could consider adding an additional trusted person as an administrator as back up.

#### Add a profile picture

- Generally speaking, profile pictures of people work better than of logos, but chose something that works for you.

#### Add a 'cover' picture

This should be something that conveys a message about what you do and who you are – groups of people doing something in the community can work well.

#### About

Don't forget to finish completing this as it may affect search results etc.

#### Contact details

Include how you would prefer people to contact you, but bear in mind your page will also likely get messages directly so you will need to check this too.

#### Profile

Don't feel that you have to complete all of this at once – better to get it live and add to it as you go.

#### Add events

You can create events for your page – ideas to consider for this include: ward surgeries, campaign sessions you are running, public meetings you are hosting. You can also share other pages' events – for example if a community group is running something you can share it and encourage people to go along.

### **Posting and keeping it live**

Try to post regularly: if you can something every day, but 2-3 times a week can be fine. Ideally with a picture. You can pre-schedule if you know an issue is coming up using a tool like Hootsuite

Experiment with Facebook live videos on your page – they increase engagement hugely

Patience – it takes time to build up Facebook page likes, in my experience more so than twitter.

Aim for engagement with your follower:: this is better both from a point of view of authenticity and from the point of view of Facebook's algorithm it is better to have a few highly engaged followers than a lot of inactive followers

### **Managing engagement**

Reply promptly to messages – treat this like an inbox, increasingly people expect to be able to contact you this way. If you reply promptly you get a 'badge' on your page marking you as responsive

Respond to positive, neutral and constructive negative comments, usually it is best to do this 'as your page'. If it doesn't need a reply just 'liking' a comment is seen as polite.

Negative comments that are not in breach of your rules but are borderline can be 'hidden' – this is useful if someone is attempting to be negative but is not being abusive. When comments are hidden only the poster and their Facebook friends can see the comment.

If someone is truly offensive you can delete their comments or even block them from your page. This is your space.

Don't remove all criticism, where it is constructive or reasonable it is better to be seen to engage politely and helpfully where appropriate. Remember this will be seen not just by the person posting but by others too, who may give you credit even if the original commenter doesn't.

### **Examples of Facebook Pages:**

<https://www.facebook.com/RachelCEden/>

<https://www.facebook.com/PortTalbotWardLabour/>

<https://www.facebook.com/northburn1/>

### **Getting "Likes"**

There is nothing wrong with messaging people you know asking them to 'like' your page. Note however that the Facebook algorithm rewards pages that have a high rate of engagement so it is best to encourage people who are likely to be genuinely interested to like rather than just anyone who will do it. A good person to ask to like the page is a local resident involved in a community group, a less helpful person to ask is a relative who lives at the other end of the country.

Share interesting content and then ask people to re-share it.

Join Facebook groups as your page and post useful and relevant content there.

Ask local members of your political party, residents who have supported you, neighbours, local friends and family to 'like' your page.

Paid advertising can work, but this is most effective if you have interesting content first and can also attract negative responses.

If you are planning to pay to boost posts/likes etc be careful around election time as it will count towards election expenses and you will need to target carefully to ensure it is local spend. Your political party or group should be able to advise on this.