How to… get content and make it engaging

What content should we have?

The best way to decide what the content should be on your website and social media is to take a step back and think 'what is the purpose of our website and social media?'

You will probably decide the purpose is twofold:
1. To keep existing members informed
2. To provide information for prospective volunteers/girls/parents and/or existing parents

So now you have established the purpose, and that you have two different audiences to cater for, you need to consider what content they will both be looking for when they come to your website and social media. Some ideas are given below, but it is not an exhaustive list.

Existing Members	Prospective/existing Volunteers/Girls/Parents
• Info on upcoming events/opportunities e.g. trips, international selection, County Day and booking forms to download • Info on upcoming training sessions and how to book • Info on Residential Facilities • Shop including opening times and location • Office opening times and location • Equipment/Activities hire • Other downloadable resources e.g. Challenge Badges • Photos from events • "News" from the county/division/district/units	• Basic information on the organisation • How to Join • Shop opening times and location • Photos from events

News VS Information

It's best to consider "News" and "Information" as two different things. News is more likely reports on things that have already happened, written in a journalistic style, whereas Information will be details about things that have yet to happen- for example events, trainings, and will be written in a factual style, or possibly in a style to market or "sell".

Keep it up to date!

The most important aspect of any information on the website is that it needs to be **accurate**, **up to date** and **comprehensive**. Think how annoying it would be to go to look up the booking deadline for an event you are desperate to register for to find that the information is not there (and you have to ring the office/email around), it hasn't been updated, or is just wrong, and you and your girls miss out on the event. Obviously as volunteers it can be hard to find the time to update constantly you might want to consider setting a regular weekly update deadline.

Where does content come from?

So now you have established what the purpose of your website and social media is, who the audience is and the type of content they will be looking for you to provide- you need to figure out how to get that content up there! Receiving the content in a timely manner and in a useable format is by far the greatest challenge to running a Girlguiding website or social media channel.

Think about how content currently gets to the person running your website and social media, and also how this might work in an ideal world.
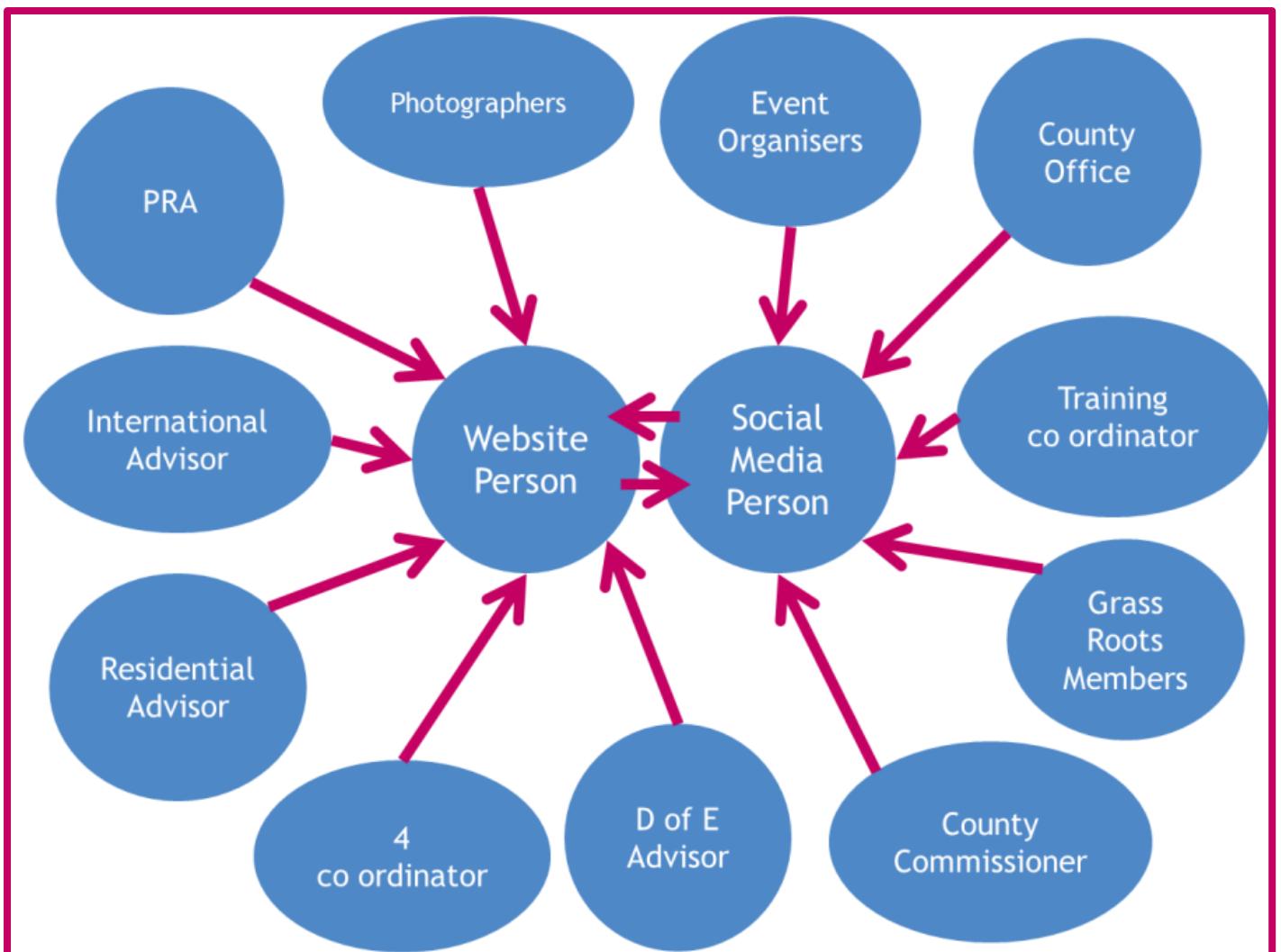
Where does content come from?...continued

The diagram on the previous page shows just some of the key people in the county who will be providers of your content. Good communication with these parties is essential!

A cartoon showing how that communication would work in an ideal world is shown on the next page. Now obviously that is in an ideal world. In reality we are all volunteers who don't always have the time to be chasing information – some ideas to improve workflow are listed below.

Ideas for improving your workflow for web and social media

- Increase awareness of website and social media in your County – is it on your letter head? Powerpoint template? Newsletter? Is it referred to in trainings? Have you demo'd it at County Day?

- Plan web and social media into all events from the beginning- set deadlines for receiving information e.g. booking forms

- Consider having a slot to present how web and social media can benefit your county and what needs to happen to make it work at your County Guiding Development meeting or Exec?

- Increase communication with event planners/advisors – let them know who you are

- Have a pro forma and/or style guide- set out expectations of how you want to receive information to minimise the editing you have to do- set expectations from the beginning that anything submitted may be edited

- Likewise set policies for the county on whether for example you share peoples personal contact details if those are on the Booking Forms for events

- Set a deadline for receiving information for uploading to the website in a set period of time

- Grow your team- recruit some regular photographers and identify people to write "news stories" on events in advance

Linking your website and social media

Note that if your website person and social media person aren't in fact the same person- these two need to have a really close working relationship. Shared a good infographic on social media? Maybe you also want to put it on the website. Posted the latest information about an event to your website? Let people know on social media. The two channels will drive traffic between each other, and it's important that they are consistent.

Writing for the web

Writing for the web is different to how you would write for any other form of media, and you will likely find you need to edit most content that is submitted. Some easy to follow tips on how to structure your content can be found on the usability.gov website.

Be engaging

So now you've got your content, you need to make it engaging. Engaging your audience means sharing content that encourages them to act. You can see how successful that content is when people comment, share, like, retweet, and repin (and if you read about the Facebook algortithim in the How to…statistics for Social Media you will realise how important engagement is for increasing your reach to new audiences). So what type of content is engaging?

WELCOME!

Videos

Photo Collages

Infographics

Teasers

Novelty

Multimedia

Use photos, videos, infographics and collages to engage your audience- show them how exciting and fun Girlguiding is

Live Social Media from events

Our members love to see what's going on in Girlguiding near them

Ask a Question/Get replies

As simple as "What has been your most memorable moment as a volunteer?"

Use Humour

Social media is not a formal method of communication- you can have some fun.

Be novel

Girlguiding's minifigs are really popular- and Staffordshire have a knitted County Commisioner!

Inspirational

Get your audience thinking about what they can to help- e.g. These girls have just seen the sea for the first time, and our volunteers made that happen!