



Social media guidelines *for* Sands volunteers and supporters

*Helping to support anyone affected by the death of a baby,
raising awareness of baby loss and saving babies lives*

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Introduction

Social media networks are more popular than ever. As a Sands volunteer or supporter, you're in a unique position to use these networks to make a difference to the work we do and ensure that every bereaved family gets the care and support they need wherever they live in the UK.

By connecting with us and each other, helping spread the word or simply sharing positive messages about Sands, you can help us to reach a wider audience, amplify our voice and break the silence around baby loss.

This document covers brand, content, posts, best practice, uses for hashtags and direction for social interaction, to support and guide you in making decisions about social media.



*If you have any questions please get in touch with us by calling
020 7436 7940 or emailing communications@sands.org.uk*

Sands social media

Sands has a presence on the following social media channels:



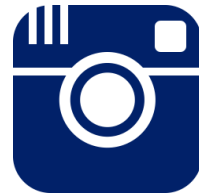
Facebook

[@SandsCharity](#)



Twitter

[@SandsUK](#)



Instagram

[@SandsCharity](#)



LinkedIn

[Sands](#)



YouTube

[YouTube](#)

Connect with us today & stay up to date!

Like/follow our pages and share our posts on your own timeline. This sounds so simple, but it's a great way to let people know about the work that we do and share our recent campaigns such as Sands Awareness Month and Baby Loss Awareness Week.

You can make a massive difference by helping us spread the word online.

General guidelines

You are the face of Sands to the public, when you post on social media. This guidance is to support you in being the best ambassador you can for the charity and helping us to make a difference to bereaved families and spread the word about our important work.

You're free to say whatever you like about Sands on social media, but we hope that when talking about us you'll make good judgments and not say or do anything that could reflect badly on our work.

There are a few simple rules that we ask you to follow when promoting our work online. Some of these are legal issues about the use of our name and brand but most are simply helpful tips.



General guidelines

▶ Be an online ambassador

Remember, by spreading the word about us and our work, you actively help us reach bereaved parents and families that need our support.

▶ Think before you share

Never disclose non-public and confidential information about Sands, our staff, volunteers, supporters and most importantly bereaved parents.

▶ Give credit where it's due

Please respect copyright and trademark regulations. When using someone else's content, please give them a mention and seek their approval before using their content. Refer to separate guidance on consent.

▶ Be the best person you can be online

Be courteous, supporting and respectful of other people and their views, religions and cultures. Aim for an empathetic, inclusive and compassionate tone. Avoid professional jargon, jokes or sarcasm, as these can easily be misinterpreted.

▶ Whatever you say online can be made public

Your privacy settings won't necessarily stop other people sharing your posts (either deliberately or accidentally). Refer to separate guidance on GDPR.

▶ If in doubt...

...best not to post or comment. Likewise, don't be drawn into arguments, whether in a public comment or private message.

Creating social media accounts

▶ Choosing a name

When naming your social media page, make sure that it reflects what your relationship is with Sands.

For example, a Twitter profile for a local group in Plymouth can be called “@PlymouthSands”.

However if you are a volunteer and would like to create an individual account, please don't use “Sands” as part of the handle as it can create confusion when other users are searching for the official Sands account.

Stay clear of anything like “@SandsVolunteer” or “@SandsSupporter”

▶ Profile description

In the description of your account page, you're welcome to mention Sands and clarify who you are and what you do, whether it represents a local group, supporter or volunteer.

For example: @JohnSmith's description: “I volunteer for Plymouth Sands as a befriender”.

Also, don't forget to include links to your website or contact details!



If you need help with choosing an image, please refer to [MySands.org.uk](https://mysands.org.uk) or email communications@sands.org.uk

Creating social media accounts

▶ Profile image

If it is an individual account, use a photo of yourself. If the account represents a local group, please use a high resolution group logo.



▶ Cover / header image

Use a high resolution image which reflects Sands work. There will be a range of images to choose from and some are only relevant during a certain campaign moment, like Sands Awareness Month in June. It is important to update from time to time to ensure they are current and up to date.

▶ Who to follow

Choosing carefully who you follow will increase the impact you make. To get you started, follow your local hospitals, members of your local community and other Sands groups in the region are a great place to start.

The image shows a promotional banner for the 'Sands Bereavement Support App'. The banner includes the text 'Sands Bereavement Support App', 'Support and information for bereaved parents, families, healthcare professionals and anyone affected by the death of a baby', and '#SandsApp'. It also features 'Download now' buttons for Google Play and the App Store, and a background image of hands clasped in prayer. Below the banner is a screenshot of the Twitter profile for Sands (@SandsUK). The profile shows 9,452 tweets, 1,034 following, 15.6K followers, 3,916 likes, 8 lists, and 4 moments. A pinned tweet is visible, along with a 'Your Tweet activity' chart showing 4,822 impressions over the last 24 hours.

If you need help with choosing an image, please refer to [MySands.org.uk](https://www.mysands.org.uk) or email communications@sands.org.uk

Considerations for using social media

It's up to you to decide if, how and why you would like to use social media. If you are thinking to set up an account for your local group, it would be useful to consider the following:

- ▶ **Managing social media channels takes time**

Think about who will be responsible for creating and posting content on a regular basis. It takes time to respond to comments and replies. You will need to check in from time to time to ensure that all enquiries and support requests are addressed. Perhaps consider agreeing a rota.

- ▶ **Be ready to offer support**

Especially if someone is responding to bereavement related content or having a difficult time personally. Some words, images, days of the year might act as a trigger and it is not possible to predict those. However, it is important to be able to offer support or refer to Sands Helpline and other bereavement support materials.

It might also be useful to include the following in your profile description or in a pinned post: *"Please note: I am a volunteer/This is a volunteer-led group and we might not be able to respond immediately. If you need bereavement support, please visit sands.org.uk/support or call our Helpline on 0808 164 3332"*



Considerations continued

▶ Check if everyone is happy with the content

Ask if they want to be mentioned in posts. Tagging others in a post can help amplify its reach.

But don't forget that you need to obtain specific consent for anyone who appears in photos and videos that you might want to post on your social media.

▶ 'Speaking on behalf of Sands' vs. 'speaking about Sands'

We all talk about Sands, but only certain Sands staff can speak on behalf of the charity.

As volunteers and supporters, you wouldn't want to be in a position where someone else thought your views were those of the charity.

Social media has blurred the lines between personal opinion and organisational views. Now anyone can make a comment online and journalists search social media for comments about people, organisations, and issues.

Make sure that you're not caught out by including a statement in your profile description such as *"Any views expressed on this account are my own and not that of Sands."*

Hashtags

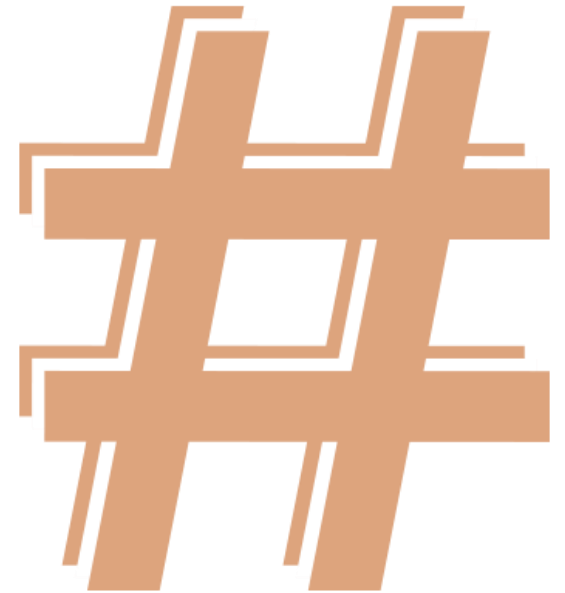
Hashtags were initially created to categorise social campaigns. They can also be used to draw attention to a particular word and add an emotional twist to a post.

Sands overarching proposition evolves around reducing the number of babies dying, hence our main hashtag is *#15babiesaday*.

It is at the core of the charity's mission and runs through all of our communications.

It is useful to include a few different hashtags in one post, keep them relevant to the campaign and don't include more than four.

Consider also including at least one generic hashtag, as it helps boost the post to the audience that might not know us yet.



Hashtags continued

A list of supplementary and campaign specific hashtags is included below:

#15babiesaday

Sands generic

- #VoiceOfBereavedFamilies
- #FindingTheWords

Fundraising

- #TeamSands
- #WalkAMileinMyShoes
- #SandsSuperstar
- #TeamSands2019
- #challenge15
- #FundraisingFriday

Events

- #SandsAwarenessMonth
- #SandsConference
- #SandsGardenDay
- #LightsOfLove

Professionals

- #SandsTraining
- #SandsResearch
- #SandsSaferCare
- #SandsSavingBabies
- #NBCP

Generic (non-Sands)

- #babyloss
- #stillbirth
- #alwayslovedneverforgotten

Baby Loss Awareness Week

- #WaveofLight
- #BLAW2019
- #babylossawarenessweek

Sharing, Liking and Commenting

The difference between Sharing, Liking and Commenting on Facebook:

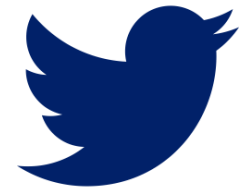
- ▶ **Sharing** gets five gold stars when it comes to exposure. Not only are you drawing attention to the messaging, you are sharing exact content with your own personal audience. Don't forget to incorporate our own, personal message to reflect the content of the share.
- ▶ **Liking** is also a great tool to drum up awareness. Just by 'liking' a post on Facebook, it shows your friends that you've 'liked' this post, and they will see it in their news feeds.
- ▶ **Commenting** is another great tool to get eyes on your posts. If you're Commenting, this will also show up in your friends' news feeds. But, the difference between Commenting and 'Liking'? They're actually able to see the conversation being had, which is great for understanding and increasing the conversation.



Sharing, Liking and Commenting

The difference between Favouriting, Retweeting and Replying on **Twitter**:

- ▶ **Liking** on Twitter holds the same functionality as 'liking' on Facebook. By liking a post on Twitter, you show your followers that you've liked this post, and your mutual followers will see it in their news feeds.
- ▶ **Retweeting** is similar to 'sharing' on Facebook, and earns five gold stars in terms of maximised exposure. Not only are you drawing attention to the messaging, you are sharing the exact content with your own personal audience.
- ▶ **Quote Tweeting** is similar to hitting that 'share' button on Facebook. Quote tweeting provides the opportunity to add personal insight to the post. By choosing to quote tweet, you are driving the most reach to your audience, versus 'liking' or 'retweeting'.
- ▶ **Replying** this option is the most basic and quickest way to engage in back-and-forth conversation.



When things go wrong

When something goes wrong, the best course of action is to own up and apologise, instead of deleting posts and/or comments. Everything on the web is documented, so it's best to be honest and transparent rather than try to hide something.

If you're dealing with a particularly difficult individual, it is recommended to steer the conversation off social media. Encourage them to continue the conversation via email or a private message instead.

In cases when:

- ▶ If you make an ill-advised post on social media
- ▶ There's been a mistake and/or an incorrect information was posted/you regret posting something
- ▶ Something has gone unexpectedly viral and you're worried as the comments and responses aren't positive

...please do let us know as soon as possible, so that we can support you with managing the situation.

***If you have any questions please get in touch with us by calling
020 7436 7940 or emailing communications@sands.org.uk***

Inappropriate content

Sadly, not everyone using social media has good intentions.

Facebook

- ▶ If you come across a comment within the official Sands Facebook page which you feel is inappropriate, or if you have any other questions regarding Facebook, please contact us via Facebook Messenger or send us an email.
- ▶ You can also report abusive or inappropriate content directly to Facebook. Here is Facebook's guide on how to [report content on Facebook](#)

Twitter

- ▶ On Twitter, you can also block users and prevent them following you and their @replies and mentions will not show up in your timeline.
- ▶ Here is Twitter's guide on how to [block users](#)

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Best practice/example posts

Across all platforms, use of relevant images and emoji's will help increase your reach and engagement, as they are visually more appealing than text-only posts. It is also useful to include a link/Call To Action in your posts, if appropriate.

Facebook post



Sands, the stillbirth & neonatal death charity Like Page

Published by Matthew Kiernan [?] · 14 November at 16:00 · 🌐

👉 Volunteering opportunity 👉

We are always after hand knitted or crochet blankets for our Always Loved, Never Forgotten Memory Boxes.

Why not knit for Sands and make a huge difference today!

🔗 <https://www.sands.org.uk/get-inv.../volunteer-sands/knit-sands>

#TeamSands #SandsSuperstars

148,319 People reached | 18,661 Engagements

Emma Gallen, Caroline Rogan and 380 others · 327 Comments 958 shares

Like Comment Share

Twitter post



Sands @SandsUK · Mar 15

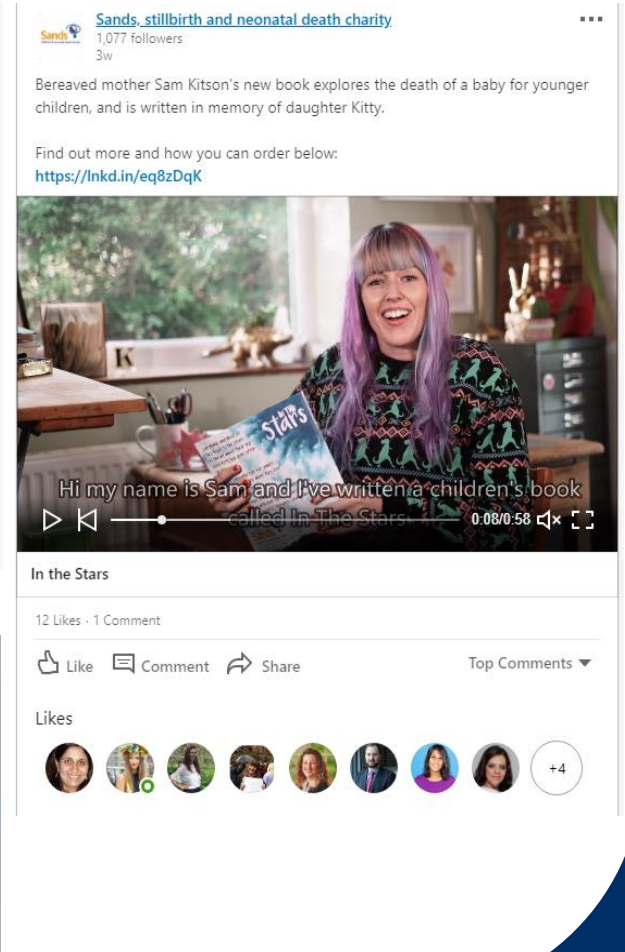
👏 Well done to Josh and the entire crew on @HMSLedbury who have completed an indoor 24 hour row in the Gulf completing a whopping 710 nautical miles 🇬🇧

They've raised over £3000 for us! Amazing efforts guys!

For more info click below 📌
justgiving.com/fundraising/jo...

1000+ Retweets | 1000+ Likes

LinkedIn post



Sands, stillbirth and neonatal death charity 1,077 followers · 3w

Bereaved mother Sam Kitson's new book explores the death of a baby for younger children, and is written in memory of daughter Kitty.

Find out more and how you can order below:
<https://lnkd.in/eq8zDqK>

Hi my name is Sam and I've written a children's book called In The Stars

In the Stars

12 Likes · 1 Comment

Like Comment Share

Likes

Like by essex_sands and 85 others

Instagram post



#FindingTheWords

How do you explain to a three year old that his little sister **has died?**

Bereaved mother, Claire McCann

questions and I mean a lot of some we hadn't even thought of they were the hardest. We was as truthful as we could be to help them understand. He asked about the funeral, why does the body stay on earth if their spirit goes to heaven and more. I'll never forget those questions he had that night x

lucelidd The hardest thing I ever had to see was the haunted look on their faces as my three big boys came to meet their baby brother.

Sands Stillbirth & neonatal death charity



Thank you for reading!