

How to make your social media communications accessible to people with sight loss

R N I B
Scotland

See differently

One in five people aged 75 and over have sight loss and many blind and partially sighted people have comorbidities. It is therefore important that any information relating to the Coronavirus pandemic that you put out on your social media channels to constituents is accessible, giving it the best chance of reaching those at high risk from the virus.

This brief contains simple ways you can make your social media communications accessible to blind and partially sighted constituents.

Social media and websites

Blind and partially sighted people use different tools to read online materials, including screen readers - which read text out loud - and magnification. Screen readers cannot make sense of information in images so avoid sharing any written information as screenshots or images as these are not accessible.

Hashtags

Make sure you capitalise the first letter of every word in a hashtag so screen readers can read them out correctly, and magnification users can see it more clearly. So instead of saying #generalelection, use #GeneralElection.

Image descriptions

Image descriptions ensure the information from your image reaches all your constituents. Websites and social media often offer ways to insert a text description of the image, which can be read out by a screen reader, allowing the viewer to build up a mental picture of the scene.

How to write an image description

Describe broadly what your image shows, thinking about which details are most important to the people you're trying to reach. Example description: [Image description: I'm discussing local issues with constituent Sophie on a bench in a

park. I am a woman dressed casually, Sophie has long brown hair and glasses on.]

How to add your image description

- Twitter Write your tweet and when you add a picture, you'll notice "Add description" pops up in white writing on the bottom right of your image. Click on the button to insert your description.
- Facebook Include a description in the text post accompanying your picture. Write any other text first and then include the description afterwards. Type a square bracket, write "Image description:", describe your image, close the square brackets and then insert your image into the post.
- Instagram Upload your photo and edit it as required. On the caption page, add your caption and then click on "advanced settings" and then "write alt text" (both are at the bottom of the screens). Insert your image description into the alt text section and in square brackets in your caption.
- Websites On most content management systems when you upload an image there is an option to add an image description. Please make sure you always complete this.

Contact

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