



**Beginners Guide to  
Twitter**

**Association of Scottish Community Councils**

## **Getting started**

This guide should help even the most technophobic Community Councillor create a Twitter profile, and furthermore get acquainted with using the social platform to Tweet about their local and wider issues relating to Community Councils across Scotland.

## **What the heck is Twitter?**

To keep it short... Twitter is an instantaneous messaging platform where you are able to share messages or "Tweets" you have written yourself or by others you "Follow". It is kind of like writing a text message or email but it is public and limited to 140 characters or less, and people who follow you on Twitter will see your Tweets. Likewise you will see Tweets from people you follow on Twitter. You can also send Direct Message Tweets to people if you want to keep the message private between the two of you, but only if they are following you. You can't Direct Message people (DM) who aren't following you.

Here is a short video to watch which will help introduce Twitter to you:

<http://bit.ly/wP2pn1> The video was produced in 2008 but still describes very well what Twitter is and what people use it for.

## **What does Twitter do for Businesses and Organisations?**

As an organisation, the ASCC and local Community Councils across Scotland can use Twitter to quickly share information, gather market research and insights, and build relationships with people who care about their community and making a difference. Likewise you will be able to reach more people than before in a quicker way, and you will also be able to encourage more people (who may not have know of the ASCC or Community Councils before) to start getting more involved. Another especially important point is that you can do this via a medium people are using every minute of every day. There is already conversations happening around Scottish Communities and other related areas that the ASCC and Community Councillors across Scotland should be listening to and participating with the users who are Tweeting about such issues.

## Let's Get Started

A step by step walkthrough to create your Twitter profile:

**1. Got to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) and then click sign up.**

2. You will then see 4 tabs to enter information relating to your new account sign up.

a. For full name do not enter your real name (unless it's a personal account) instead it is recommended to enter the community name followed by CC. So as an example: BailliestonCC, AberchirderMarnochCC and so on. Twitter will allow you to create a name like this. So where possible please do so. Note: the full name cannot be changed once created.

b. Enter a preferred email address to receive emails from Twitter. Make sure this address is checked because Twitter will send out a confirmation email to have the account properly activated.

c. For username you can enter the same format as you did for Full name, where possible again of course. Usernames can be changed at any point when a profile has been created.

d. Click "Create my account" and you are finished.

3. You will now have access to your created account.

4. Twitter will try to get you to follow the most popular accounts, just click "skip" located underneath this recommendations section.

5. Making sure you are still signed in and before you do anything else click the head and shoulders icon (top right) which will then drop down further options. Click "settings".

6. Once in settings make sure you:

a. \*Please note to save changes before moving on from different sections within settings.

b. Updated and review the "Account" section.

c. Review "notifications" to decide what emails you want to receive from Twitter (recommended to keep them checked until you are more familiar with Twitter)

d. Update the "profile" section. Profile photo or image, location, website, and bio should be completed.

e. Next head to "Design" where you can select a background of your own to use or upload a photo appropriate for use with your community council profile if you wish. There are basic Twitter backgrounds and this is not a necessity.

7. Once you do this you should check your email for the account verification email from Twitter. Follow the instructions within this email.

8. Once you have done this you are ready to start interacting with people on Twitter.

9. Find and follow the ASCC profile – find the search bar at the top of the page. Then type in `_ASCC_` and you will have a result of the search displayed. Most likely (if done correctly) the ASCC profile will have been returned. Click on our profile, and click follow. You are now following the official ASCC profile and are probably your first account followed on Twitter.

10. Search for other users by location, interests, news, names, political party, and other relevant terms to you and the wider Community Council organisation.

## Getting into it

Twitter can be a bit more cumbersome to get used to than other social platforms but once you get used to the interface it will become very easy to use. Here are some key terms that will keep you right when you get going:

**A “mention”** – other Twitter users can mention an account in their Tweets by preceding it with the `@` symbol. For example, if directly tweeting the ASCC account it would be “`@_ASCC_ hello!`” or “`@_ASCC_ glad the meeting with the ... went well`”

**A “retweet”** – when you see a tweet by another user that you want to share click Retweet to forward it to your own followers instantly. Likewise other users can do this for your tweets so try to make it interesting and compelling!

**A “direct message”** – to privately tweet a particular user who is already following you, just start your tweet with a DM or D to direct message them. For example “D `@_ASCC_ hello!`”

**A “hashtag”**- users often prepend `#` to (i.e. stick `#` on the front of) words in their Tweets to categorise them for others. For example, take a look at the latest news on communities across Scotland `#Communitycouncils`. You might also see numerous other hashtags – there are thousands. But not all are appropriate for use. It depends on your organisations goals and relevance.

## And Finally...

The best way to learn about Twitter is to use it. Software exists to make this a little easier such as Tweetdeck and Hootsuite. Free versions exist for both and tutorials can be found online to teach you how they can help you manage your Twitter profiles.