

Street Support Network: Marketing Guide for Locations



Introduction

Welcome to the Street Support Network's Marketing Guide for Locations! This guide is here to help you effectively market your Street Support location with a focus on achieving four key objectives:

1. Connect with individuals who could benefit from your location's services.
2. Inform frontline workers about the advantages of using your Street Support site.
3. Enhance collaboration within your local homelessness sector.
4. Encourage more help organisations to get listed under your location.

Whether you're new to promoting your site or looking to enhance your current strategies, this guide offers practical and low-cost approaches to increase your visibility. It aims to provide straightforward, actionable steps and tips that anyone can follow to reach a wider audience, engage with the community, and forge strong partnerships.

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Key messaging

As a charity, our communication is all about being clear and friendly, making sure that people not only hear about our services but also feel welcomed to use them. Here's why it's important to get our messaging right:

- Clarity and simplicity: we want everyone to quickly understand what we offer and how it can help them.
- Engagement and sharing: we aim to speak in a way that grabs attention and makes people want to tell others about us.
- Consistency builds trust: when our messages are consistent, people start to see us as reliable and trustworthy.

In the homelessness sector, where many loud voices discuss politics and advice, it's important to maintain a clear set of key messages. If you ever find yourself unsure of what to say, come back to these. Consistent, simple messaging will help your audience quickly grasp what Street Support Network does and how we make a difference.

Now, let's break down what we want to say:

Help is out there in [your location]

If you're facing tough times, remember, you're not alone. We're here to connect you to local support.

Finding help, easily and locally

We make finding help straightforward. All the local support services are in one place, easy to find and easy to use.

Helping the helpers

We help local organisations do more good by making it easier for them to work together, share resources, and avoid doing the same work twice.

A trusted hub for homelessness services

Think of Street Support [your location] as your go-to place for finding help. We've tailored our resources to fit what our community needs, making everything simpler.

Championing partnerships and collaboration

We're all about teamwork. By bringing organisations together and sharing what works, we make sure everyone who needs help gets the best possible support.

Driving digital transformation for social good

We use the latest digital tools to make our services better and smarter. This means better support for you, faster and more efficiently.

With these messages, you'll be all set to spread the word about your Street Support location in a way that's easy to understand and hard to ignore.

Tone of voice

Here's an overview of how we write internally, on social media, email, newsletters and blog posts.

It should be pretty easy to get the hang of because there's really just one easy rule to follow:
we write how we talk.

Why do we need a tone of voice?

There's actually quite a few reasons!

We believe in what we do, and the words that we use are the quickest way of showing people what we stand for. Every word adds up to create a perception of us in people's heads.

Homelessness is a complex and sensitive topic. If the way we talk confuses, frustrates or offends someone, we could lose them. Whether it's someone who supports us, or someone who needs our help. Ours is a noisy sector. We don't have the biggest presence or the most people shouting so we need to make sure what we say can hold its own in standing out from the crowd.

How should I be writing?

Good writing is empathetic. Thinking carefully about the people you're addressing should be something you put thought into every time. Try writing as though the person you're communicating with is standing in front of you and you're both holding a cup of tea. Use the language they use, use terms they understand.

Not enough people know what we do, so let's make it easy for them to explain who we are to the next person they have a cup of tea with.

We can start to do this by cutting out formal dialect and professional jargon wherever possible. We are kind, friendly and warm people, so why should our writing sound disengaged and faceless? It just doesn't make sense.

The best way to get a feel for what's right is to read aloud what you've written, does it sound natural? If not, don't worry, this stuff has been programmed into us. A good place to start may be looking at word substitutions. Are you using words that could be switched for simpler ones that would sound more like a real life conversation?

Instead of

Query	Question
Request	Ask
Require	Need
Resolve	Fix
Utilise	Use
Therefore	So
Provide	Give
However	But

Try

Try to keep sentences under 20 words. We're all human and we're all busy. Shorter sentences are easier for us to scan and digest - and easier to understand for people who struggle with reading or have cognitive disabilities.

Research shows that when a sentence is 14 words, your reader will typically understand 90% of it! But when a sentence is 43 words, they'll typically understand less than 10%.

The trick isn't to sit there counting every word you write. We vary the length of our sentences when we talk. So you'll see where you'd naturally pause or take a breath when you read it out loud. Reflecting that in our writing makes us sound more human, and helps with rhythm too.

If in doubt, bring it back to basics: Simple and sensitive. Friendly and kind.

Read what you've written aloud and ask, 'does this sound like me?'

Where can I find examples of writing in the SSN tone of voice?

We make a real effort to write like we talk - in emails, blogposts, newsletters and across our social media platforms, so if you'd like to see examples in the wild, why not have a browse of our:

[Facebook page](#)

[LinkedIn profile](#)

[Bluesky profile](#)

[Newsletter archives](#)

It's also worth checking out the AI section of this guide for more help on choosing the right language... and if you're still unsure if a piece of writing is in our tone of voice? [I'm just an email away](#).

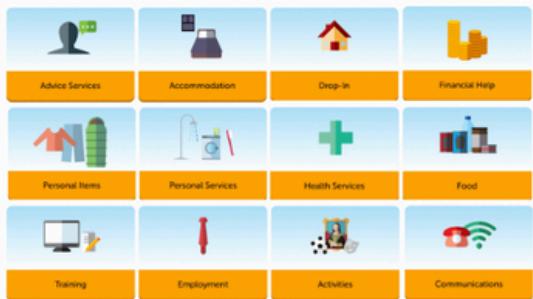
Imagery guidelines

Social media posts with images are a lot more engaging than those without. Every image we put out is a chance to make a connection with someone. We want to put out images that stop people scrolling and get them clicking through to your Street Support site. That's why on the Street Support Network social media accounts, each post we write comes with an accompanying image.

What we DO:

- Choose simplicity and impact: On social media, our preference is clean and compelling graphics with clear, concise messaging.
- Use Ethical and Respectful Imagery: If you want to use photos, opt for high-quality, non-stereotypical images that respect the dignity of all individuals, like those available from the [Centre for Homelessness Impact's Free Image Library](#). Building on [evidence relating to the reinforcing effect of negative images of homelessness](#), the library holds images that offer an alternative to the overused images of single middle-aged men sleeping in doorways, and instead capture a wider breadth of experiences of homelessness in the UK, including families living in hostels, young people in bed and breakfast accommodation and people who are sofa surfing.

How can we help?



What we AVOID:

- Images that reinforce stereotypes: Avoid clichéd images that don't fully represent the bigger picture of homelessness, such as people sleeping on streets. Images like this are problematic for a few different reasons - they're often unconsensual, they add to the stigma of homelessness = bad choices, and importantly for us, may also not resonate with people we're trying to reach, people who are not yet in crisis.
- Overly dramatic visuals: Choose uplifting images that inspire hope and action, rather than ones that portray despair.

My rule for this kind of thing is if you're unsure then it's a no. You can always reach out to me at mara@streetsupport.net for another opinion.

Leveraging free resources

Canva for Non-Profits: As a non-profit, you can access [a free premium Canva account](#) which is a design platform ideal for non-designers. It offers a simple way to create good quality visuals that can help communicate your message effectively.

Sharing and collaboration

Reuse Our Content: You are very welcome to repost images directly from our page. Feel free to use what we share to enhance your own messaging and outreach.

Custom Requests: If you need something more tailored, don't hesitate to get in touch. I'm here to collaborate and create visuals that meet your specific needs.

Social media strategy

Platform recommendations

While the choice of social media platforms is entirely up to you, we recommend starting with Facebook as the most effective platform for your Street Support location. This is because Facebook is community-rooted, and offers the opportunity to engage with local groups. You can share updates, services, and information in local Facebook groups, which increases visibility and connection with people in your area.

In addition to Facebook, Nextdoor is great for local connection, as it focuses on neighbourhoods, helping you engage directly with the local community. It's also a great place to post about resources, offer support, and encourage individuals to reach out.

Other locations have a presence on Bluesky, LinkedIn, X and Instagram. Have a chat with Mara about your objectives and she can advise you if it's worth your location being on these platforms.

Just a note to say, we've decided to stop using X (formerly Twitter) because it doesn't align with our core values of empathy, support, and community.

Content creation and interaction

To build a strong and engaging social media presence, we suggest dedicating a few hours a week to creating content, responding to messages, and interacting with your audience. Here's how you can effectively manage your social media presence:

- Create content: regularly post relevant content, such as organisation updates, local news stories, behind the scenes content, and resources available for your community.
- Engage with followers: respond to comments with your established tone of voice - friendly, clear, and supportive.
- Ask questions: encourage your followers to interact with posts by asking questions, such as, "What kind of support do you think is most needed in our community?" or "Have you or someone you know found Street Support [Location] helpful?"
- Share relevant content: share posts from local organisations or government services that align with Street Support Network's mission, keeping your followers informed.

Building your audience

When building your audience, remember to focus on several key groups that align with your Street Support location's goals:

- Members of the public: regular people who might need help now or in the future, or who want to support others.
- Homelessness organisations: connect with organisations that can benefit from listing their services on your Street Support site. Share how the platform can help reduce duplication and increase service access.
- Frontline community organisations: partner with and engage community-based organisations such as:
 - Local churches – these often have outreach programs for people at risk of homelessness.
 - GP surgeries – GPs can be a key point of contact for individuals in need of support.
 - Food banks – many people in need of homelessness support also rely on food banks.
 - Community centres – places where people gather for various services and activities.
 - Local schools – schools can play an important role in identifying young people at risk and providing access to early support.

By building relationships with these groups, you can ensure that your Street Support location becomes a recognised and trusted part of the local support network.

Setting up your profiles

To make sure your social media accounts are as effective as possible, it's important to have clear, engaging profile images, bios, and cover photos.

- Profile and cover images: Your profile images should reflect the branding of your Street Support location. When you're at this stage, get in touch with Mara and she'll design them for you.
- Bios: your bios should be clear and welcoming, briefly describing the purpose of your Street Support location and encouraging people to visit the website for more information or to access services. Mara can help you draft your bio - again, just reach out!

Establishing your profiles

As you plan your posts, here are a few best practices to keep in mind:

- Be consistent: post regularly to maintain visibility and stay connected with your audience. You don't have to post daily, but consistency is key.
- Focus on local issues: tailor your content to reflect local needs and concerns, making it relevant to your community.
- Highlight resources: spotlight local organisations, Street Support resources and new local initiatives.
- Use strong calls to action: encourage people to visit your Street Support site.

Talking TO and WITH your social media audience

Here's a bunch of different ideas in case you're stuck on what to post. It's a mix of ways to keep people in the loop (talking to your audience) and ways to encourage interaction or be part of the conversation (talking with your audience).

As you plan your posts, go back to the key messages in the first section of this guide. These should be the foundation for everything you share - your content doesn't need to repeat them word-for-word, but it should always reflect the values and priorities behind Street Support's work.

Ideas for Talking To Your Audience:

These types of posts help keep people up to date with what you're doing and why it matters.

- Share what Street Support Network is – not everyone will know what the platform does or how it works. Explain what Street Support Network is, who it's for, and how people can use it to find help or offer support. Keep it simple and consistent.
- News within your organisation – share important updates, changes in staff or services, funding wins, or upcoming events.
- News within your local network – shine a light on what's happening around you. Share how local collaboration is working.
- Sector news, and why it's important – break down new reports, policy changes, or headlines and explain what they mean locally.
- Talk about who you are – introduce team members, share your values, or show a bit of your daily work.

- Talk about your mission – be clear and proud about what you’re here to do.
- Reflecting on your work and achievements – share wins, challenges, and what you’ve learned.
- Behind the scenes content – show the human side of your work—whether it’s prepping for an event or settling down with a cuppa to update organisations’ details.
- Street Support Network updates – let people know about changes to the website, new features, or how to use the platform to find or offer help.

Ideas for Talking With Your Audience:

These posts help you interact, build relationships, and show you’re listening.

- Posing questions and polls to your social network – ask for thoughts, ideas, or feedback on anything relevant to your Street Support location
- Sharing others’ posts – amplify voices from your area and across the sector.
- Sharing others’ media – repost videos, articles, or interviews - especially those sharing lived experience or practical insights.
- Celebrating others’ wins – highlight the good things happening, whether that’s partners, volunteers, or the people you support.
- Promoting others’ initiatives – share events, campaigns, or services that align with Street Support’s mission.
- Inviting your social network’s questions and ideas – let people know they can comment or message with suggestions.
- Joining in with conversations being had by others – comment, reply, use hashtags - get involved in what’s already going on.

No need to overthink it. Start with one or two ideas from each list and build from there. The more you post, the easier it gets.

If you’d like to have a go at creating some content for your social media before you start posting, we’re more than happy to look at it and offer any further advice and guidance. [Just get in touch!](#)

How to get help from AI

We're not saying you have to, but we find using AI really useful in our day to day work and wanted to share how it might be able to help you in your marketing efforts. From brainstorming ideas to refining content, here's how you could use AI to support your social media and content creation efforts.

Brainstorming ideas for content

One of the most valuable things AI can do is help you brainstorm creative ideas for content that resonates with your audience. Whether you're posting on social media or drafting materials, ChatGPT or another similar model can help generate a list of ideas based on your goals and target audience.

How ChatGPT Can Help:

- Social media post ideas: if you're unsure what to post, you can provide a brief overview of your goals (e.g. promoting local partnerships, encouraging organisations to sign up, raising awareness of homelessness prevention), and ChatGPT can suggest engaging content ideas tailored to your audience.

Example prompt: "Can you suggest some social media post ideas that promote Street Support [Location] as a resource for people at risk of homelessness?"

- Content idea generation: if you're looking to create blog content, ChatGPT can help generate topics or approaches based on your location's unique needs.

Example prompt: "Can you suggest some content ideas for raising awareness of the prevention-first approach in [Location]?"

Getting content written

Once you have a content idea, ChatGPT can help draft your content quickly and efficiently, freeing up your time for other tasks. Whether it's a short social media post or a longer piece of content, ChatGPT can generate initial drafts.

How ChatGPT Can Help:

- Social media posts: Provide a brief description of what you want to communicate, and ChatGPT can generate a social media post that fits your tone and messaging. You can also specify which platform the post is for, and ChatGPT will adjust the language and length accordingly.

Example prompt: "Please write a Facebook post encouraging local organisations to sign up to Street Support [location] and fill in their service listings."

Inputting tone of voice as a prompt

To ensure that your content aligns with Street Support Network's tone of voice, you can provide ChatGPT with specific instructions. This ensures the output is friendly, supportive, professional and sounds like us.

How ChatGPT Can Help:

Provide tone prompts: let ChatGPT know the tone you're aiming for by summarising our tone of voice, such as "friendly, clear, and compassionate." You can also paste examples from previous communications.

Example: "Write a post using a warm, supportive tone that encourages people to visit Street Support [Location] to find local help. The tone should be friendly and approachable."

Adjusting Tone: If a draft isn't quite right, you can ask ChatGPT to adjust the tone to match your needs, whether you want it more formal, lighthearted, or conversational.

Top tip:

You could even copy and paste the Tone of Voice section of this guide straight into ChatGPT, and it will use it as a guide to craft content that matches the Street Support Network style!

But remember to check anything that Chat GPT comes up with yourself. Read it aloud and ask, does it sound like me?

The Street Support Marketing Assistant (Powered by ChatGPT)

Okay here's where it gets really exciting (or maybe that's just for geeky marketers like me!)

If you're not sure where to start with ChatGPT or want a version that already understands what Street Support Network is all about, we've got you covered.

The Street Support Marketing Assistant is a custom-built version of ChatGPT made just for whoever is in charge of marketing your Street Support location.

It's been trained on all the key communications resources, like the Marketing Guide for Locations, the Tone of Voice Guide, the 2025 Communications Strategy, and example content from across the network. It knows the Street Support Network voice inside out, and it's here to make your life easier.

What it can help with:

- Explaining and introducing Street Support Network: it writes clear, human-friendly content explaining what Street Support Network is, who it's for, and how it helps. It can tailor posts to your local context and use a tone that builds trust.
- Establishing and managing social media: it can suggest which platforms to use, how to set them up, write bios, suggest hashtags like #FindHelp and #SupportNotShame, and build post ideas or full content calendars.
- Creating impactful content: it can write about services, partnerships, prevention, or whatever you need. Whether you want something informative, celebratory, or serious, it will keep things aligned with Street Support Network's tone of voice.
- Building community and engagement: it can suggest ways to get people talking and connecting, such as through polls, volunteer spotlights, team introductions, and behind-the-scenes posts.
- Supporting long-term strategy: it helps track trends, respond to what's working, and stay aligned with national campaigns.
- Writing calls to action: a strong call to action encourages people to take the next step. ChatGPT can suggest effective CTAs for social media posts, emails and blogs. Example: "Can you write a call to action encouraging people to visit Street Support [Location] to find help?"
- Proofreading and editing: ChatGPT can assist in improving the clarity of your content, ensuring it's error-free and consistent with your message. You can ask for feedback on drafts to make sure the tone and structure are on point. Remember - always check it yourself, too!

Who it's for:

- All our locations! We see it being particularly useful for locations who are just getting started on their marketing efforts.
- Volunteers or part-time coordinators juggling multiple roles.
- Anyone who wants to communicate more clearly and effectively about homelessness support.

The goal is to make it quicker and easier for you to connect people to help, build trust locally, and stay consistent with the national message.

If you want to give the Marketing Assistant a try, [just click here!](#)

Important Note: The Human Touch

While ChatGPT can provide a great starting point, it's important to finish content creation with a human touch. Use ChatGPT's suggestions and drafts as a foundation—but don't forget to proofread and apply your personal judgement. Fine-tune the content, ensuring information is correct and true to our mission.

Low-to-No Budget Outreach Plan

You don't need a big budget to make a big impact. The most effective outreach often comes down to local knowledge, trusted relationships, and making support visible where it is needed most.

This section of our guide offers practical, low-cost ways to spread the word about your Street Support location through folks on the frontline, community spaces, and everyday places where people at risk of homelessness already go. It's all about meeting people where they are and making help easy to find.

Helping Frontline Workers Signpost with Confidence

Job Centres and Employment Support Services

- Business cards (downloadable resources at the end of this section!) at reception desks and with work coaches so job seekers can easily access your Street Support site.
- Posters in staff areas so advisors can refer to Street Support Network when helping claimants.

GP Surgeries, Pharmacies and Mental Health Services

- Posters displayed in waiting rooms for both staff and patients.
- Email practice managers encouraging them to share your Street Support site with their teams.

Libraries and Digital Access Points

- Posters near public computers where people are likely to search for help.
- Email or talk to library staff about Street Support Network so they can signpost people to support.

Housing Officers and Local Council Services

- Posters in housing offices and homelessness prevention teams.
- Ask your local council to feature info about your Street Support site in newsletters and staff bulletins.
- Offer training sessions or briefing emails to make sure housing teams know how to use the platform.

Food Banks and Community Centres

- Business cards included in food parcels if possible.
- Posters placed on noticeboards and near waiting areas.
- Get in touch via email with staff and volunteers so they can guide people to your Street Support site.

Hostels and Emergency Accommodation

- Posters displayed in shared spaces where residents can easily see them.
- Business cards given to support workers for quick reference when signposting.

Making Sure People in Need Can Find Us

Not everyone knows where to turn when they are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. This section focuses on helping people come across your Street Support site in everyday places. These small moments of visibility can guide someone to help without them having to ask.

Job Centres and Public Services

- Business cards available at reception desks for people to take away.
- Posters in waiting rooms where people have time to read.
- Encourage advisors to mention Street Support Network as a standard part of their appointments.

Public Transport Hubs

- Posters placed in bus and train stations where people might seek shelter.
- QR code stickers in bus stop shelters directing people to the Find Help page on your Street Support site.

Laundrettes, Public Toilets and Shopping Centres

- Small QR code stickers placed discreetly in washrooms or near community noticeboards.
- Posters on local community boards in supermarkets, launderettes, and cafés where people might linger.

Places of Worship

- Posters and business cards placed in churches, mosques, gurdwaras, and synagogues.
- Encourage faith leaders to raise awareness of Street Support Network with their congregations or community groups.

Digital and No-Cost Ways to Spread the Word

These methods are free or very low cost and can help build visibility over time. Consistency and community partnerships are key.

Social Media and Community Groups

- Share Street Support [Location] in local Facebook and WhatsApp groups where people seek support or share community resources.
- Reach out to local charities and councils to post about your Street Support site on their social media channels.

Email and Internal Networks

- Send explainer emails to key local organisations, encouraging them to share internally with staff.
- Ask to be included in local community and charity newsletters.
- Reach out to large local employers such as supermarkets or delivery companies to share information about Street Support Network with employees who may be struggling.

Digital Screens and Local Ad Space

- Request space on free digital screens in GP surgeries, community centres, or council buildings to display Street Support Network information.
- Ask supermarkets, job centres, or local shopping centres if they can include your Street Support site on their public information screens.

Resources

[Help is Out There poster](#)

[Help is Out There 'business cards'](#)

[Help is Out There stickers](#)

Please do [get in touch](#) for personalised versions of the above for your Street Support location.

Measuring Success

To make sure your outreach is truly reaching the people who need it, you can track what's working and where there's room to improve. Measuring success doesn't have to be complicated. It's about listening to your community, reviewing your digital presence, and learning from the responses you get, both online and offline.

Social Media Metrics

Social media is a powerful way to understand what messages are landing well with your audience. Here are some things to keep an eye on:

- Engagement rate: look at likes, comments, shares and overall interactions. A high engagement rate means your content is connecting and helping you reach more people.
- Click-through rate (CTR): track how often people are clicking on links in your posts, especially ones that lead to your Street Support site. A higher CTR means your content is prompting action.
- Follower growth: keep an eye on how your follower count grows over time. A steady increase suggests your message is reaching new audiences and building momentum.
- Sentiment analysis: notice the tone of comments and messages. Are the responses generally positive? Are people raising concerns or sharing useful feedback? This can help you shape your future messaging.

Community Feedback from Outreach Materials

It's not all about numbers. Some of the most useful insights come from real conversations. Once your materials are out there, check in with people. Make contacts, stay in touch and ask how things are landing.

- Chat to people: whether it's local partners, frontline workers or community groups, ask if they've seen your posters or leaflets, if they think they're useful, and if they've got any suggestions. Build this feedback into your relationships. It helps you improve your outreach and shows you're listening.
- Listen for word of mouth: are more people mentioning Street Support Network? Are partners saying they've had more people coming through after seeing your materials? These kinds of insights are a good sign your message is spreading.

By keeping your focus local, making help easy to find and measuring what matters, you can grow awareness of your Street Support location and help more people get the support they need. You don't need a big budget. Start simple, build trust and keep listening to your community. That's how we make real change, together.