

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AND CITIZEN SCIENCE**

Your water quality testing is not just about collecting data – it’s about raising awareness, inspiring action, and engaging your local community. Social media is a powerful tool to share your findings, highlight pollution issues, and push for change. By sharing your journey, you can educate your local community and bring them onboard your campaigns. This could be as simple as getting them to sign a petition, or it could be recruiting for your bathing water campaign.

It’s also an important means to hold polluters and policymakers accountable, and amplify your campaign’s impact. Below, you’ll find some ideas for content, a template content planner, and suggested captions you can steal.

### **SETTING UP SOCIAL MEDIA**

If you’ve not yet set up your social media but you want to, here are some useful how-to guides:

- [How To Create A New Instagram Account - Full Guide](#)
- [A Step-by-Step Guide on How to Create a Facebook Group](#)

(Please do email [wildwaters@sas.org.uk](mailto:wildwaters@sas.org.uk) for any support too)

## **CONTENT IDEAS**

Here are some suggested content ideas:

### **Your testing in action**

- Take photos or short videos of your team collecting water samples.
- Show the testing equipment and process
- Videos are a great option here as they're really engaging. You can do mini-explainers, talking about what you're looking for and why
- Photos of your team testing all year round
- 'Meet the team' posts: short videos or a photo with a caption about the team member and why they wanted to get involved

### **Your findings**

- Share photos or graphs of your test results, along with an explanation of the impact
- You can compare your results with previous weeks or with official data, such as rainfall and sewage alerts (if available).

### **Impact on your community**

- Post photos or videos of polluted water to highlight issues – these are usually really interesting to wider communities
- Interview local swimmers, paddlers, or fishermen about how pollution affects them. You could even put questions up asking if anyone has been sick, and share those stories
- Share stories of how your testing has led to action or awareness, such as someone finding out about the water quality and then emailing their MP or downloading the Safer Seas and Rivers Service
- Encourage participation by asking followers to comment with their experiences of local water pollution.
- Collaborate and work with local groups, schools, or environmental campaigns to widen your reach. You can make posts collaborative, so they're shared on both groups' channels simultaneously, which is a great way to have double the impact. And do tag Surfers Against Sewage!

### **Call to action**

Be clear about how anyone seeing this can take action. This could be as simple as encouraging people to follow your page for updates, or getting in touch to get involved.

You can also direct them to relevant petitions or events, either yours or more national ones. And if you're calling out polluters, like water companies, or engaging with your MP or regulator, you can ask them to respond.

## SUGGESTED CAPTIONS & TEMPLATES

*“We’re out testing the water at [location] today! Our citizen science project helps monitor pollution and protect our waterways. Stay tuned for results. #EndSewagePollution”*

*“Here are the latest water quality results for [location]. The bacteria levels are [explain results]. What does this mean? [Brief interpretation]. We need [campaign goal], to protect our waterways. You can get involved by [call to action]”*

*“Did you know only 14% of UK rivers have ‘good’ ecological status. We’re testing down at [location] to understand how pollution is impacting the health of us and all the wildlife, so we can fight for better protection for the waters we swim, surf, paddle and play in. If you want to get involved, here’s what you can do: [call to action]”*

*“Our latest water quality test at [location] found [pollution issue]. We need action NOW. [@localMP/@watercompany] – what are you doing to fix this? #ActNow #EndSewagePollution”*

### Template: social media content planner

If you want to plan in advance, we’ve included a simple planner below. This can be a useful way to get your team together to brainstorm and map out suggested copy and images. Anyone who has access to your group can then post it, but we recommend having one or two people who lead on running the social media campaign.

Date	Post Type	Key Message	Media (Photo/Video)	Call to Action

## **FINAL TIPS**

- Keep it simple. Not everyone is a scientist so explain things in everyday language where you can.
- Be visual, as posts with strong imagery get more engagement.
- Post consistently. Even small updates help keep momentum!
- Engage lots by replying to comments and messages, to build a community.
- Make sure you get permission before sharing photos of people on social media, if they're clearly recognizable. If you'd like a consent form, we have one we can share.

### **Sharing your content with Surfers Against Sewage**

We'd love to share your stories on our own social media too! We've put together a Google drive where you can share your photos and videos:

[Click here to go to the Google Drive.](#)

Please do share any pictures or videos of your testing (and you have permission to share). Just make sure your groups name is in the file name so we know who to credit!