



GUIDE TO USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS

Social media can be a great place to promote local volunteering opportunities.

This document has been created to provide guidance on using a new suite of templates and resources to promote your local volunteering opportunities, predominantly through social media (such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).

It includes:

- an outline of what tools are available and how to use them
- using imagery and your own photos
- further support and advice.

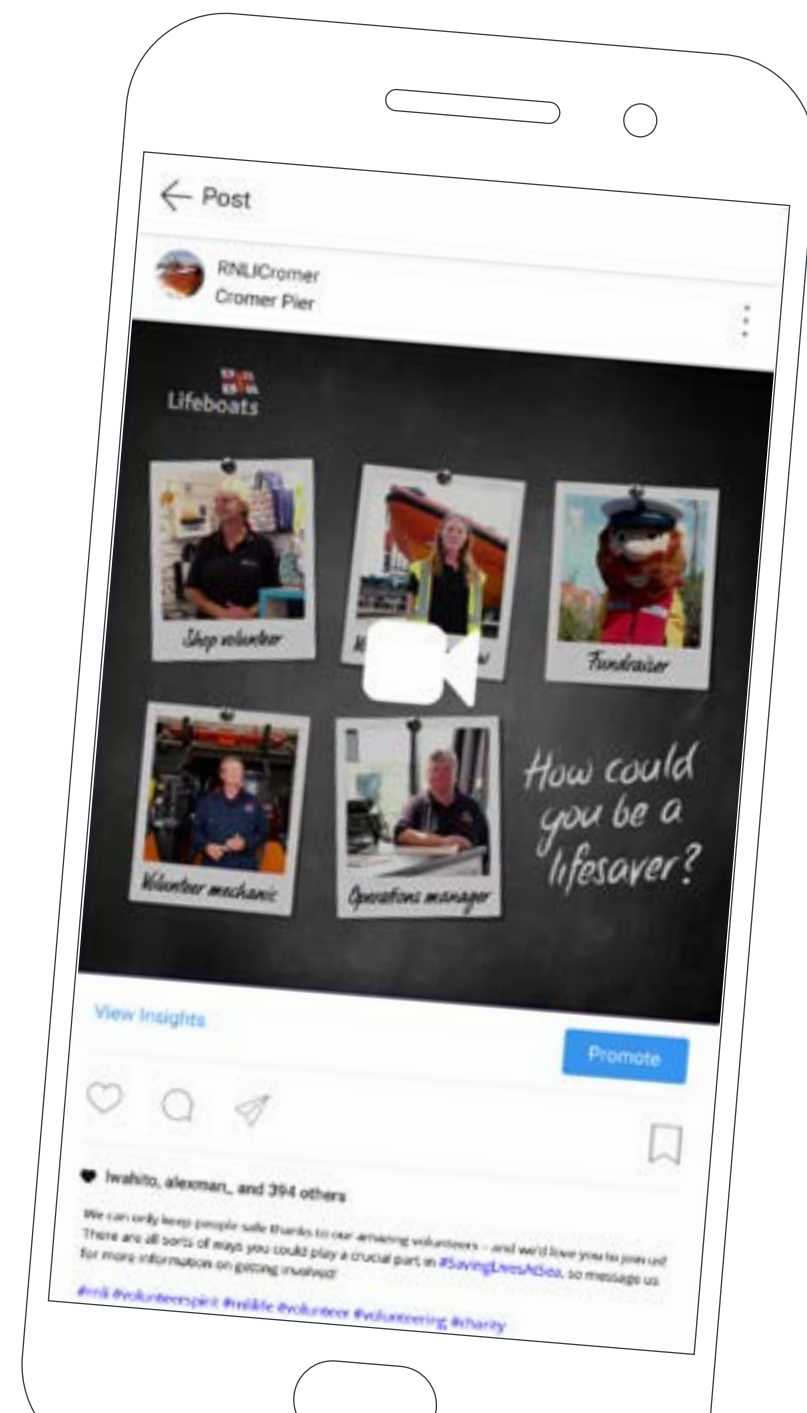
As well as social media, it's also important to consider other ways to raise awareness of a volunteering opportunity; the best way will vary by role and location.

Further information on promoting volunteering opportunities more generally can be found at [RNLI.org/VolunteerManagerResources](https://www.rnli.org/VolunteerManagerResources) in the 'Recruitment and Selection' section or by contacting the Volunteering Team on volunteering@rnli.org.uk.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

- this guide
- a Word document that includes template posts that can be locally tailored for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- a volunteering video that can be used with a number of the posts
- a template press release
- an image consent form.

These can all be found at [RNLI.org/VolunteerManagerResources](https://www.rnli.org/VolunteerManagerResources) in the 'Recruitment and Selection' section.

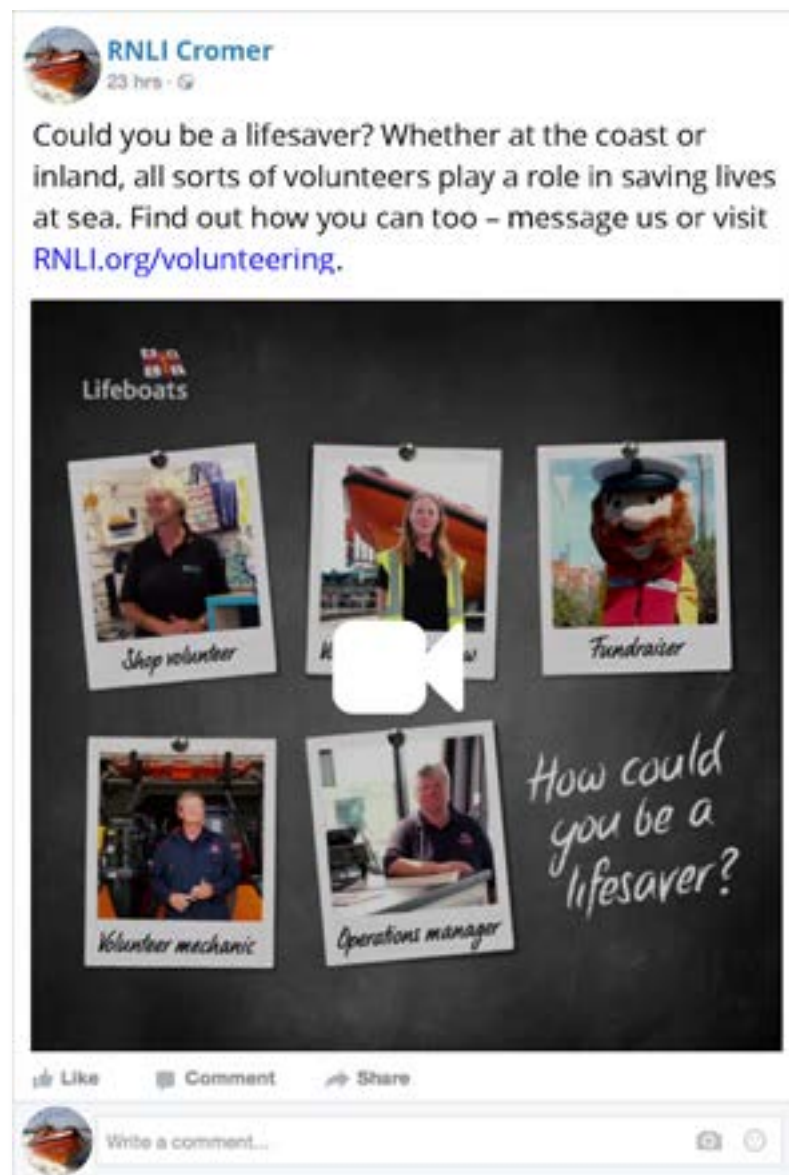


SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATE POSTS:

FACEBOOK

Generic role (video)

Could you be a lifesaver?
Whether at the coast or inland,
all sorts of volunteers play a
role in saving lives at sea.
Find out how you can too –
message us or visit <URL>.



SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATE POSTS:

FACEBOOK

Tailored role (video)

We can only keep people safe thanks to our amazing volunteers – and we'd love you to join us! Give us your time as a <insert role and place if necessary> and you'll play a crucial part in saving lives at sea. Message us or visit <URL>.

Note: For URL insert the URL from the specific role on the volunteering website.

The image shows a Facebook post from RNLI Cromer, posted 23 hours ago. The text of the post reads: "We can only keep people safe thanks to our amazing volunteers – and we'd love you to join us! Give us your time as a shop volunteer at our pier shop and you'll play a crucial part in saving lives at sea. Message us or visit <https://volunteering.rnli.org/vacancy/volunteer-shop-manager-lowestoft-366358.html>." Below the text is a video thumbnail with a play button icon. The video content is a collage of polaroid photos on a chalkboard background. The photos are labeled: "Shop volunteer", "Fundraiser", "Volunteer mechanic", and "Operations manager". A handwritten note on the chalkboard asks "How could you be a lifesaver?". The video player interface shows "Like", "Comment", and "Share" buttons, and a comment input field at the bottom.

SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATE POSTS:

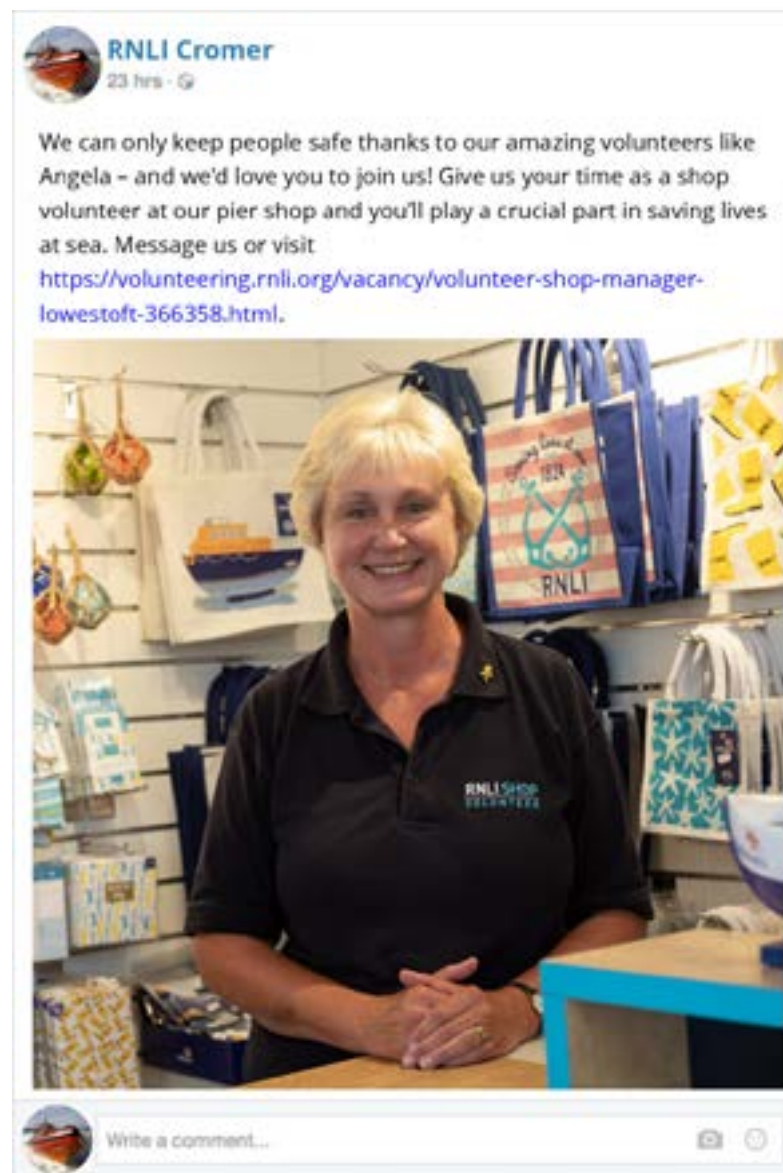
FACEBOOK

Tailored role (photo)

We can only keep people safe thanks to our amazing volunteers like <insert first name> – and we'd love you to join us! Give us your time as a <insert role and place if necessary> and you'll play a crucial part in saving lives at sea. Message us or visit <URL>.

Note: Images here are illustrative. For photography, please try to source local volunteers and show diversity that represents your community.

For URL insert the URL from the specific role on the volunteering website.

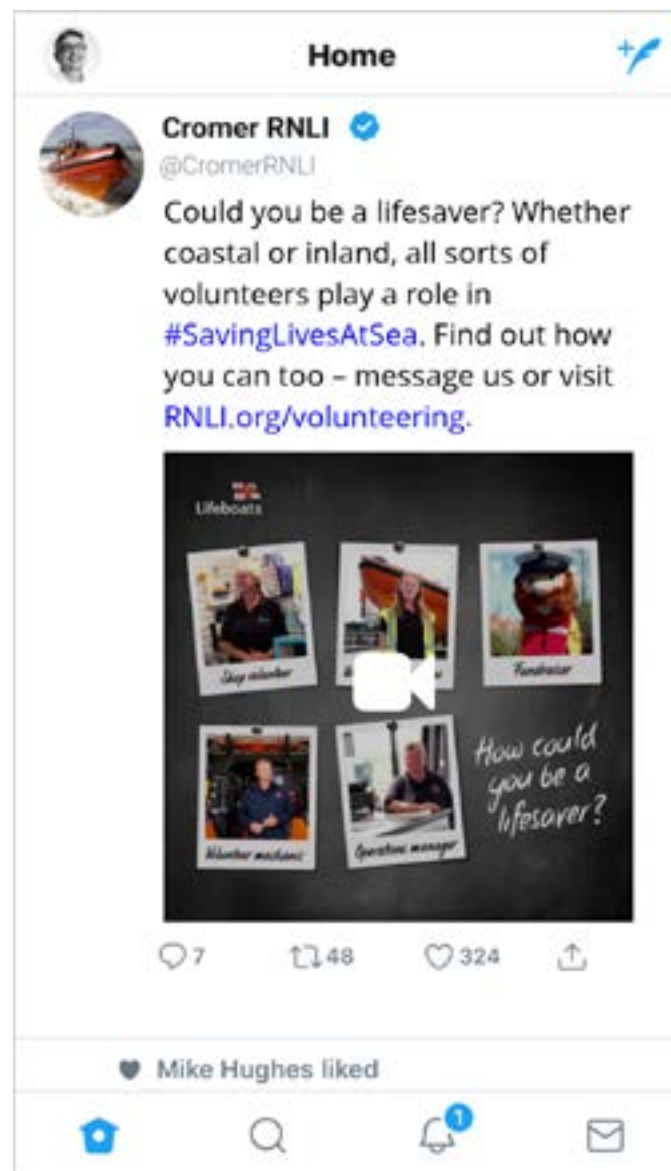


SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATE POSTS:

TWITTER

Generic role (video)

Could you be a lifesaver?
Whether coastal or inland, all sorts of volunteers play a role in [#SavingLivesAtSea](#). Find out how you can too – message us or visit [<URL>](#).



SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATE POSTS:

TWITTER

Tailored role (photo)

<At/Across place/region> we can only keep people safe thanks to our amazing volunteers – and we'd love you to join us! Give us your time as a <insert role> and you'll play a crucial part in [#SavingLivesAtSea](#). Message us or visit <URL>.

Note: Images here are illustrative. For photography, please try to source local volunteers and show diversity that represents your community.

For URL insert the URL from the specific role on the volunteering website.



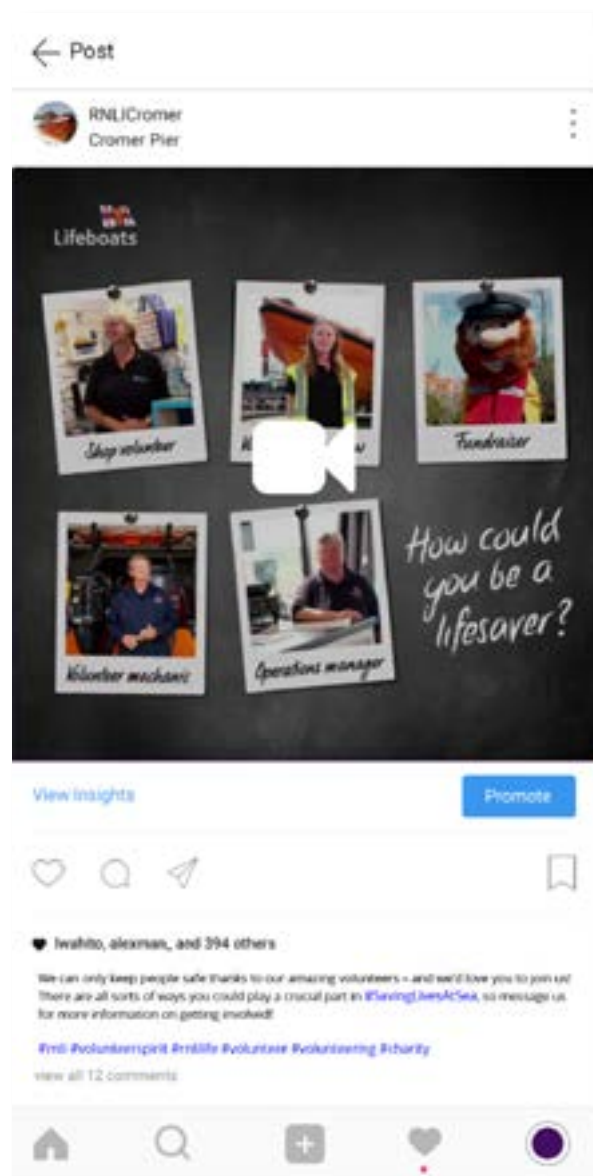
SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATE POSTS:

INSTAGRAM

Generic role (video)

We can only keep people safe thanks to our amazing volunteers – and we'd love you to join us! There are all sorts of ways you could play a crucial part in [#SavingLivesAtSea](#), so message us for more information on getting involved!

[#RNLI](#) [#volunteerspirit](#) [#RNLIlife](#)
[#volunteer](#) [#volunteering](#)
[#charity](#)



SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATE POSTS:

INSTAGRAM

Generic role (photo)

We can only keep people safe thanks to our amazing volunteers like these – and we'd love you to join us! There are all sorts of ways you could play a crucial part in [#SavingLivesAtSea](#), so message us for more information on getting involved!

[#RNLI](#) [#volunteerspirit](#) [#RNLIlife](#)
[#volunteer](#) [#volunteering](#) [#charity](#)

Note: Images here are illustrative.

For photography, please try to source local volunteers and show diversity that represents your community.



SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATE POSTS:

INSTAGRAM

Generic role (photo)

<Insert first name> pictured serving another happy customer in his role as an RNLI shop volunteer. We can only keep people safe thanks to our amazing volunteers like <insert first name> – and we'd love you to join us! There are all sorts of ways you could play a crucial part in [#SavingLivesAtSea](#), so message us for more information on getting involved.

[#RNLI](#) [#volunteerspirit](#) [#RNLIlife](#)
[#volunteer](#) [#volunteering](#) [#charity](#)

Note: Images here are illustrative. For photography, please try to source local volunteers and show diversity that represents your community. Remember to amend the first line to describe your chosen image.



SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATE POSTS:

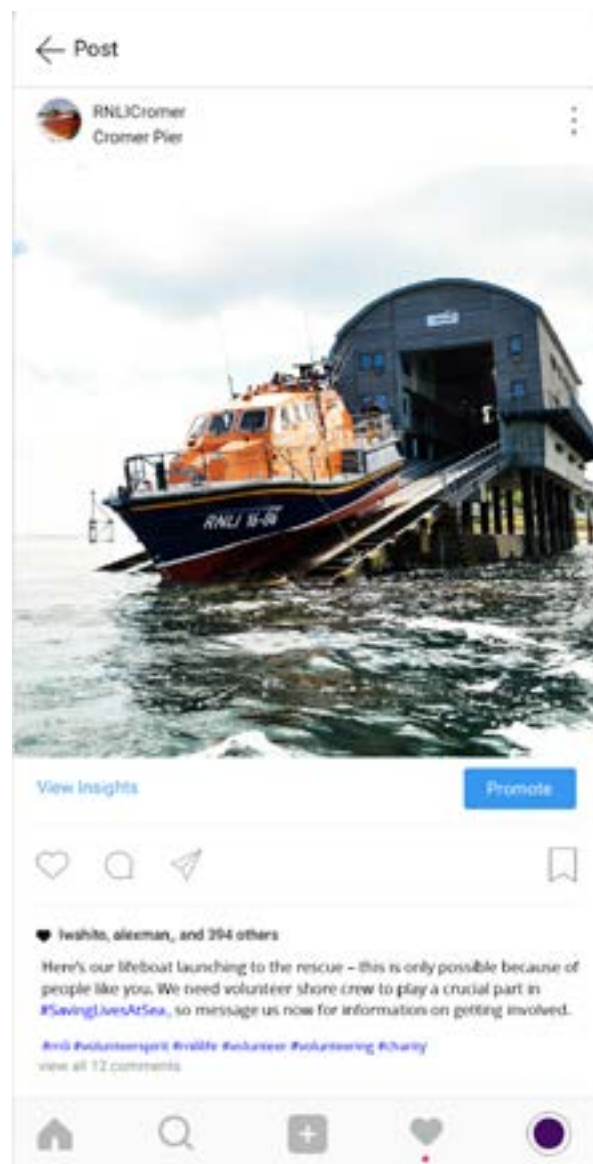
INSTAGRAM

Tailored role (photo)

Here's our lifeboat launching to the rescue – this is only possible because of people like you. Give us your time as a <insert role> and you'll play a crucial part in [#SavingLivesAtSea](#), so message us now for information on getting involved.

[#RNLI](#) [#volunteerspirit](#) [#RNLIlife](#)
[#volunteer](#) [#volunteering](#)
[#charity](#)

Note: Images here are illustrative. For photography, please try to source local volunteers and show diversity that represents your community. Remember to amend the first line to describe your chosen image.



HOW DO I USE THE TEMPLATES TO POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

- We recommend using an existing, relevant social media account such as a station or fundraising group page. Please liaise with whoever runs it to post on your behalf.
- The templates are suggestions of what you may want to write on your social media posts to attract volunteers.
- You can copy and paste the suggested text and adapt with your local information or any specific details about the volunteer role that you want to include.
- The hashtags are suggestions of what may work well but you may choose different ones that are relevant locally.
- Include information on how they can apply or who to contact for more information. An advert can also be placed on the RNLI volunteer recruitment site at www.rnli.org/volroles so that people can apply there – contact the Volunteering Team who can help you with this.
- It is important to regularly check direct messages and comments on your social media accounts and always respond promptly in a friendly, supportive way.

WHAT IMAGES OR VIDEOS SHOULD I USE ON THE POSTS?

- Videos and photos are more likely to capture the attention of people than text posts on social media.
- Using your own images will be the most relevant and engaging locally – for example, images of existing volunteers carrying out the role you are advertising.
- If you don't feel confident enough to take your own pictures, a selection of existing images are also available for download and use at RNLI.org/VolunteeringImages.
- Alternatively, ask other local volunteers to see if anyone has any relevant pictures that you could use.
- You may also want to post the volunteering video found at RNLI.org/VolunteerManagerResources in the 'Recruitment and Selection' section.

HOW DO I TAKE A GREAT PICTURE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA?

LIGHTING

If there isn't enough light, your photos will not turn out well. The best kind of lighting is natural lighting, but make sure that the sun is not too strong as this will cast harsh shadows in your photos.

When shooting photos outside, it is best to take them on an overcast day or in the shade on a sunny day.

Where possible when shooting indoors, place the subject by a window where the natural light is coming through and illuminating them. Position the camera so that it is shooting the way the light is coming in. Never face the lens of the camera towards the light source.



GOOD example



BAD example

HOW DO I TAKE A GREAT PICTURE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA?

BACKGROUND

Consider the background behind the subject of your photo; you don't want anything that is too busy that will detract from the focus of your picture, or that contains confidential or personal information.

Keep an eye out for the little details that could be distracting, such as a boat mast or trees sticking out from the subject's head.



GOOD example



BAD example

HOW DO I TAKE A GREAT PICTURE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA?

DON'T USE ZOOM

Using the digital zoom function or cropping the photo after taking often results in lower quality, grainy images.

To achieve a close up shot, physically move closer to your subject and try to fill the frame as much as possible to avoid dead space.



GOOD example



BAD example

HOW DO I TAKE A GREAT PICTURE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA?

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ensure any photographs used meet appropriate standards – the crew are seated correctly, wearing appropriate PPE and the operation of the boat is safe and correct. You can find further information in the 'Lifeboats Photo Guidelines' and 'Lifeguards Photo Guidelines'. Access them at [RNLI.org/VolunteerManagerResources](https://www.rnli.org/VolunteerManagerResources) under 'Recruitment and Selection'.

If you are in any doubt about a photograph, please check with the local lifeboat operations manager, the Social Media Team or the Film and Image Team.



PERMISSIONS

When taking new photos, please make the subject aware of the different ways you intend to use them. Ask them to complete an image consent form which can be found in the 'Recruitment and Selection' section on [RNLI.org/VolunteerManagerResources](https://www.rnli.org/VolunteerManagerResources).

In addition, if you are not the photographer you will need to ensure you have their permission and to credit them if they request this.

HOW DO I USE THE PRESS RELEASE?

- A template press release can be found in the 'Recruitment and Selection' section on [RNLI.org/VolunteerManagerResources](https://www.rnli.org/VolunteerManagerResources). If you are at or near a station, please liaise with the lifeboat press officer (LPO) on using this template.
- If you don't have access to an LPO, please contact your volunteering adviser (see email address for Volunteering Team to the right of this section) who will be able to put you in contact with a regional member of the media team who will be able to assist you.

FURTHER SUPPORT AND ADVICE

- 'Guide to Social Media for RNLI Volunteers' – this includes guidelines on using social media to represent the RNLI, as well as dealing with offensive or inappropriate comments to your post.

[RNLI.org/SocialMediaGuidance](https://www.rnli.org/SocialMediaGuidance)

- Any questions on...
 - recruiting volunteers - contact the Volunteering Team: volunteering@rnli.org.uk
 - social media - contact the Social Media Team: social@rnli.org.uk
 - using and finding images and clearing rights - contact the Film and Image Team: images@rnli.org.uk
- Another great place to connect with other volunteers, look for help and advice on using social media is the RNLI Volunteers Facebook group that can be found at facebook.com/groups/RNLIvolunteers

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea

Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603)
and Scotland (SC037736). Registered charity number 20003326 in the Republic of Ireland



Lifeboats