How to
Create a Great Website

A great website can be the keystone to your project's online presence; it is the place where all important information can be easily found and a place where people can be directed to from your social media channels.

This guide will help you create a website that will work effectively for your project.

First, you will need to buy a domain name

Your domain name will be the name of your website and should therefore be simple and easy to remember. Bear in mind that if you are creating a website for a 'save our pub' campaign you may also need a domain name for the saved pub in the future – it maybe worth buying both domain names at the same time. You can search for available domain names and buy them from a range of providers – just search online.

Next, you will need to choose a webhost

A webhost provides the space for your website on a webserver which will make it accessible on the World Wide Web. Every website you have ever visited is hosted on a web server. There are lots of webhosts to choose from and you may find that you can buy your domain name and web hosting from the same organisations. Some to check out include GoDaddy, 123Reg and Wordpress.
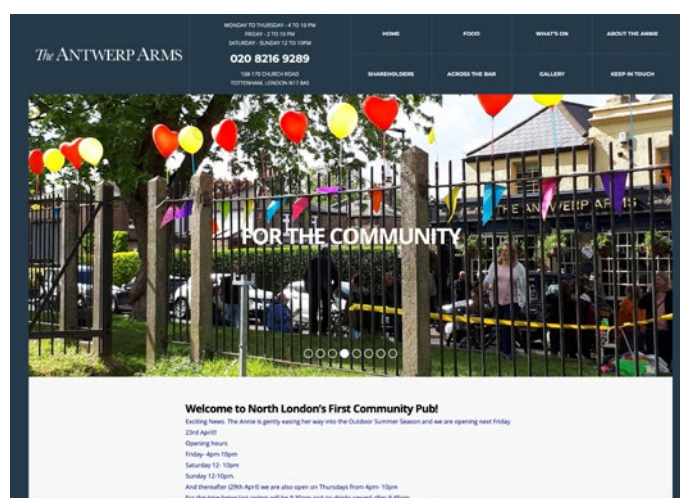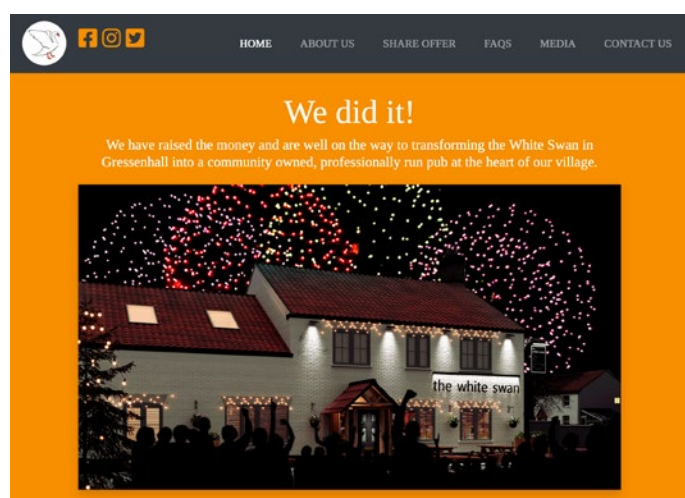
Now, you can start creating your website!

There are two ways to create your website:

Bespoke build – this means that you will have a website totally tailored to your brand and needs. However, a bespoke build needs specialist skills. There are lots of web designers you can pay to create your site for you but this comes at a cost, both for the initial build and then for maintenance and management afterwards.

A better option may be to find someone in your community that can build a website for you. This could be a more cost effective option but bear in mind that, once built, a site needs regular updating and so you may be reliant on the availability and cooperation of one person to do that.

Pre-built templates – companies such as Wordpress and Squarespace provide lots of pre-built templates for websites. All you need to do is choose a template that suits your project and simply drag and drop your copy and images into the templates. You can experiment with different templates to see what works best. Using a pre-built template is simple and you can have more than one administrator with access to update the pages.
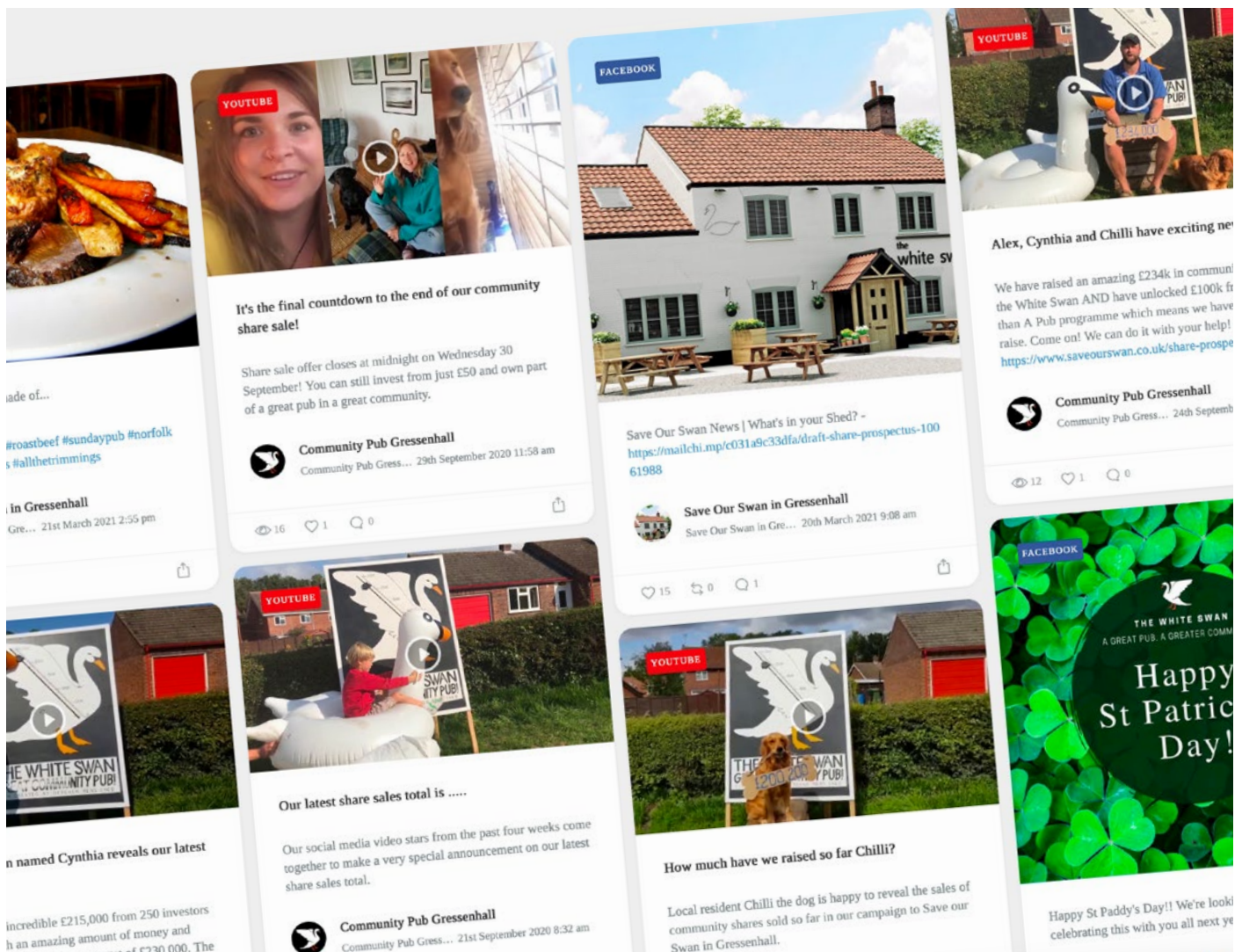
I Here are some tips to help ensure your website works well for you

Make it easy to navigate

People do not read websites, they scan them for the information they are interested in. Keep the navigation on your site simple with names for each page that help your visitors quickly find what they want e.g. About Us, Share Offer, FAQs, Contact Us. Highlighting words in italics or in bold on your pages will break up chunks of copy and help people find important information.

Keep it simple

Use simple, conversational English with no jargon or acronyms. Don't clutter up your pages with lots of text – you can keep the copy on each page short and succinct and then embed pdf.s of lengthy documents such as your business plan if people want to read more.

Make it mobile

A lot of people will access your website from a smart phone so you need to make sure the site displays well on a smaller screen. Most of the pre-built templates you can buy take this into account, but if you are having a website built for you make sure you request it is 'mobile friendly'.

Keep it up to date

Your website will lose credibility if the content does not reflect the latest developments and news on your project. One way of ensuring the site keeps up to date is to link your social media feeds to the Home page of your website.

Keep it real

Make sure your website looks believable and genuine by using photos of real people involved in your project (with their permission of course!) and images of recognisable, local places. Template pages and stock shots from the internet can make your website look too corporate or too similar to many others.

Keep an eye on the data

Link your website to Google Analytics which will enable you to see at a glance how many visitors you have had, what pages they visited and how long they stayed. You can also see how they found your site, for instance, via Google or from a link on another of your social media channels. This information can help you refine your website content and also tell you which of your social media channels and posts work best in driving traffic to your site (if that is what you wanted them to do).

https://analytics.google.com