

Derbyshire Constabulary X proposal 2024

Making Derbyshire Safer **Together**



Introduction

X (formerly Twitter) changed ownership in late 2022 and was rebranded in mid-2023. Along with the rebrand, several changes were brought into the platform – such as changes in verified accounts, paywalls for certain tools, reduction in effective moderation, and the reinstatement of notable figures who had previously been banned from the platform due to hateful messaging. These changes have seen a shift in the demographics using the channels and an increase in hateful content and misinformation – seen widely throughout the unrest in August 2024 - resulting in a change of use from our communities. There has also been a significant shift in the support we are able to get from X – which was already limited – since the changes.

Objectives

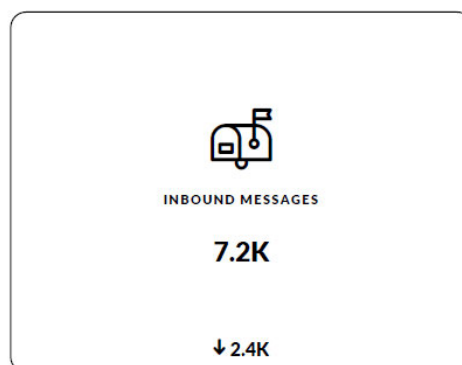
To provide considered recommendations on the use of X for the force, aligning ourselves with the national steer from Digital Public Contact to move to using the channel for warn and inform only, and taking into account the changes the platform has seen.

Considerations to be taken:

- Community use
- Twitter as a reporting tool
- Our current accounts

Community use

Following a review of all Safer Neighbourhood Team accounts last year, the lack of engagement across the accounts saw them close. The central account was showing steady engagement, however this dropped significantly. Looking at the data for the 6 months prior to us pausing posts on the account, we saw a 25% drop off compared to the previous period.



We do need to consider the variable nature of engagements, however, the drop over this period is significant and mirrors what is being reported for the wider X community.

Our Priorities



Vulnerability



Fighting Crime



Our People



Prevention and Partnerships



Responsive and Visible Policing



Service to the Public

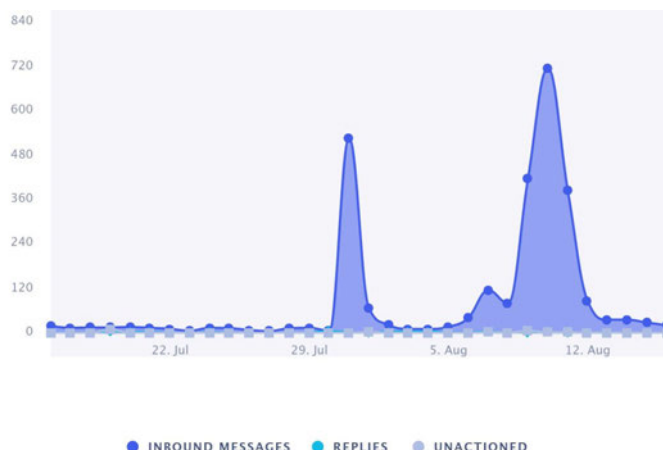


Trust and Legitimacy



The daily use of X in the UK has been declining. Recent reports are indicating a significant drop off around 17% over the past year ([40 Twitter \(X\) Stats to Know in Marketing in 2024 | Sprout Social](#))

There was an anomaly in this trend for us as a force in August, which saw a peak in volume due to our account being targeted by hate messaging:



Twitter as a reporting tool

We have taken crime reports through X, via direct message within the DerPolConact account for over 5 years. As a part of this review, the volume of reports through the channel has been reviewed and it is showing that only 9% of the force's direct messages come through X in the last year. However, further investigation has shown that 92% of those direct messages result in ROCs or incidents recorded. A dip test conducted by contact management shows that many of the reports are either non-emergency or signposting to other services.

A further discussion with [REDACTED], Contact Centre Manager, has highlighted [REDACTED] support in having us move away from reporting through Twitter and encourage users to report through other digital means such as Facebook, LiveChat or the force website, which is our recommendation.

Currently in the UK only 3 forces have Twitter accounts specifically for reporting (the equivalent of DerPolContact), including Derbyshire. Should the decision be made to continue to take reports through Twitter, the recommendation is that we move the reporting to the central DerbysPolice account and the DerPolContact account is deactivated.

Our current accounts

A significant effort has been made to consolidate our existing accounts, with legacy accounts fully deactivated and deleted, neighbourhood accounts deactivated but held to protect the handle from



impersonation, and locked accounts being reported to X and the DPC social media lead for deactivation.

We are also consulting with remaining active accounts to assess whether the accounts should remain, moved to a different platform or deleted. To date 30 accounts have been deleted and 37 are active but are not necessarily used. Of the 37, 25 are being prepared for deactivation and 12 are in consultation, with a view for all but 2 of these to be deactivated.

Proposal

Following consultation with the handful of accounts that are still actively using X, we have devised the follow:

- The Dog Unit account will move to Instagram. With the platform being more visual, it suits the content we're able to get for the dog unit better and will allow the team to continue to promote their work to an audience more open to their content.
- The RPU account will close. The team have struggled to post consistently to the channel and the content is engaged with by policing fans, as opposed to members of the Derbyshire community. The portfolio lead in the Engagement team will liaise with them to ensure relevant content is published on the central force accounts to ensure their work continues to be promoted.
- The football accounts (DCFCPolice and SpireitesPolice) will move over to Facebook, and we will look to trial a WhatsApp channel for each once signed off by Information Management. The team feedback the noticeable difference they have seen in their audience and are in agreement with this approach
- After consulting with Inspector [REDACTED], the decision has been made to keep the RPU Bikers account. There is an engaged audience there and it seems to plug a gap as they struggle to get engagement from the biking community.

There will be only one remaining X channel, additional to the above, which will be the central force account, and this should be used as a breaking news and major incident channel only. With 40% of respondents to the National social media survey still having medium+ confidence in X as an information source, it is important for the force to remain on the platform to be a single point of truth during breaking news and major incidents, and wherever possible to counter misinformation.

