

From Richard Thomas

## Using Twitter

This is the first of a series of documents which I am hoping to write. This first one is aimed at people who already use Twitter somewhat or who would like to make a start at Twitter and feel confident in their ability to set up an account.

My aim will be to share what I have discovered so far-I would be delighted to hear from anyone with further suggestions.

There are many ways in which tweeting can further the European Movement.

1. First and foremost, it is vital to join the huge pro-European Twitter community. To do this, you exploit the #(hashtag) system. This has two functions: it declares your allegiances, and is used by Twitter to direct your tweets to your chosen audience. #FBPE stands for Follow Back Pro Eu. #FBPE is employed by the overwhelming majority of pro-EU people. You should add it to your Twitter name-e.g. Alex Brit #FBPE- and you should also append it at the bottom of any Brexit/EU tweet you send. This will increase the number of views, followers, likes and re-tweets you will achieve. It is also important that you take it literally by following everyone you see who chooses this identifier, either in a bio or a tweet. Through the Twitter system for suggesting other users, you can discover a host of like-minded people.

Less widely found, but quite popular, is #WATON - this represents WeAreTheOppositionNow.

As well as using #FBPE it is also helpful to know what other hashtags are already available. #ExitfromBrexit is an evergreen; #Brexitshambles only too appropriate ; #RemainerNow gives you a chance to encourage switchers; #The75percent is favoured by young people who voted overwhelmingly for Remain, and also those, like Vince Cable, who want to reach out to them. Ending with #Remain will send your tweet to all self-proclaimed Remainers. #StopBrexit is self-evident. So long as you stay within the character limit, you can pick-and-mix amongst the hashtags above, appending them to your tweet.

It is a good idea to also reference the particular topic, as in #BrexitImpact , #2ndreferendum, #Irishborder.

When complaining about media bias, you can allude to the broadcaster and the programme- e.g. #bbc #bbcqt. This should be done at the end of a tweet. I am sure that these tweets are monitored by broadcasters and are taken into account.

At the same time, you will want to make sure your tweets extend beyond the Twitter echo chamber, and this can be accomplished by sprinkling hashtags used by the other side. #Brexit will be picked up by everyone, while #THEWILLOFTHEPEOPLE will take you into an alternative reality!

It is important to follow back your interactors, and to like and retweet responses to your tweets with which you agree.

Finally, people to follow: thousands! Including, perhaps: Vince Cable, Alistair Campbell, Andrew Adonis, Tom Brake, Owen Smith, Chukka Umanna, Faisal Islam (Sky News, very good on the EU), Mike Galsworthy (Founder of @Scientists4EU), Gina Miller, Dominic Grieve, Ian Dunt (author of 'Brexit: what the Hell Happens Next?'), Brexit Bin, Jo Maugham QC, AC Grayling (philosopher, a leader of the pro-EU movement), Prof. Tanja Bueltmann, Anna Soubry, Nicky Morgan, etc. @bbclaurak is good for scoops, as is #Buzz Feed UK . Madeleine Kay#EUsupergirl (that's all one Twitter name) has many younger followers. All papers, news services etc are informative.

If you allow your device to use your address, then a tweet sent from Bexhill will be automatically retweeted by #Everything Bexhill. There are parallel systems in some other places.

Twitter has been credited as the main influence edging public opinion towards staying in the EU. Finally, Twitter is addictive . Tweet responsibly!

2. Here is a follow-up to my first bulletin about Twitter. Here are some more people you can follow. I am indebted to Claire Hill for suggesting more Labour figures- namely, Heidi Alexander, Ben Bradshaw, Peter Kyle, Chris Leslie and Chuka Umanna. I would like to add the Financial Times, and a newcomer, an absolute star, a very knowledgeable young Nigerian calling himself femi\_sorry. He has debated with Farage and did very well, and his Twitter feed is brilliant. Richard Thomas.

### 3. Twitter – this is to encourage people who are not on Twitter to sign up.

I have heard people say that they are on Facebook but think that Twitter might be too complicated. Nothing could be further from the truth now, as Twitter has streamlined its joining process. The simplest way is to obtain the app and then follow the instructions. Twitter will not even ask you to invent your own Twitter name, though you are welcome to do so: just give it your name, and it will suggest a version of it that has not been used before. Twitter will give you a very long list of potential interests you have; you can nominate as many as you like. It will then give you a list of people and organisations corresponding to that, and it will regularly send you the messages ( called 'tweets') from those sources. If you like those tweets, you can put a 'like' on them or you can 're-tweet' them to your followers. Twitter will send out your tweets to people with the same interests as you. You have the option to write comments on other people's tweets. It's an ideal platform for concise discursive contributions! Go for it! Richard Thomas.