Barking Owl: AI – October 2026

This meeting focused on AI usage in communications roles. The group shared various ways we currently use AI, including text simplification, content creation, website development, and brand voice guidance, with participants noting both benefits and challenges such as the need for editing AI-generated content and concerns about over-dramatisation. The discussion revealed mixed perspectives on AI-generated design content, with some expressing concerns about brand identity and environmental impact, while others shared practical tips about using AI agents and brand voice prompts. The conversation also covered effective content strategies, with participants agreeing that authentic photos of real people and simple video content tend to perform better than AI-generated graphics on social media.

What AI tools are we using?

The group discussed current use of AI tools in our work. One member shared that they use AI to simplify text for case studies and newsletter articles, though they noted the output sometimes made content sound too dramatic. Another member described using AI for writing structures and website content, and mentioned their organisation has incorporated AI prompts into new brand guidelines. One member explained using AI to make outreach emails more concise and actionable, and for creating subject lines and preview lines for newsletters.

AI brand voice

We discussed strategies for using AI tools like Copilot to maintain consistent brand voice and tone, particularly for organisations with specific communication guidelines. One member shared how to create an AI agent in Copilot that can remember brand guidelines and instructions.

Use of AI by smaller, local groups

The group discussed the increasing use of AI in creating posters and leaflets by smaller organisations, with concerns raised about brand reputation, privacy issues, and environmental impact. Some members expressed opposition to using AI for design work, as well as environmental concerns and the risk of content looking too similar across organisations.

We also discussed concerns around consent when using AI-generated images, as we cannot always verify the source of the image.

We also talked about the potential problems with AI notetakers, with some members refusing to let them into meetings, especially when the participant does not attend and sends a notetaker instead.

We ended by discussing effective content strategies, with participants agreeing that photos of real people and authentic, unedited video content tend to perform better than AI designed or even professionally designed graphics on social media.