

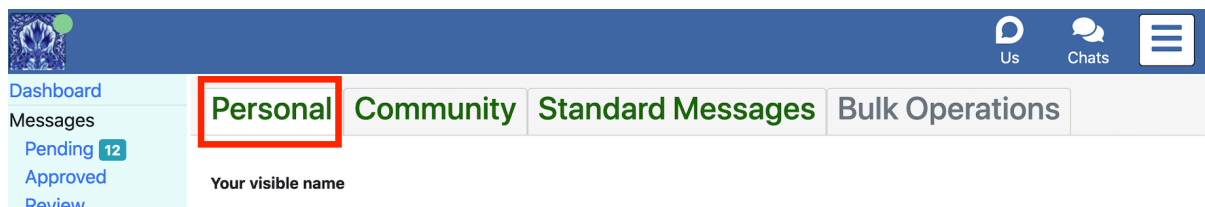
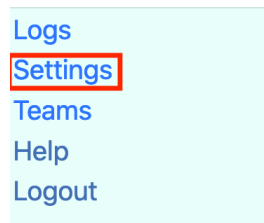
Logging in

First go to modtools.org and log in. You may use any of the login options, but the email associated with the option you choose must also be the one you use for moderating for the program to recognise you..

Please try our all of the buttons and things we mention. It is much easier to remember what they do if you see it work as well as read it. We are working on a practice group so you cannot do any damage or harm, none of it goes onto a real group.

Personal settings

You need to set up your personal settings. Click settings in the menu. Select personal and check everything is correct. In the name section, use the name you want to be added to emails, this will be added automatically. Set up your notifications and you can turn on a bell telling you work is waiting to be done if you want to, so you hear a bell if you are working on other stuff in another window. Save any changes and you are ready to start.



Group rules

First thing you need to do is read a copy of the rules of the group you will be moderating. Group rules can be obtained from settings, community, click the box that says 'please choose' and select the group. When the blue lines show, select 'How it looks' .. Scroll down to welcome mail for new members and copy and paste the text into a new document to read it more easily.





Eldrick Test

Community Addresses

Your Settings

How It Looks




How It Looks

These are various settings about how the community appears to freeglers on the site and in emails.

[Only owners can change these settings.](#)

Profile picture

This is used in emails and on the site. It needs to look good small, like a Facebook profile picture. Avoid text - it's not readable. Aim for a simple image that people will recognise as relating to your location.



Tagline

This should be short and snappy. Include some local reference that people in your area will feel connected to.

This is a test native group.

Welcome email

Pending Messages

When you log in to modtools you will be on the dashboard page. This will make the program check which groups you moderate. It contains lots of groups stats that are useful to mods.

On the far left of the page is a menu. The top section is Messages.

Underneath the messages title there are four options.

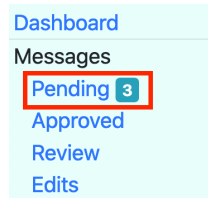
Pending

Approved

Review

Edits

Pending is where all the messages that need moderating will be waiting to be reviewed. If there are messages waiting there will be a number next to it. So click on pending and you will see the test messages that have been set up on the Freshers group..

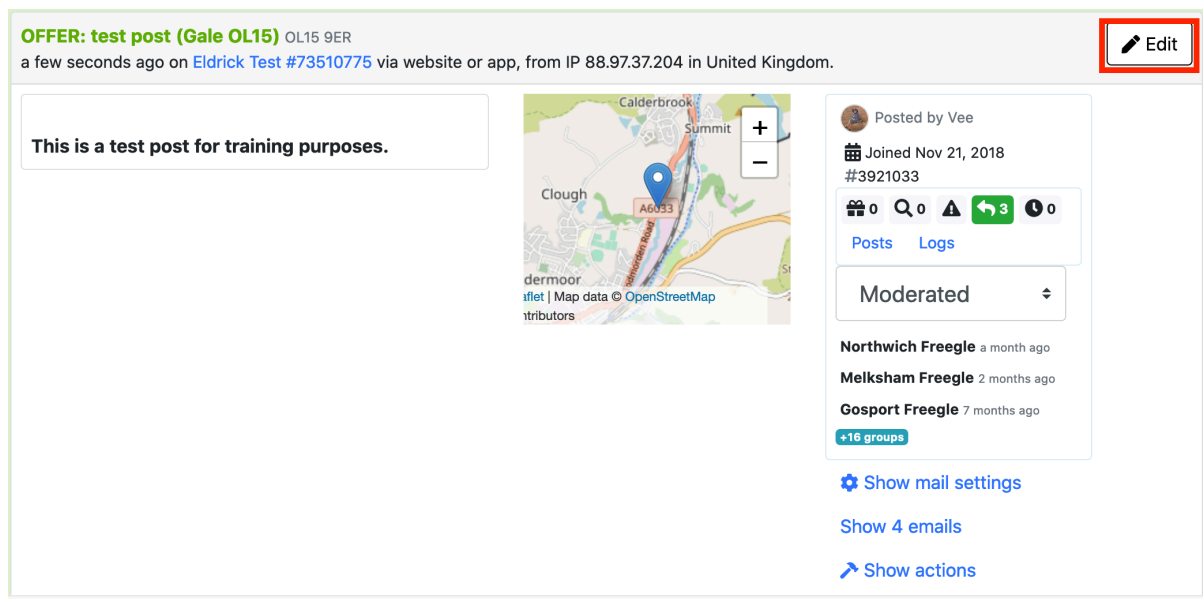


Before you moderate any messages you need to know what all the different functions do. So look at the first message that is waiting.

The top line is the **message title** as the member wrote it.

If it is red, it may need editing to correct it (not always though, sometimes it is just missing punctuation and we don't reject or even edit for that)

If it is green it is usually correct.



The title is written out in the format OFFER: item description (location) and as the program generates the title from the info the member has put in the boxes, is usually in the correct format. We do have members from Trash Nothing though who can change that a little so that the location is not so accurate and that can be edited and corrected. Just click the edit button at the top right of the page and an edit box will pop up. Make the changes you need to make and click 'Save' below the message. If the member has made the post an offer but it is obviously a wanted post, you can click

the word Offer and a drop down appears so you can change it to the type of post it should be. Always click save after making changes to make them hold.

Directly below the subject line/title, is **information about the person posting the message**. First it will tell you how long the message has been waiting to be moderated followed by the name of the group they are posting from and the post number. It also tells you the how the post was made. For instance 'website' shows it was made on Freegle. 'Trash Nothing' shows a post made on the Trash Nothing website so you can easily see what platform the member is using. Sometimes under this bit of information, you will see warnings in red. It may say duplicate of post made 3 days ago. Anything in red is a warning to check a little closer. If a wanted post is a duplicate after three days and your repost limit is seven days (or more), the post is rejected as posted too soon. Sometimes you may get two copies in pending at the same time, so you would approve one and reject the other as a duplicate. It may also tell you about crossposting. Most groups allow crossposting to other groups at the same time. For some people posting on several groups will mean you are getting to a wider audience and so you are more likely to receive the item you need. A few groups don't allow it though, so it is flagged up so you can see where else it has been posted.

Then you have the **IP address** and the country the post originated in. If it is a foreign country it may just need checking closer, but some people will move to this country and keep their native countries email address, so they aren't automatically spammers or scammers, they may be genuine and just need checking a little to ensure they are genuine. Just look at their previous posting history and see if it looks genuine. If they are new, look at the post itself and see if it looks like a real offer. Usually if someone joins, offers an expensive plasma TV or a laptop nearly new, it needs checking a little closer and you are best to ask other mods on the team to look at it as well.

Below all that is the **main body of the message**. The main body should describe the item. Most groups don't allow personal details within the message. Freegle is for members only. If people post their phone number or address on the group, it can be seen by non-members and that makes the collector completely untraceable in the event of a problem. So if a post contains personal details, click the edit box at the top right and edit the details out before approving. Always email the member and explain any changes you make to their posts.

Rejecting a message is always a very last resort. We only reject if there is no other choice. So if the message has something against the rules that could be edited out we would do it here. You may get a wanted with an offer to pay, you can edit out the offer of cash and make it a straight wanted post, you may get a request to borrow, so we edit out the request to borrow and make it a straight wanted post. If someone is offering to sell, it would have to be rejected, because you can't edit the cash amounts out, that person will still want money for it, edited or not, so we reject for sale posts. Again, message the person who made the post to inform them of changes. They will never get it right if we don't tell them when they make mistakes.

If someone advertises the time of entry and the venue of a charity event along with a wanted for stuff, we allow the wanted, but remove the event details. We would email the person to let them know it isn't allowed on the main group, but we would send them to the main site, where there is an events section. Their event can be listed in a separate section on the website that all members can access to see and details of the event will be sent out in its own email, separate to the group posts.

If the member has posted **photographs**, just check they are the right way up. If not you can click the rotate buttons to straighten them up. Occasionally a member may post photos that are not relevant to the post, they can be deleted by clicking the dustbin.

On the right side there is a lot of detail about the member and their past posting history. You will find this information useful.

First is a **mini map** that pinpoints roughly where the member is. It isn't precise, we don't know their precise location, the arrow just points to somewhere within the postcode area they entered onto the post.

To the right again at the very top next to the edit button there is a '**view email source**' button. This is the header as you would see on an email with the source of the email. It's not something we really need to use, it can be useful to program developers though when diagnosing problems.

Under that is the **members name or userid** and below that is the **date the member joined**. It is good to see how long a person has been a member. If the date is in red, that member joined within the past Month and may need a little more help posting correctly than members who have been with the group for longer. The number with the # hashtag is the **membership number** and can be used to search for posts and other information on the member. It's also useful when a member is having problems. Quote the member number when asking tech to look at a problem a member is having.

The next row has some buttons. This is the **members post history**. The first has a little **gift box** on it. This is where you will see any past offers that member has made. It will have the number of past posts on the button, if you click it, you will see the titles of the previous posts made in the last few months. You can't see the body of the post, but the title will tell you what sort of offers this person has made before. Some groups have repost limits. Some will allow a repost of offers after 24 hours, some will ask a member to wait a couple of days and here you can see if the post you are moderating has already been made before and when.

Directly next to the gift box is a **magnifying glass**, that will show you the recent wanted posts . Wanted posts are usually restricted a little more. Some groups don't allow reposts before a set amount of time, on some groups it is 7 days, on others it could be up to 28 days, so check the group you are moderating to see what the rule is for that group. When a member places a wanted post you can see here if it has been posted before.

The **warning triangle** records modmails. When you send a modmail that box turns red and has the number of mails they have been sent recently on it. So you can see at a glance if this is someone who has problems a lot. If you click it, you will see titles of the modmails so you can see what we have spoken to the member about before.

The **arrow** shows how many replies the member has made to other posts. So you can see if they are replying to lots of posts and maybe selling without declaring it. We allow selling but the taker must be clear to the person offering an item that they intend selling stuff on, Some people get quite upset about their items they thought were helping someone out being sold on.

The final one that looks like a **clock** is telling you how many chat messages to this member are expecting a reply but haven't yet received one. When a member replies to a post they are asked if they expect a reply.

There is a little blue **logs** button. Just click the word logs and the members history of everything they have done on the group shows. When they logged in, when they log out, what groups they join, what posts they make who approved the posts. It is all there in the logs. The program will automatically repost any post that doesn't get a response. So if nobody at all replies to an offer, it will

repost. If they get even one reply, it won't and the member needs to repost it manually from their my posts tab if the item isn't taken. They will have a post again button. Reposts can be set to anything from once to ten times. Each group sets their own number of reposts before the post times out. Most groups are set to repost between 3 and 5 times.

Directly below is the **member's settings** on the group. The first one is their **moderation status**. We aim to get people off of moderation as soon as we can. Once a member has posted a couple of posts that are correct and haven't needed us to email them, they can be taken off of moderation. To do that, we click on the moderated box and set it onto Group Settings. Once a member is set to group settings, their posts are no longer reviewed by moderators and will go straight onto the group.

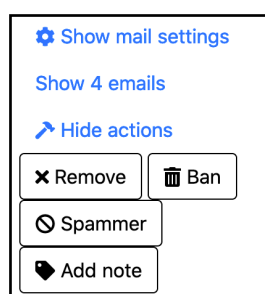
The can't post setting is rarely used. If for instance you are waiting for a response from an email asking to clarify details and are being ignored, setting a member to can't post will often get their attention. They will mail you to find out why they can't post and you have their attention. Or their email may have been hijacked and sending spam to members, you can set them to can't post until they change their password and secure their account. So it can be useful, but use it sparingly and as a last resort.

Going down the list, next is a **list of groups the member is on**. If this list is huge, it could be someone who is selling stuff or it could be a spammer/scammer. You can report these people as multijoiners and the spam team will check them out and let you know if they are genuine or not. More about how to report spam later. The list of groups is often truncated if there are several to save space on the page, so you may see a button that says +3 for instance, click that button and the full list of groups will display.

Next is show **mail settings**. Click this and you will see the email delivery whether they get instant emails or digests and how often. You can also see if community and volunteer emails are on or off. We don't usually touch these settings unless a member asks us to change it for them, which is why it is hidden most of the time. Click again to hide the settings and get the space back on your page.

Then we see show emails with the number of **email addresses** the person has that we know about. So if it says show 3 emails, click it and you will see three email addresses, all belonging to this member.

Click show **actions** and you will see four buttons.



The first button is **remove**. This removes the member, not the post. Once you click this you will get an 'are you sure' pop up to make sure it isn't an accidental click. If you remove a member they can rejoin at any time with the same id and email.

The second button is a **ban** button. We only use this if a member has seriously broken rules or been abusive in some way. Banning members is quite rare but it does happen. When banned a member is

removed just from the group you click the ban button on. It does not affect any of their memberships on other groups. The member cannot rejoin the group with that id or email address. There is nothing to stop them rejoining with new details and email, but usually if they do they either knuckle down and do things properly, in which case they are no longer a problem, or they become obvious again and you can ban the new id.

The third button is the **spammer** button. There are two types of spam. One lot is hijacked emails. Usually they are something like 'Hi' and a link. These ones we usually mail the member and let them know their email has been compromised and ask them to change their password.

Then there is obvious spam. We get invoices from supposed companies or product adverts, blackmail type emails and similar. Usually it is more than just a link, although it may contain links as well. When we receive this sort of spam, we click the spammer button. A box pops up explaining when to report spam and asks you to write a reason for reporting. Please try to make this clear, something like 'sending invoice spam' or 'sending mattress adverts'. Sometimes we report multi joiners just in case they are spammers or scammers. A multijoiner has usually joined more than about 15 groups. The report will go to a spam team, who will double check the report and make sure that spam is really being sent. If it is then they will add the person to the spam list. If not the spam report will be rejected and you will get an email suggesting you remove the member with a ban if you don't want them on the group. When a person is added to the spam list, they are instantly removed from all the groups they are on across the country and they cannot rejoin any groups using that id or email.

Please don't add any posts in the test group to the spam list. Test posts are made by moderators and we don't want them removed from their groups ☺

The final button is '**Add Note**' This is extremely useful and you should use it to keep mods informed about a member and even if you are a lone moderator, it will serve as a reminder. If you have sent a member a warning about something, add a note and let all mods know. So if for instance someone is warned about asking for money, click add note and a box appears that you can type a message into. Add a note saying warned for asking for payment. The note will show in red at the top of every post that member makes in the future and all mods can see it. It will remain on the membership until a moderator deletes it. Only mods can see it, the members can't. When adding notes, stick to the facts and don't elaborate with personal opinion. Data protection says if a member asks to see what we have written about him, we have to send them a copy including the notes. So keep notes brief and to the point. If you have to hold a post to get additional information from a member, add a note to say why you have held the post, so other moderators know why the post is being held. (More about how to hold a post later.) You can add multiple notes to a member or you can edit a note and add to it or change it. Each note will show how long ago it was made and who made it. The edit button to make changes is on the note.

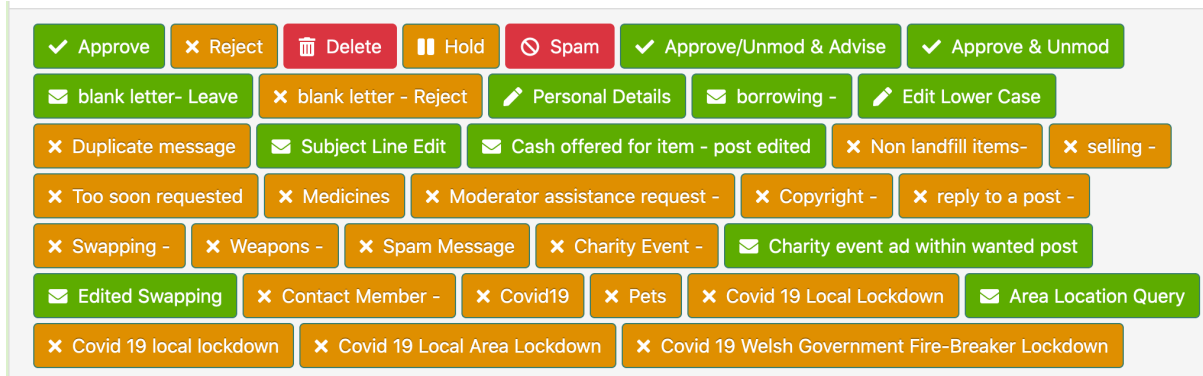
You can also see notes made about the member by moderators of other groups the member is on, but you can't edit or delete them. It is handy to know what has happened with a member on other groups sometimes.

All of the information above seems a lot but takes seconds to scan through it before actually moderating the messages.

Moderating messages

Pending

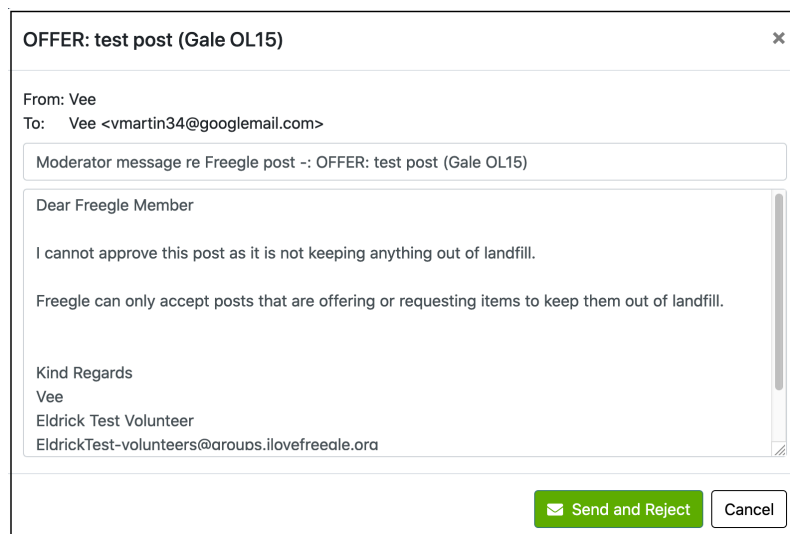
At the bottom of the page you will see lots of big coloured buttons with titles on. Most of these buttons carry a ready made email to send to members.



The buttons with an x in the corner are for rejecting posts and will delete the pending message when you send the email, So for instance, if someone is trying to sell stuff on the group, you select the selling button and the post is deleted as you send it. All messages can be edited before sending, so if they don't quite fit you can edit them and make them fit.

The buttons with an envelope icon are for sending reminders or advice messages where you don't want to reject the message, so when you click send, the email goes to the member, but the message remains in pending to be edited before approving.

Green buttons with a pencil icon are for editing. Most will add a message to a pending post, so you could have one that says personal messages that will add a mod note to the post before approving it. There is one green button that will change the case. If a member sends a post in capitals, it is considered to be shouting on the internet, so we click the change case button and the message is automatically changed to lower case.



We always email a member if altering a post to let them know why. They will never get posting right if we don't tell them where they are going wrong. , Until you click 'send' on a selected email nothing happens, so if you select the wrong message, just click cancel or close and choose the right one. This does also have the advantage that you can look at all of the messages and see what each one says, which in turn will tell you the circumstances under which we send the emails.

Rejecting a post should always be a last resort when all else has failed. . Edit where you can. A borrowing post is not allowed, but can easily be edited into a straight wanted post instead. The member can always reFreegle it. A selling post would have to be rejected, we can't change it to an offer, we don't know that the member is happy to give it away.



The first five buttons in the big coloured buttons are generic buttons with no built in emails.

The **approve** button does what it says on the tin. Click approve and the message goes straight to the group.

The **reject** button will reject a post , but the reject button has no email ready written so it is rarely used.

Delete will delete the message. It isn't often you will need to delete a message without a message to the member, but if for instance a member has posted half a dozen times because they didn't; realise they are on moderation and thought the message just hadn't posted, you can message them about one duplicate and delete the others.

Hold is used when you are dealing with a message and maybe you needed to email the member because they forgot to add the sizes of the shoes they offered or you want to check some other information before approving or rejecting. By clicking hold although you can still see the moderation buttons under the post, the other mods on the group can't. All they see is a note that says 'held by' and your name, so other mods know it is in the process of being dealt with and will leave it to you or check with you what needs to be done with it. Other mods can release the post, so if you hold a post then go on holiday for a fortnight, the post can still be dealt with, but they have to physically click the release button so it wouldn't be accidental.

Spam is used to delete a message that is spam. It will not mark the author as a spammer. Often we see hijacked emails and we don't want to remove the member, but we do want the system to learn that this sort of message is spam and hopefully by clicking the spam button a similar message in future, will be filtered for review or deleted before it even gets to moderation . If you want to mark the sender as a spammer, use the spammer button above and fill out the reason.

All the other buttons are for specific problems that occur on posts. So if someone has asked to borrow an item, you would click the borrow button and a ready made email will pop up onto your screen, it will be signed and ready to go. You can edit it slightly if you need to before sending. When you click send, you can then edit the members post to remove the request to borrow, make it a wanted post and approve it. Have a look through all the ready made emails and see what we say and it will give you an idea of what is and is not allowed. There are two blank emails among them, one is a leave type email and the other a reject so you can make up your own email, if none fit the reason you need to send a message to the member.

Approved

If you click approved you will see all the messages that are on the group. These are the ones members see on the website. It has all the functions that you see on pending messages and it all works exactly the same way. The messages are slightly different to those in pending. Approved messages, can be edited by both the moderator and the member. So if an unmoderated member posts a message not within the rules, it can be edited rather than rejected if possible.

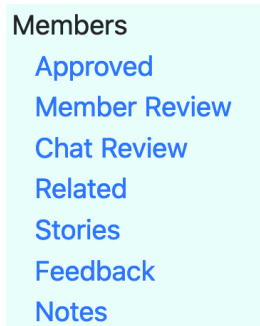
Review

This is where any messages the program thinks may be spam will be filtered to. Not all messages filtered to review are spam, in fact most are not, just read the message and decide if it is spam or not and click the spam button or the not spam button. If you click not spam, all the moderation buttons will appear and you can moderate it and approve or reject it from the review section. If the post was made by an unmoderated member and is already on the group, you won't see an approve button, you will see a reply button because it is already on the group. Just leave it and when you leave the section it will vanish from review..

Edits

When a member edits their post, it will be live on the group immediately, but a copy will go into edits for you to look it over and make sure something you don't allow has been added, such as a home address or a price for sale. If you are happy the edit is still within group rules, just click accept edit, if not reject the edit and the post will revert to what it was originally. You also have the opportunity to message the member to check details before deciding what to do with it. You will see the original message with the changes. Sometimes it is hard to read, so a copy of the edited version is below..

Members



Approved

This is a list of all the members on your group. The order is the last to join at the top of the list and the oldest members at the bottom. So you can easily check new members if you want to. First you choose the group in the top box and the member list appears. Each membership has all the functions you see in pending and it all works the same way. At the top of the page you have a search to input a member number or email or even the userid and it will bring that membership into view.

Eldrick Test All members + Add = Merge Export

Search email/name/id

This group has 26 members.

You can merge members emails so if a member has more than one membership, you can click merge and combine them so whichever email they log in with , the system recognises them as the same person. We often find a member will log in with one membership and post, then look to the other membership for replies they have been told by email are waiting, merging them solves the problem. You can't merge Trash Nothing memberships,

There is an add button to add friends or people who you want to be a member on the group. Only do this with the persons permission. Just add the email address and a message saying why you are adding them and click the add button, the person is a member. They don't even have to accept the invitation, they just get a welcome email and the message from you saying why you added them.

You have a search function, it is usually on all members showing the full member list, but you can ask for just the moderation team or members with notes on their membership, or you can look at the banned list. There are a few options all self explanatory.

Member review

Member review is for members that the program thinks may be a problem, usually because they are on groups 100 miles or more apart. Just check out their posts and see if they are a problem. If they are a long way outside of your area, you may prefer to remove them or you can choose to ignore them until they do something wrong. You have a lot of the usual functions, the only real difference is an ignore button.

Chat Review

The chat review function is important. You need to stay on top of this and not leave waiting work for long periods. These are private messages between your members that the program has filtered out for various reasons for review. Sometimes they are spam and you would just click spam, the red spam button here removes the post not the member. If the message seems to be okay, just click Approve- not spam. Often we find people trying to sell via chat. They offer an item on the group then ask for payment for it privately, any message asking for money will be filtered. You can add a mod message warning the members not to sell via chat and add a note to say you have warned them, so you know if they keep doing it , you have reason to ban them. Generally we approve these posts as quickly as we can, people are arranging collections and we don't want our holding posts up to be the reason for a no show.

Related

Here if a member posts with multiple ids from a single device, the system flags them as possibly being the same person. To avoid the members getting confused you can send them a message asking them what they want to do, they can click a button in the message to merge the memberships if they want to.

Stories

After a member posts we ask them about their experience posting. Members tell us what they like or dislike about Freegle and it comes to stories for moderation. If it is gushing with good feedback, you can click a good for publicity button and it goes to our media people to choose if it goes in our newsletter or not. Some members don't want their comments to be public, so you can only read

them then hide them. If someone is unhappy about things you can message them and find out why and maybe put their minds at rest about problems they are having on the group.

Feedback

When people post we always ask them if they are happy or sad about their Freegle experience. All the results go into feedback. All you need to do is scroll past the comments and the count for them in the menu will disappear. You can message an unhappy member and engage with them if you wish, but you don't have to. Many sad faces are just because they didn't find a home for their item.

Notes

This is a record of all the notes on members, on the groups you are on. At the moment you can't do much with this section, there is no search, so it is better to filter the member list for members with notes in the members list. There will be other functions added to the notes section in the future.

Events, Volunteering, Publicity, Admins & Spammers



Events

This is similar to the volunteer section, but it is for advertising local events . Events don't have to be free, but they do have to be local, things like local plays and choir performances or church fetes. As long as it is something that will interest local people, but is not someone's business, it is fine to post as an event. Event posts will come to you for moderation and you just approve or reject them.

Volunteers

This is a section for allowing members to advertise for volunteers for charitable type things. All the adverts come to you for moderation. If there is a number next to any of the titles in the menu, then there is something waiting in that section to be done, so if there is a 1 against volunteers, you have one volunteer post awaiting to be moderated. It must be a volunteer position. It isn't for general work adverts or for people to ask for cleaners and gardeners, it's meant for clubs and charities to ask for free help.

Publicity

The publicity section of modtools, will show you Facebook posts made by our Media team. You can choose which ones to post onto your own groups Facebook page by clicking the button with the group name underneath. As soon as you click the button, your post will be on Facebook.

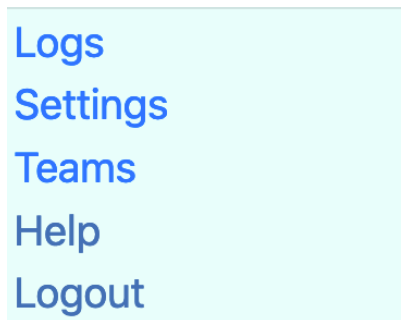
Admins

This is where you can send a group message to all members. It is split into three sections. Pending, create and previous. To send a message to the entire group, including those set to no emails, click create. Select the group in the top box, Add a title then type your message to members. When done, click send and it will go to pending. That gives you a chance to look it over before it goes to the groups. Once it has been approved in pending, it will go to the members of the group and a copy will go to the previous section, so if you want to resend the same admin next year, it is there already written.

Spammers

This section is for the spam team mostly, but you can see the spam list to see who is on it. If one of your members has been added and it is an error, you can click a request removal button and one of the spam team will review the request to remove the member from spam.

Logs and Settings



Logs

The logs in the menu are for the whole group. Everything that happens on the group should be in here. It's in two sections. Messages and members. The message logs show every message and what happened to it. If it was moderated it will say by who, it will tell you who posted the message, if it was marked taken or deleted it is all in here. You can search for specific logs on a particular member if you need to. Members shows you who joined the group and when they leave.

Settings

Settings is where you set up the group and your personal settings. Mostly this will all be done already and the only thing you will need to edit may be your personal settings when you first join the mod team. Be careful about changing other settings as they can affect the way the whole group works.

Chat



The only other thing to worry about is the chat icon at the very top of the page on the blue border. If there is a red blob with a number on any of the above functions it means there is work waiting to be done and it is the same for chat. The chat has messages from members to moderators and should be dealt with pretty swiftly. This is often members having problems posting or using the group. Click chat and the messages load, just as they do on the main Freegle group.

Us

The icon next to chat that says Us, is a way to talk to other moderators around the country. If you are not sure how to deal with something, click Us and post on Central to ask how to do it, if you are having trouble using modtools, post on tech and modtools. People are more than happy to help you out and give their opinions on how to deal with problems.

And finally...

Finally remember it is important to moderate regularly. All groups should be moderated two or three times a day, but try to log in at least once a day. If messages are left waiting they will automatically approve after 48 hours regardless of content. This is so that we don't lose members if moderators abandon their groups or don't moderate regularly. It isn't ideal to allow posts to self moderate, scammers are quick to notice a group is letting on messages that shouldn't be allowed.