

A BRIDGEHEAD SOCIAL CARE REPORT · OCTOBER 2024

SOCIAL MEDIA POWER LIST 2024

TOP 20 LARGE CARE HOME GROUPS

Ranked on social media reach, engagement and content quality



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ABOUT BRIDGEHEAD SOCIAL CARE

A division of Bridgehead Communications, Bridgehead Social Care is a specialist marketing, public relations, and political communications consultancy focused exclusively on the adult social care sector.

Our expert team includes former national print and broadcast journalists as well as senior policy advisers with an in-depth understanding of the adult social care landscape.

We help care homes, both large and small, to drive their self-funding occupancy rates. Our support covers marketing campaigns, public relations, media coverage, reputation management, social media, and SEO.

Our clients and the services they require are broad. They include care bodies looking to rebrand or market themselves more effectively; providers seeking to raise the profile of their care service provision through both digital and traditional media; those seeking to navigate a hostile media environment; as well as individuals and organisations looking to have their voice and opinions heard among key sector decision makers.

For more information, please visit our website: www.bridgeheadcommunications.com/social-care. Or contact us directly on:

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Yours faithfully,

William Walter,
Managing Director,
Bridgehead Communications



Our core services include:



Marketing
& Content
Production



Profile
Promotion



Crisis
Communication
& Reputation
Management



Regulatory
& Political
Engagement



Campaign
Management

2. OVERVIEW AND KEY FINDINGS

Social media is an increasingly important mechanism to support stakeholder engagement in the social care sector.

Last year, we produced a series of reports investigating the use of social media among the country's leading care home groups. Following the success of this research, we have decided to publish a second series of reports, updating our analysis to include those groups – and their homes – at the forefront of care provision in 2024.

In this, the third and final report in the series, we examine the use and applications of social media in the adult social care sector using **carehome.co.uk's list of the Top 20 Large Care Home Groups 2024**. We construct a 'power list' of runners and riders among these leading care groups and each of their respective homes, unveiling the statistics behind their social media use, uncovering which platforms they use most prominently, and assessing what precisely they use these platforms for.

Our research has uncovered some interesting trends. First, the comparatively significant presence of TikTok among the largest care home groups compared to those of a small and medium size. Among large care home groups, TikTok accounted for seven per cent of the overall follower count. Among small and mid-sized groups, the platform accounted for less than one per cent.

Second, the growing use of LinkedIn as a platform for social media use compared to previous years.

In our 2023 report, the overall tally of followers on LinkedIn among the then top twenty groups stood at 211,700. Now, it stands at almost 350,000, an increase of more than 60 per cent. It accounts for more than one-fifth of the overall following of the Top 20 Large Care Home groups, rising as a proportion by three percentage points on last year's figures.

We uncovered the same trend in both our small and mid-sized reports in this series. In the former, LinkedIn use increased as a proportion of the total followings by 30 per cent compared with 2023, and in the latter it increased by eight per cent.

Interestingly, though, the rise of LinkedIn use among large care home groups has not meant a decline in the number or proportion of Facebook followers – the most commonly used social media platform of all. In fact, the total Facebook following of the Top 20 Large Care Home Groups this year stands at over 1,000,000 – a rise from 700,000 last year. The platform now accounts for 63 per cent of the of the total followings of all groups, increasing from 60 per cent in our previous report.

The only platform that has undergone a decline in its overall figures since our 2023 report was TikTok, falling in number from 117,200 to 114,777 and in proportion from ten to seven per cent.

Though neither X nor Instagram declined in total number, their proportion of the total followings of the top twenty groups did fall. X fell from 9 per cent to 7 per cent, while Instagram fell from 1.6 per cent to 1.3 per cent.

A detailed exploration of these findings is offered in the analysis that follows.

To lay the groundwork in our understanding, though, it's important to first understand the nature of social media platforms themselves. As with last year's reports, we look at five of the most popular and relevant social media platforms to the adult social care sector: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok. We explore which are growing in size and influence, and which are not. Within our analysis, we also consider the implications of the age demographics of each platform's user base.

Using this information, we then identify the most appropriate platforms for social media use in the sector, exploring the most effective applications of each including in community-building, marketing, reputation management, and domestic and overseas recruitment.

We then reveal the raw statistics behind the social media use of the Top 20 Large Care Home Groups 2024.

After analysing our results, we turn our attention to the relative merits of group versus individual care home social media accounts to help you determine which is likely to be most effective for your group or home's needs.

KEY FINDINGS

By platform

Since 2019, and of the five social media channels analysed in this study, **TikTok** has enjoyed both the largest numerical **and** the largest proportional increase in total user numbers in the UK.

The app has increased from around 5 million active users in 2019 to more than **23 million** in 2023.

Each of the three largest platforms (**Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn**) have risen by around **11 million** between 2019 and 2023, with Instagram witnessing the highest proportional growth (**47 per cent**).

Facebook has the largest number of users across all age ranges apart from those aged 25-34.

In the **25-34** age category Facebook was beaten by **LinkedIn**, which has an estimated **18 million** users in the age group.

KEY FINDINGS

By Care Group

The Top 20 Large Care Home Groups 2024 had a combined total of **1,628,806 followers** across the five platforms.

Facebook followers constituted **63 per cent** of this figure. LinkedIn accounted for **21 per cent**, X for around **8 per cent**, TikTok for **7 per cent**, and Instagram for **1.3 per cent**.

Barchester Healthcare (276,678) was the clearest statistical outlier in total follower statistics. Its combined total stood around **25,000 followers** higher than its closest competitor, Care UK (252,500).

Barchester's statistics were fuelled by a significant **Facebook following (201,925)** – the highest of all groups.

Care UK had the highest number of **LinkedIn followers (101,272)** across its group and home accounts.

Anchor had the highest number of followers on both **X (formerly Twitter)** with **69,383**, on **Instagram** with **5,576**, and on **TikTok** with **40,778**.

Marham House Care Home, belonging to the Anchor group, topped the individual home leaderboard with **64,080 followers**, largely split between **Facebook** and **TikTok**.

Care UK topped the list of most-followed individual group accounts with **129,886 followers**. The vast majority of these **(101,000)** came from **X (Twitter)**.

3. INTRODUCTION

Social Media in Social Care

Effective engagement between care groups and their respective stakeholders is important to their successful operation and function. In the past, as [The Guardian observed in 2014](#), for various reasons the social care sector has historically been cautious with digital tools. This culture has now changed. Social media and its various platforms are becoming an increasingly important mechanism to support stakeholder engagement in the care sector.

For example, as well as being a social networking platform, Facebook is a popular business development and marketing tool through which care groups and their homes can showcase the quality of their service offering, activities, and events to both existing and prospective care-receivers and their families.

The platform, alongside others such as LinkedIn, is also proving an invaluable resource to help care groups address the significant recruitment challenges they face, particularly in the post-COVID environment. Used effectively, social media is helping groups to connect directly with applicants from the UK and overseas, driving up application rates, reducing their dependency on agency staff, and lowering costs.

Social media is also a useful tool for boosting staff morale. Across platforms care groups use social media to celebrate staff development and achievement.

This, in turn, supports recruitment by both promoting the opportunities that groups offer, as well as the culture that they encourage. It highlights their understanding of the importance of employee recognition and wellbeing to their target audience.



Facebook, alongside platforms such as LinkedIn, is proving an invaluable resource to help care groups address the significant recruitment challenges they face.

Social media platforms, particularly X, Facebook, and LinkedIn, are also proving to be invaluable campaigning tools. They allow care groups and those working within the sector to raise awareness of challenges affecting the industry among policymakers, the media, and the wider public.

The role of social media in amplifying the sector's voice became particularly apparent during the pandemic.

Since then, it has allowed the industry to highlight other issues, including the recruitment crisis, rising operating costs, and social care stigma, to key audiences.

Return on investment

Robust evidence quantifying the positive return on investment of social media in the social care sector is limited. Despite this, we can draw some insight from the findings of previous research into social media's applications in the healthcare sector.

One [US study published in 2014](#), for example, concluded that healthcare organisations were able to significantly increase their visibility and brand recognition using social media. Of those consumers surveyed for the study, 57 per cent felt that a brand's presence on social media positively influenced their choice to use that organisation's services. Similarly, 12.5 per cent of the healthcare organisations surveyed reported that they had attracted new patients through social media.

Major organisations, such as Skills for Care, now offer [guidance and 'top tips'](#) for how care providers can use social media. These include advice, for example, to look out for awareness days, to "be visual," and to remember hashtags. The page, and others like it that have sprung up in recent years, is testament to the increasing popularity of social media as a tool in the social care sector.

Our conversations with those leading marketing efforts at the most successful small and mid-sized care home groups made clear the increasing value of social media as a tool for business development.

Carl Roberts, Associate Sales and Marketing Director at **Boutique Care Homes**, said that social media platforms offer "a window into our homes for those researching care options." Kat Clayton, Sales and Marketing Director at **Berkley Care Group**, told us that their social media channels are a "great tool for highlighting the unique, luxury experience that we offer".

Given the continued growth in UK-based users of social media platforms (Chart 1) it seems reasonable to assume that the dividends from the effective use of social media have also multiplied.



Major organisations, such as Skills for Care, now offer guidance and 'top tips' for how care providers can use social media.

Users by Platform

To use social media effectively in the adult social care sector, understanding the underlying statistics behind their wider use is crucial.

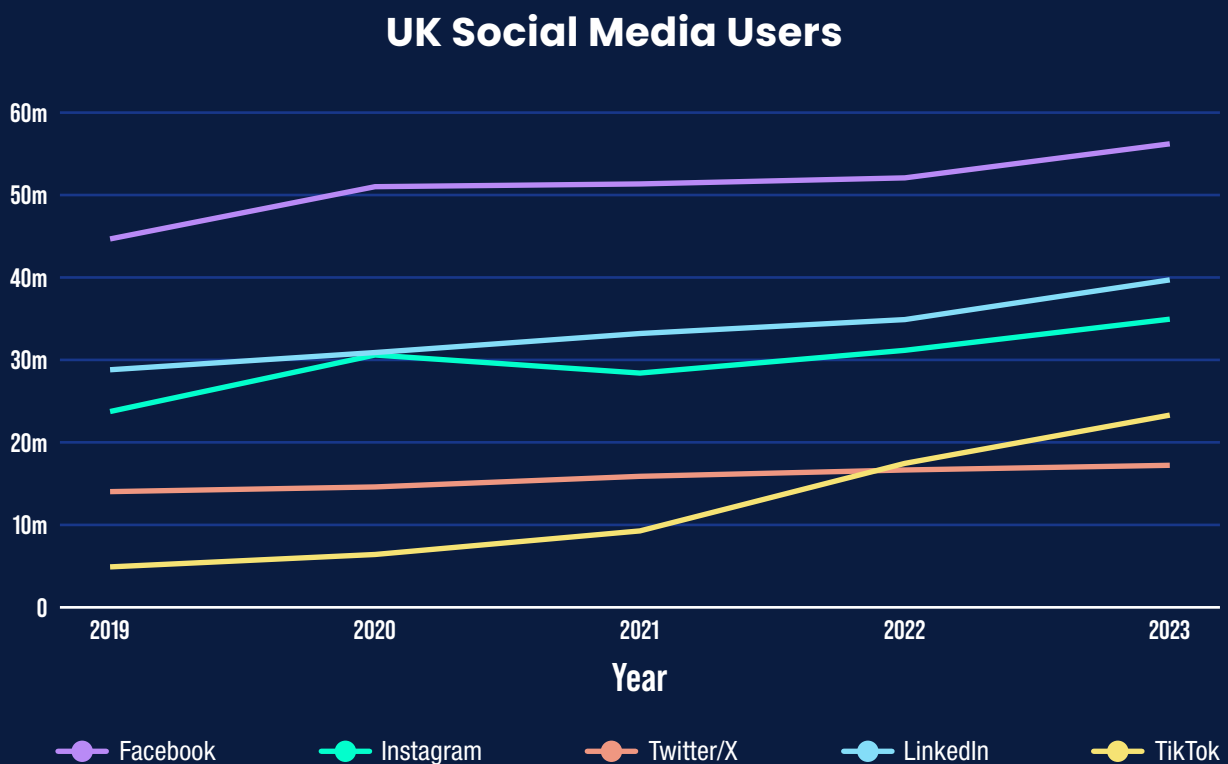


Chart 1

Chart 1¹ shows the growth in the number of UK users for the five most commonly used social media platforms in the social care sector. It reveals that, since 2019, TikTok has enjoyed the largest growth in terms of user numbers, increasing from around 5 million to more than 23 million in four years.

Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram have seen steady increases in user figures, each rising by around 11 million since 2019. Interestingly, Instagram has seen the largest proportional growth, increasing by around 47 per cent between 2019 and 2023.

¹ Sources: Facebook ([NapoleonCat](#)), Twitter ([Statista](#)), Instagram ([NapoleonCat](#)), LinkedIn ([NapoleonCat](#)), TikTok (Ofcom data, reported in [The Sun](#), [MSN](#), [GB News](#)).

Facebook and LinkedIn use has risen by 25 and 37 per cent respectively in the period.

Facebook's continued growth comes despite a common misconception that the platform is outdated and used predominantly by older generations.

Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram have seen a steady increase in user figures, each rising by around 11 million since 2019.

The chart also reveals that, over the last few years, Instagram and LinkedIn have grown in relative parallel, though it seems likely in the next five years that LinkedIn will take a wider lead given its higher growth rate. X's user base has also risen since 2019, though at a far less significant rate than its competitors. While estimates suggest its user base is likely to continue to grow, its annual percentage increases are anticipated to decline from around 5 per cent between 2022 and 2023 to less than one per cent between 2027 and 2028, per [Statista](#).

As noted, though, with a user growth rate of more than 400 per cent since 2019, TikTok – the newest entrant to the social media market – has seen by far the largest increase in volume of users (18,000,000).

However, with a user growth rate of more than 400 per cent since 2019, TikTok – the newest entrant to the social media market – has seen by far the largest increase in volume of users.

Demographics

It is not just the size of the prospective audience that informs the relevant applications of social media platforms, however. Other factors, particularly age, are also key. Chart 2 breaks down each platform's UK user base by age grouping.

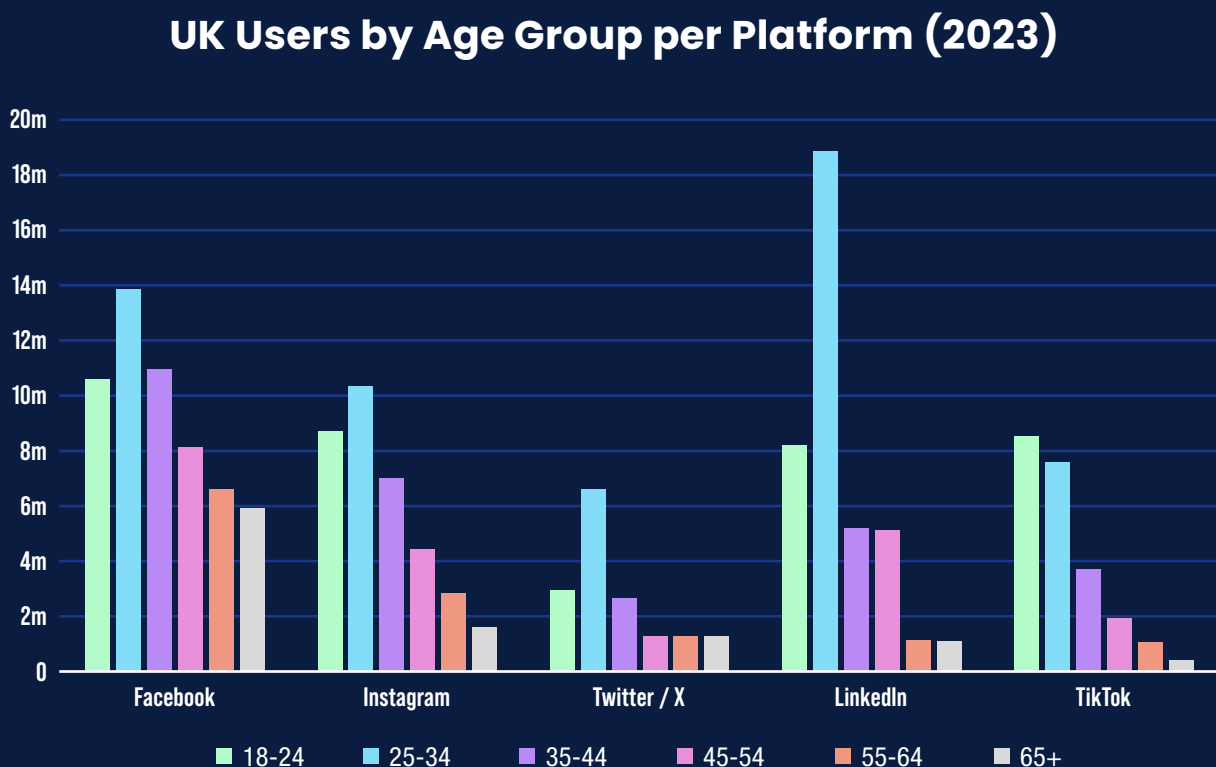


Chart 2

Chart 2² reveals that Facebook has the largest number of users across all age ranges apart from those aged between 25 and 34.

It is no surprise, therefore, that Facebook proves consistently to be the preferred platform for care groups and their homes.

2 Compiled using various data sources. Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn were populated using 2024 user data from [NapoleonCat](#). In the case of LinkedIn, all those aged over 55 were grouped in one category as well as those 35 to 54. To overcome this, we divided the userbase evenly over the 55-64 and 65+ groupings to give readers a rough indication of likely demographic. Similarly, in the case of Twitter, specific UK user data by age group is unavailable. Instead, the share of each platform's global userbase by age grouping (Twitter: [WhatsTheBigData](#) 2024) were applied to the total number of UK users ([Statista](#)). However, as with LinkedIn, inconsistencies in age groupings existed. Where these occurred the user numbers were divided evenly across the corresponding groups. The TikTok age breakdown was calculated by dividing the overall UK figure by the global age breakdowns ([Oberlo](#), accessed May 2024) to get a rough indication of the likely figures.

It dominates particularly among those aged 45 and above. In the over-65s category, it has more than three-and-a-half times as many followers (5,927,000) as its closest competitor, Instagram (1,607,000).

Despite its popularity with older demographics, the platform still enjoys a significant audience among younger people. Like LinkedIn, Instagram, and X, Facebook's largest user base is among those aged between 25-34.

LinkedIn's usership among those aged 25-34, numbering more than 18 million, is significantly higher than the other platforms, reflecting its popularity among young professionals. Its use among those aged 55 and over is particularly low.



Like LinkedIn, Instagram, and X, Facebook's largest user base is among those aged between 25-34.

Facebook and Instagram both share a relatively similar age distribution among their users: highest among 25-34-year-olds, followed by 18-24-year-olds and 35-44-year-olds.

TikTok's relatively recent entry and expansion is reflected in its younger user profile. 18- to 24-year-olds make up its largest user share, standing at more than eight million. As the platform continues to surge in popularity, it is likely that its relevance to the social care sector, particularly from a marketing and recruitment perspective, will become more significant. This suggests a clear opportunity for those social care providers looking to get ahead of their competitors to establish and develop their presence on the platform early.



As TikTok continues to surge in popularity it is likely that the platform's relevance to the adult social care sector will become more significant.

The Applications of Social Media in Adult Social Care

Recruitment

With the social care sector facing a chronic skills shortage, and potential future repercussions after a government crackdown on care worker visa rules, care providers are turning to more innovative tools to drive recruitment and reduce their reliance on agency staff. Social media, particularly in the form of Facebook and LinkedIn, is currently at forefront of this effort. Our research found that large-sized care groups were highly active in using social media for recruitment – considerably more so than mid-sized and small care groups.

Facebook is the site most often used to recruit for more junior care positions. The platform offers several advantages. It often boasts high levels of engagement among communities local to care homes. The platform's sophisticated advertising interface allows care homes to target recruitment ads accurately, whether it be locally, regionally, nationally, or even internationally.

Increasingly, as recruitment via social media becomes more sophisticated, care groups and their homes are creating dedicated '[care group or home name] – jobs' accounts for their recruitment campaigns. These are easy to access and readily appear in search results.

Hallmark Care Homes offers a good example of this method, having a designated account titled "Hallmark Luxury Care Homes Recruitment", which now boasts more than 3,500 followers.

The account shares details daily of career opportunities within the group, ranging from Carers and Nurses to Sous Chefs and Maintenance Operatives.

The same is the case for **Anchor**, whose 'Anchor Jobs' Facebook account records an impressive 16,000 followers. The account posts often to share vacancies, ranging from Care Home Manager to External Communications Manager, to its audience.

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Facebook and LinkedIn are currently at forefront of efforts to use innovative tools to tackle staff shortages.

Our analysis has also found that LinkedIn is a popular platform from which to share recruitment opportunities among care groups, though it is traditionally used by care providers to recruit for more senior roles. While many advertise roles in straightforward posts, the online professional network also enables employers to post roles via the platform's dedicated jobs portal, through which applicants can apply for roles directly.

The sophisticated nature of the platform offers recruiters a more precise means of targeting candidates; the ability to showcase their care group and homes; and a means by which to engage with passive candidates. Premium features also allow InMail messaging as well as information on who has viewed job advertisements.

Barchester Healthcare, for example, often uses LinkedIn to advertise a variety of roles, including Care Home Managers, Care Assistants and Clinical Psychologists.

Recruitment is not exclusive to Facebook and LinkedIn, however. The use of Instagram hashtags such as #adultsocialcarejobs are also being used by care homes and recruiters to connect with younger audiences to promote vacancies.

Similarly, and as previously discussed, TikTok is an emerging platform being used to attract new staff and advertise care vacancies among younger people. Though not yet prominent in the mainstream among large care home groups – just seven out of twenty had a TikTok account of any form, there are a small number who boast a significant presence, for example **Kingsley Healthcare** and **Excelcare Holdings**. Other care groups not included in this analysis, for example **HC-One**, have begun to pioneer the use of TikTok for recruitment purposes.

Awareness and Marketing

Social media is also a powerful marketing tool through which care groups and their homes can build awareness of the positive work they do and the services they provide. This is particularly useful in engaging local communities, prospective residents, their families, and job applicants. This can be achieved by sharing positive stories about staff, showcasing events taking place, and highlighting new additions to your home's facilities or projects your home has been involved in.

Facebook is often the most effective social media platform for sharing these stories as it allows for lengthy, personable posts, though LinkedIn is increasingly becoming a platform for these also.

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Though not yet mainstream among large care home groups, with just seven out of 20 owning an account, TikTok is an emerging platform being used to attract new staff and advertise care vacancies among younger people.

Ultimately, Facebook, LinkedIn, X, Instagram, and TikTok can all be used to market care groups and their homes, but there are key considerations that come with it. These include developing marketing objectives, identifying your target audience and effectively managing your brand identity.

Interaction and Enquiries

Social media platforms also enable prospective employees, residents, and their families to correspond directly with homes with any questions or queries they may have.

Facebook, LinkedIn, X, Instagram, and TikTok allow followers or interested parties to directly message accounts.

Policy Engagement and Campaigning

The adult social care sector is an ever-evolving industry that is being forced to embrace the advent of new technologies while also facing significant challenges in recruitment, retention, and funding amidst the backdrop of an ageing population.

The effective use of social media is giving the industry a platform to campaign on key issues that it previously has not had. Platforms like X allow for far reaching posts that enable care groups to engage in sector discussions with policymakers and journalists like never before.

Hashtags and handles mean care groups and their leaders can participate in conversations with key influencers in real-time. Internal industry campaigns such as #CelebratingSocialCare can be observed in the social media activity of care groups and are useful in raising awareness of different aspects of – and individuals within – the care sector.

While the level of background noise and online chatter has undeniably increased, there is little doubt that, used effectively, social media has given corners of the sector a voice that they never had before.

They are also able to hear perspectives from other quarters of the industry that they may have otherwise been oblivious to. This can only be a positive contribution towards debate and decision-making.

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4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Using carehome.co.uk’s list of the **Top 20 Large Care Home Groups 2024**, we collated the number of followers for each care group and their respective homes on each of the five major social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn and TikTok. All figures are of September 2024.

Followers by Care Group

Our analysis found that in total, across all five platforms, the groups and their respective care homes had a combined total of 1,628,806 followers. The Chart below breaks down the total followings of each of the top twenty care home groups.

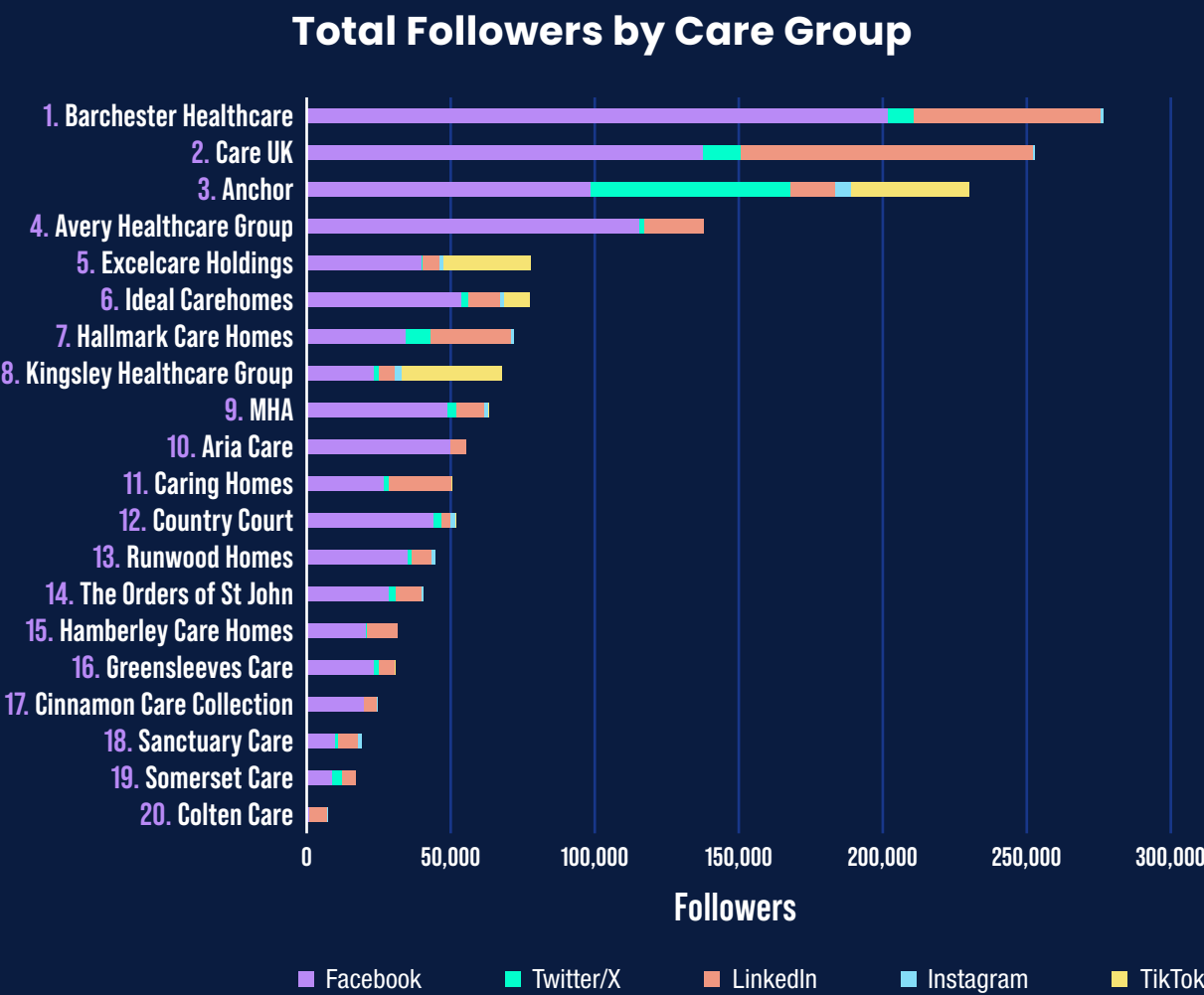


Chart 3

It was **Barchester Healthcare** that stood at the top of the rankings for social media followers of the Top 20 Large Care Groups, with a total of 276,678 followers. Facebook accounted for more than two-thirds of this total (201,925), with the remainder made up largely of LinkedIn (69,411) and X (8,874) followers. Barchester's total following has risen by 19 per cent since our last report of August 2023.

Care UK ranked second in our Social Media Power List, with 252,507 followers. Their cross-platform usage was more pronounced than that of Barchester, with more than 100,000 followers on both Facebook (137,621) and LinkedIn (101,272). Smaller followings also came on X (13,200) and Instagram (414).

Anchor, who ranked third for total social media followers with 229,997, also had a diverse presence across several platforms. This included a significant X following – the highest of all groups – at 69,383, and large Facebook (98,507) and LinkedIn (15,753) statistics.

Follower Growth Since 2023

In order to paint a picture of how individual care home groups are growing in their use of social media, we conducted a comparative analysis of the follower totals of the care home groups that appeared in our last report, in 2023, with those that appear in this. Due to the changing composition of the Top 20 Large Care Home Groups year by year, just 16 of the current 20 remain consistent. In the chart below, we reveal how each group's tallies have grown over the last twelve months.

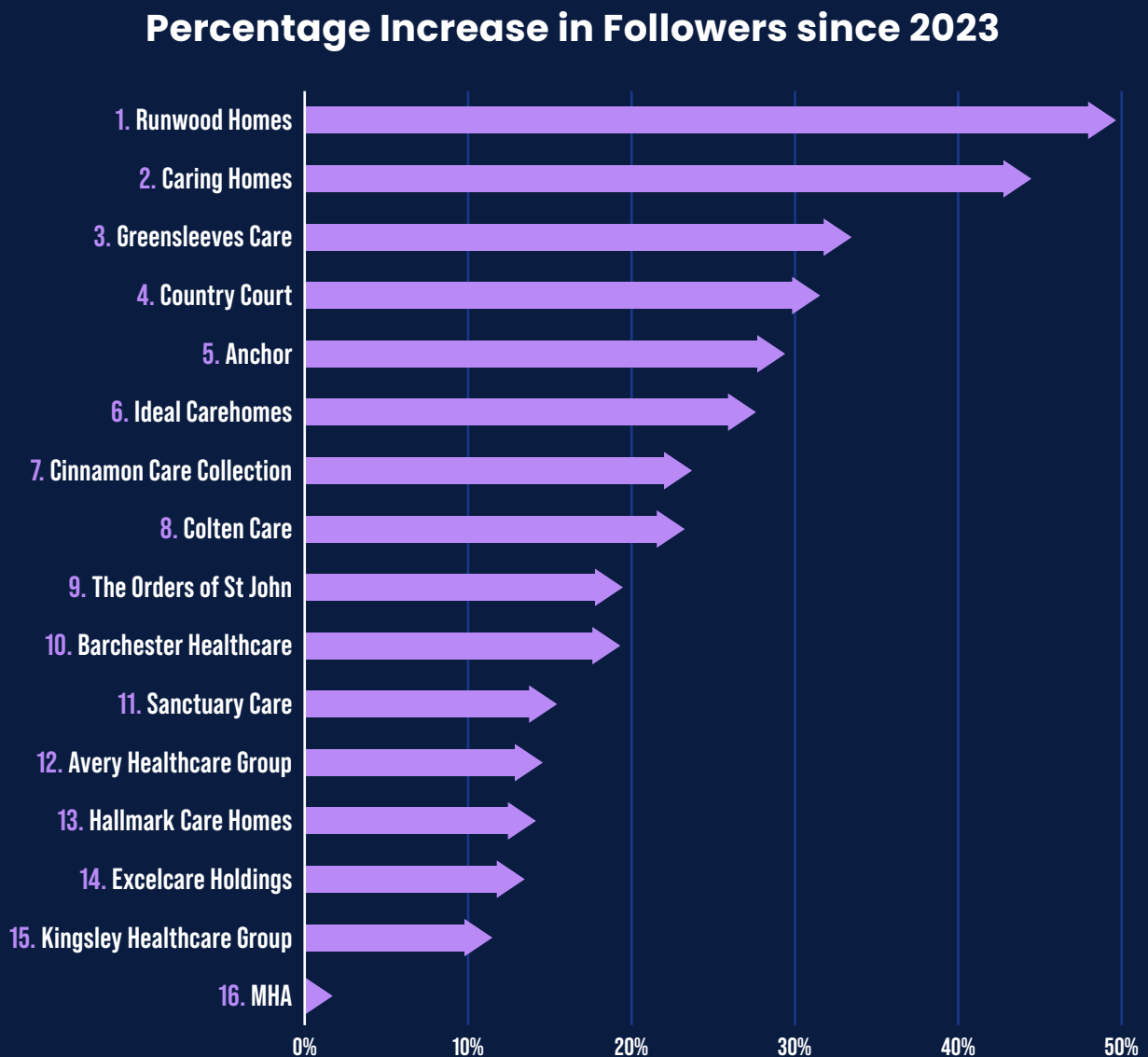


Chart 4

Over the last 12 months, as demonstrated, it was the **Runwood Homes** group that underwent the most significant expansion in their total social media following, with figures rising by 50 per cent. Interestingly, much of this growth materialised in an increase in followers among their individual care homes, where the overall tally has risen by 82 per cent since 2023.

Following close behind Runwood Homes came the **Caring Homes** group, whose overall tally increased by 45 per cent. Then came **Greensleeves Care**, who grew by 34 per cent. The overall following of **Country Court Care Homes** grew by around 32 per cent, while **Anchor's** increased by 29 per cent.

Given Runwood Homes' success in enhancing their social media presence over the last 12 months, we wanted to hear from those behind driving growth in the group's online presence.

Case Study: Runwood Homes

We sat down with Paige Murray, Head of Marketing and Recruitment at Runwood Homes. Here's what she told us about their relationship with social media.



At Runwood Homes, we are proud to be recognised for such a significant achievement in our social media journey: a 50 per cent growth in followers across our platforms over the last year.

This success was the result of a collaborative effort that brought together the marketing team, home managers, carers, and most importantly, the residents themselves. This combined effort helped to showcase the vibrant lifestyle of Runwood Homes, which has proved useful in attracting the attention of prospective new residents and their families.

The marketing team and I played a pivotal role in designing and executing a content strategy that placed particular emphasis on highlighting the unique daily activities and experiences offered at each and every one of our homes. Our creative approach focused on authenticity and capturing moments that showed the joyful and fulfilling lives of our residents.

Our social media success would not have been possible without the active participation of home managers and carers, who worked hand-in-hand with the marketing team. Their efforts ensured that daily activities such as art classes, musical performances, and community events were consistently documented and shared online. This helped prospective residents and their families get a true sense of the lively, engaging environment on offer at Runwood Homes.

The remarkable 50 per cent growth in followers across our social media platforms in 2024 is just the beginning. This achievement highlights the strength of teamwork and the power of authentic storytelling.

We are excited to see how our social media journey evolves. We cannot wait to share more inspiring stories and engaging moments from life at Runwood Homes and we look forward to seeing what new heights we'll reach in the future!

- Paige Murray,
Head of Marketing and
Recruitment,
Runwood Homes

Social Media Platforms as Proportions

Chart 4 explores the breakdown, by platform, of the followings of the Top 20 Large Care Groups. It reveals that approximately 63 per cent (1,022,128) of the overall follower count came from Facebook, 21 per cent (346,430) from LinkedIn, 8 per cent (124,468) from X (Twitter), 7 per cent (114,777) from TikTok, and just over one per cent (21,035) from Instagram.

Total Social Media Followers by Platform

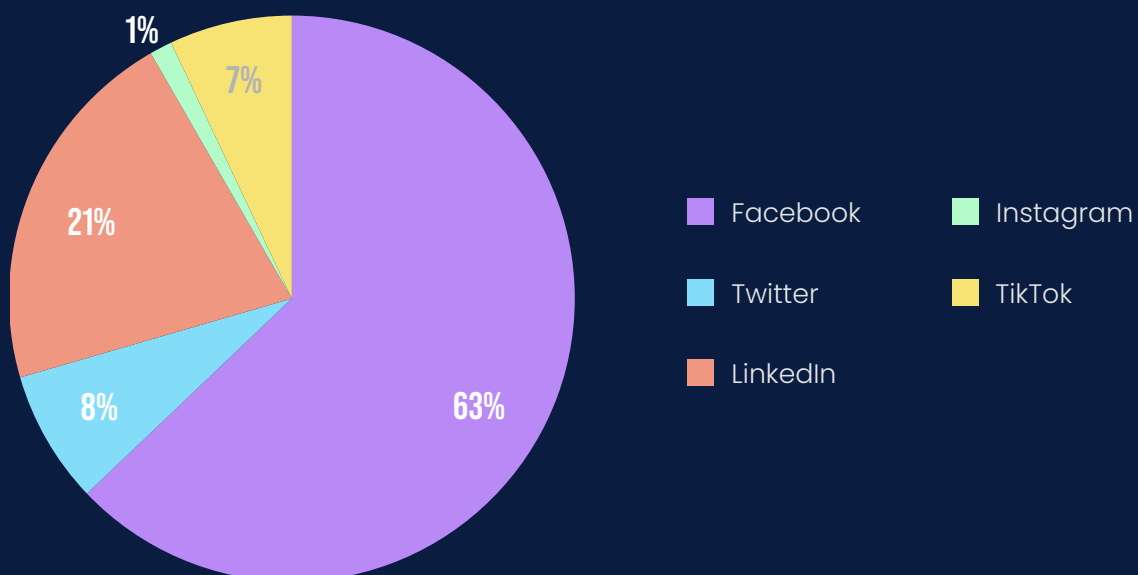


Chart 5

The dominance of Facebook is unsurprising given the relative size of its user base and the age profile of its users, combined with the platform's suitability for sharing personal, more in-depth posts featuring images.

The Facebook figures represent an increase of more than 330,000 when compared with the figures of the 2022 Top 20 Large Care Home Groups, whose statistics we analysed last year.

As a percentage, this represents an increase of around 46 per cent.

The median total Facebook following of these groups – all of which had at least one Facebook account across their group and homes – was 38,300.

The chart below reveals how the proportion of followers from each social media platform has changed since our last report:

% Platform Use 2023 vs 2024

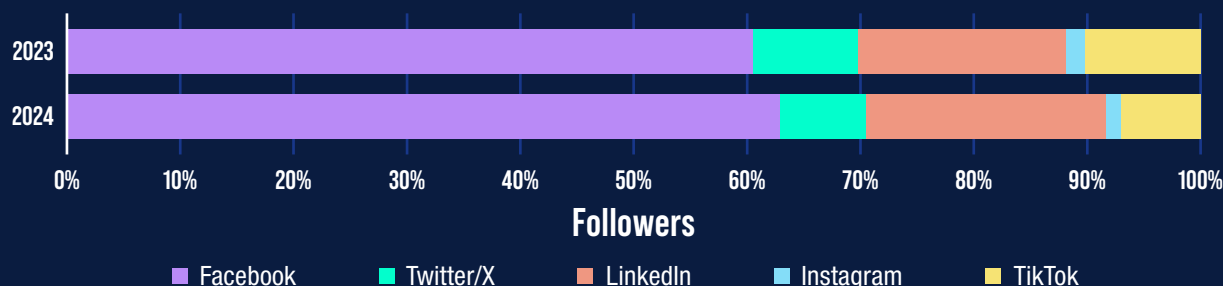


Chart 6

When compared with our investigation into the social media use of small and mid-sized care home groups, the shift towards LinkedIn among larger care home groups appears more muted. While it increased numerically by more than 130,000, in proportion it rose by just 3 per cent.

Comparative growth suggests that LinkedIn is nonetheless growing at a higher rate than Facebook. Since 2023, the number of Facebook followers among the Top 20 Large Care Home Groups has risen by 47 per cent. In the same period, the number of LinkedIn followers increased by 63 per cent.

LinkedIn is used by all twenty groups in a variety of ways. On the platform, care groups share a wide array of posts, including highlighting big occasions marked across their homes, advertising vacancies, celebrating new recruits, offering helpful tips and advice for care provision, and marking major industry dates such as Carers Week and Good Care Month.

The figures for X have declined as a proportion of the care groups' overall followings, yet not in number. Admittedly though, the X following of **Anchor**, which at 69,383 accounts for more than one half of the total, highly skews the overall figure. Removing them from the equation, the average followings of the groups that do have X accounts stands at around 3,060. Just one group, Colten Care, does not have an account on X at all.

Instagram followings have risen modestly since last year's investigation, increasing from 18,419 to 21,035. Interesting to note is that this tally is lower than the overall Instagram following of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Group, as we discovered in the previous report in this series.

TikTok is the only platform in which the volume of followers has declined since last year. It fell from 117,208 to 114,562. Important to note, though, is that only a minority of the Top 20 Large Care Home Groups have a presence on the platform. The overall figure is fuelled almost entirely by the following of accounts belonging to **Anchor** (40,778), **Kingsley Healthcare** (34,771), and **Excelcare** (30,187).

Breakdown by Home

Chart 7 reveals the social media use of the top ten most-followed care homes among the Top 20 Large Care Home Groups 2024.

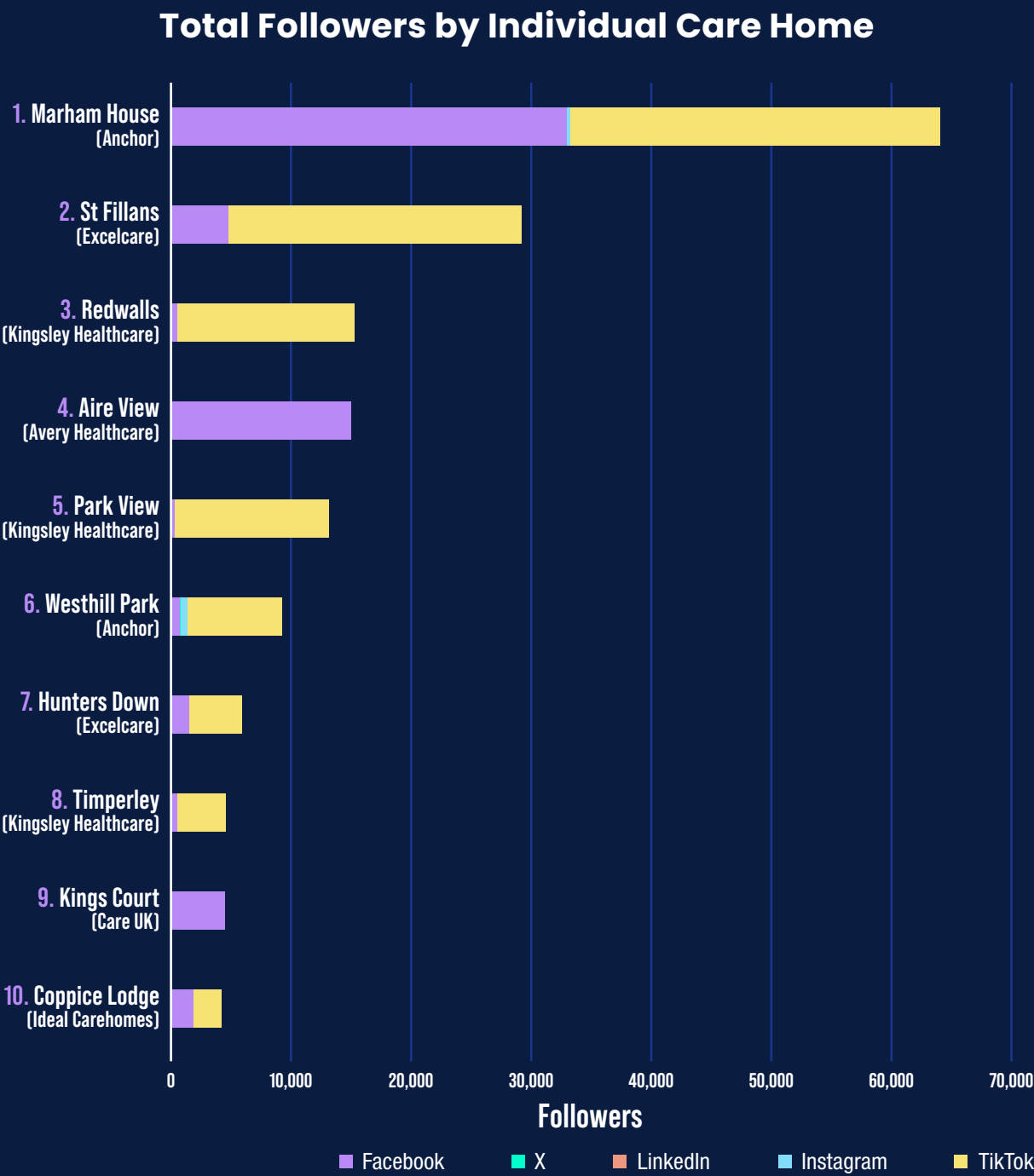


Chart 7

It is **Marham House Care Home**, belonging to the **Anchor** group, which dominates. With 64,060 followers – split almost equally between Facebook and TikTok, the home records more than double the follower count of the home in second place.

Marham House is exceedingly rare in its significant TikTok presence. On the platform, it tends towards humorous videos of events and moments in the home. One particular video on their page has thus far garnered **almost half a million likes**. On Facebook, the home posts multiple times a day, sharing activities, events, staff and residents to their 33,000 followers.

In second place came **St Fillan's Care Home**, belonging to **Excelcare**. As with Marham House, St Fillan's maintained a significant TikTok presence of more than 24,000. Posts on the account are, however, relatively sporadic. Its Facebook account, which has more than 4,800 followers, is thus more useful in offering an impression of how the home uses social media. As with many other homes, they take to social media to share images and videos of events in the home, trips away, and the celebrations of residents on birthdays and wedding anniversaries.

Following behind St Fillan's Care Home in third and fourth place came **Redwalls Nursing Home** and **Aire View Care Home**, belonging to **Kingsley Healthcare** and **Avery Healthcare** respectively. Both had just over 15,000 followers, though Redwalls' tally came almost entirely from TikTok, while Aire View's came exclusively from Facebook.

A graph displaying the followings of each of the remaining 1,284 homes featured in our analysis can be found at the end of this report.

The total following of all care homes belonging to the Top 20 Large Care Home Groups stood at 1,071,589, or approximately two-thirds of the overall followings of the groups.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, it was Facebook that dominated social media use among individual care homes. In fact, it constituted more than 83 per cent of the total following of the more than 1,200 homes featured in our analysis. More interesting, perhaps, was the fact that TikTok accounted for around 11 per cent of the total. X accounted for around six per cent, Instagram for less than one per cent, and LinkedIn for zero.

The average following of each home that had a social media account of any form was approximately 935.

Only around 150 homes did not have an identifiable account on any social media platform. In some cases, though, such as with the **Orders of St John Care Trust**, several homes in a region are represented by one social media account. This is the case with the care group in Lincoln, whose 'OSJCT Lincoln' account covers several homes in one.

In many of the remaining cases, though, this is a result of a care group having one social media account under its group name, as opposed to individual ones for each home.

But what exactly do these group accounts look like?

Breakdown by Group Account

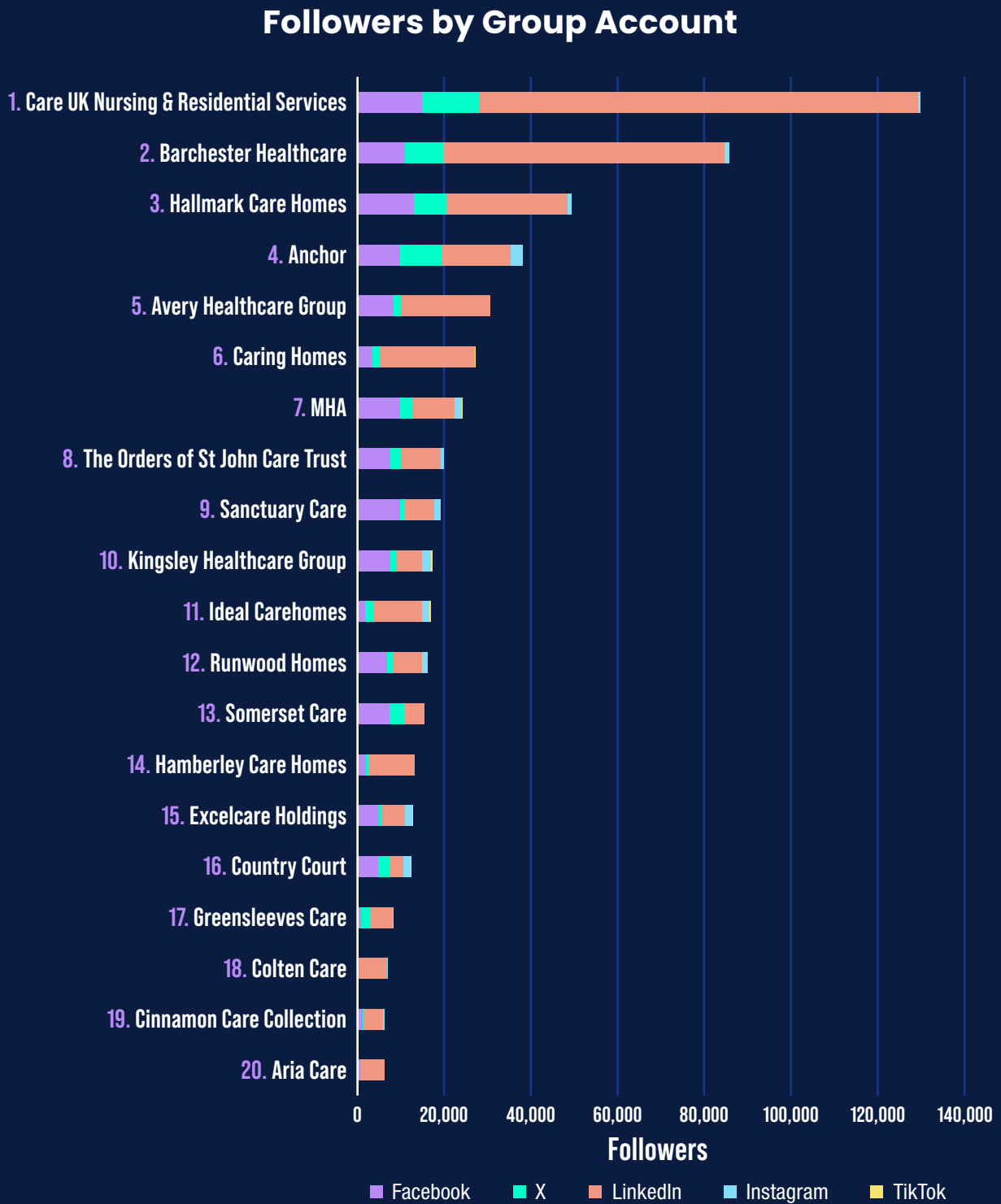


Chart 8

The overall social media following of group-specific accounts totalled 556,405, or just over one-third of the total following of the Top 20 Large Care Home Groups. Interestingly, this is several percentage points lower than the proportion of overall followings that these accounts made up in our mid-sized report.

In the same way that Facebook dominated social media use among individual care homes, it was LinkedIn that proved the platform of choice for group-specific accounts. It constituted 62 per cent of the overall tally. Facebook accounted for 23 per cent of the total, X for 11 per cent, and Instagram for 3 per cent. TikTok's presence was negligible.

The group with the most followers on its group-specific account was **CareUK**. The vast majority of their 130,000 followers came from LinkedIn, though they retained a strong presence on X and Facebook, too.

Following behind was **Barchester Healthcare**, who boasted an impressive 85,753 followers. As with Care UK, the majority of this figure came from LinkedIn, but the care group maintained a similarly strong presence on Facebook and X.

In third, fourth and fifth place came **Hallmark Care Homes** (49,386), **Anchor** (38,061), and **Avery Healthcare Group** (30,677). For Hallmark and Avery, the majority of their followers came from LinkedIn. For Anchor, though, their use of social media was more diverse. They boasted 10,000 followers on Facebook, 9,600 on X, 15,700 on LinkedIn, and 2,600 on Instagram.

The average overall following of each care group across all platforms stood at 27,820. Every group had a social media account of some form.

5. GROUP ACCOUNTS VS. INDIVIDUAL HOME ACCOUNTS

The decision to use group social media accounts, individual home accounts, or a hybrid model is not as clear cut as one may think. It is influenced by a variety of factors, including the number and geographical distribution of homes within your group, and the dynamics between homes and the wider group. Below we set out some of the key factors to consider in making decisions about social media in your care group.

Dispersion

Operating several different accounts can slow your audience growth rate, as engagement on posts and follower numbers become dependent on the amount of effort individual managers and social media personnel put into each home's account.

Time

It is also a question of managing resources. Single group accounts can be a more efficient use of staff resources, avoiding spending too much time switching between home accounts to publish individual, tailored content.

Consistency of Brand and Messaging

Having group accounts makes it easier to ensure consistency of brand and messaging, optimising the effectiveness of social media marketing campaigns.

Promotion

Importantly, operating as one group account allows you to promote positive stories and innovations as one cohesive brand, allowing each home to enjoy access to a wider user base, following, and access to a larger resource of positive news and events. This means that a home will benefit from the same exposure and followers as the others in your group. The risk, however, is that your larger potential audience becomes less targeted and less relevant to each individual home.

Benefits of Individual Accounts

More targeted and tailored

Individual group accounts offer care homes a degree of flexibility when publishing content tailored specifically to their target local audience. With a groupwide account, you would be publishing content that may not be specific to certain prospective customers.

Reduced reputational risk

While one overarching group account is good for brand awareness and promotion, there are risks that individual accounts can mitigate. Having one group account can increase the chance of your brand's reputation being negatively impacted by an incident that may otherwise be easier to contain with siloed social media accounts.

If your homes are scattered across the country, or indeed countries, and operate in local communities, then a more granular and bottom-up approach to running their social media is likely to produce better results. People may not want to consume everything your group has to offer, just what is relevant to them and their needs.

After all, it is those who run your homes on the ground who know this local community the best and will arguably be more aware of events that occur in it, as well as its needs. This knowledge is invaluable to ensuring that your individual homes remain connected to their communities, and localised accounts can ensure these connections are in real-time.

Offering advice

People enjoy personability, being able to contact who they need directly, and receiving a response quickly. A top-down approach to managing queries or complaints can appear as inauthentic, and it can slow down the process of dealing with them.

Having an individual account for each of your homes' identities can mean that people in their respective communities who use or wish to use your service can have their queries and concerns addressed in a more personal manner, improving the reputation of your homes in their communities. After all, these are their potential residents.

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Striking a balance

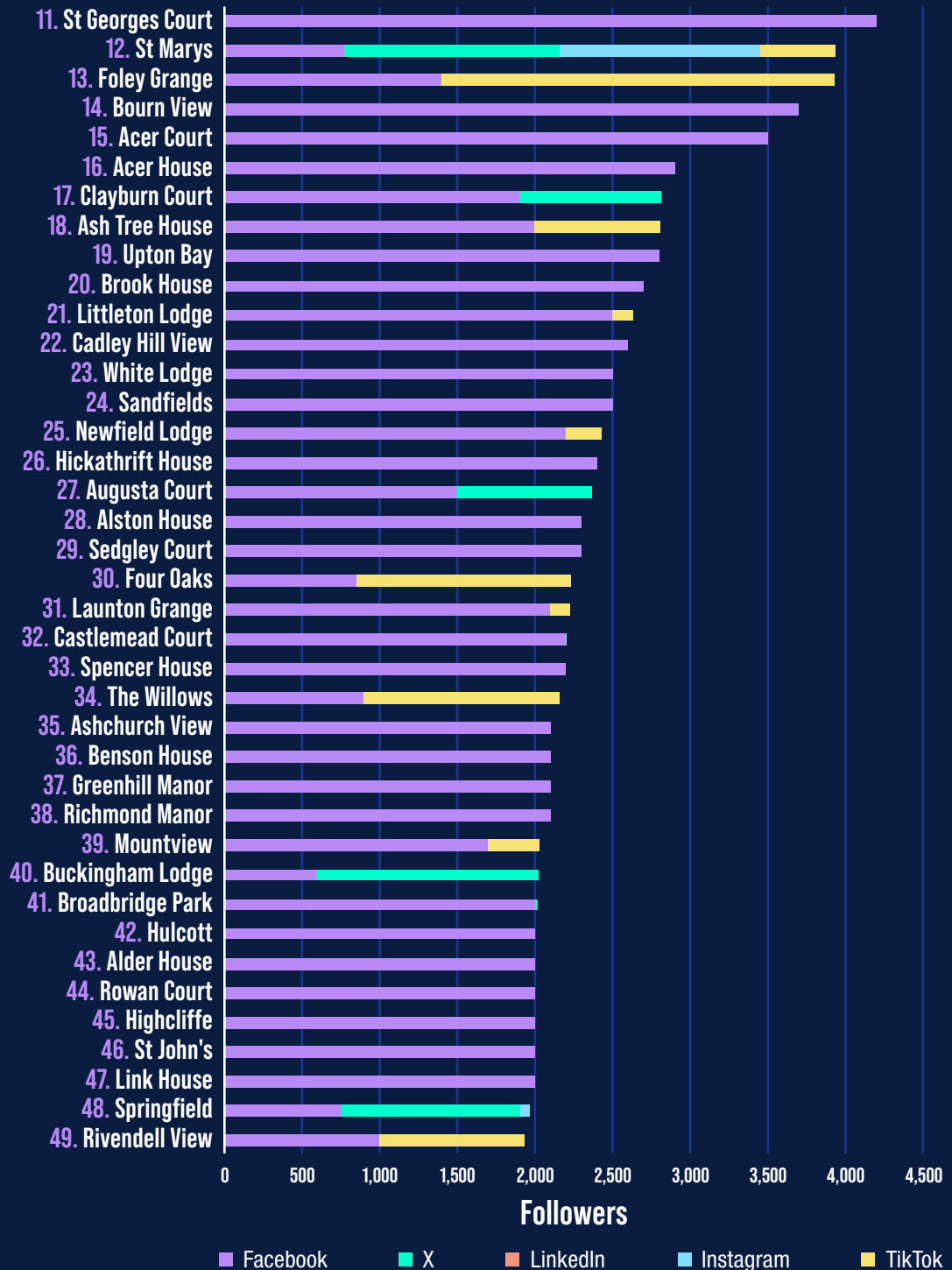
Often the most effective approach for care groups is to employ a hybrid model employing the use of both group and individual home accounts. It is important, though, to create a recognisable and uniform brand using your own logo but applying it equally and uniformly to all the respective homes with social media channels that you manage.

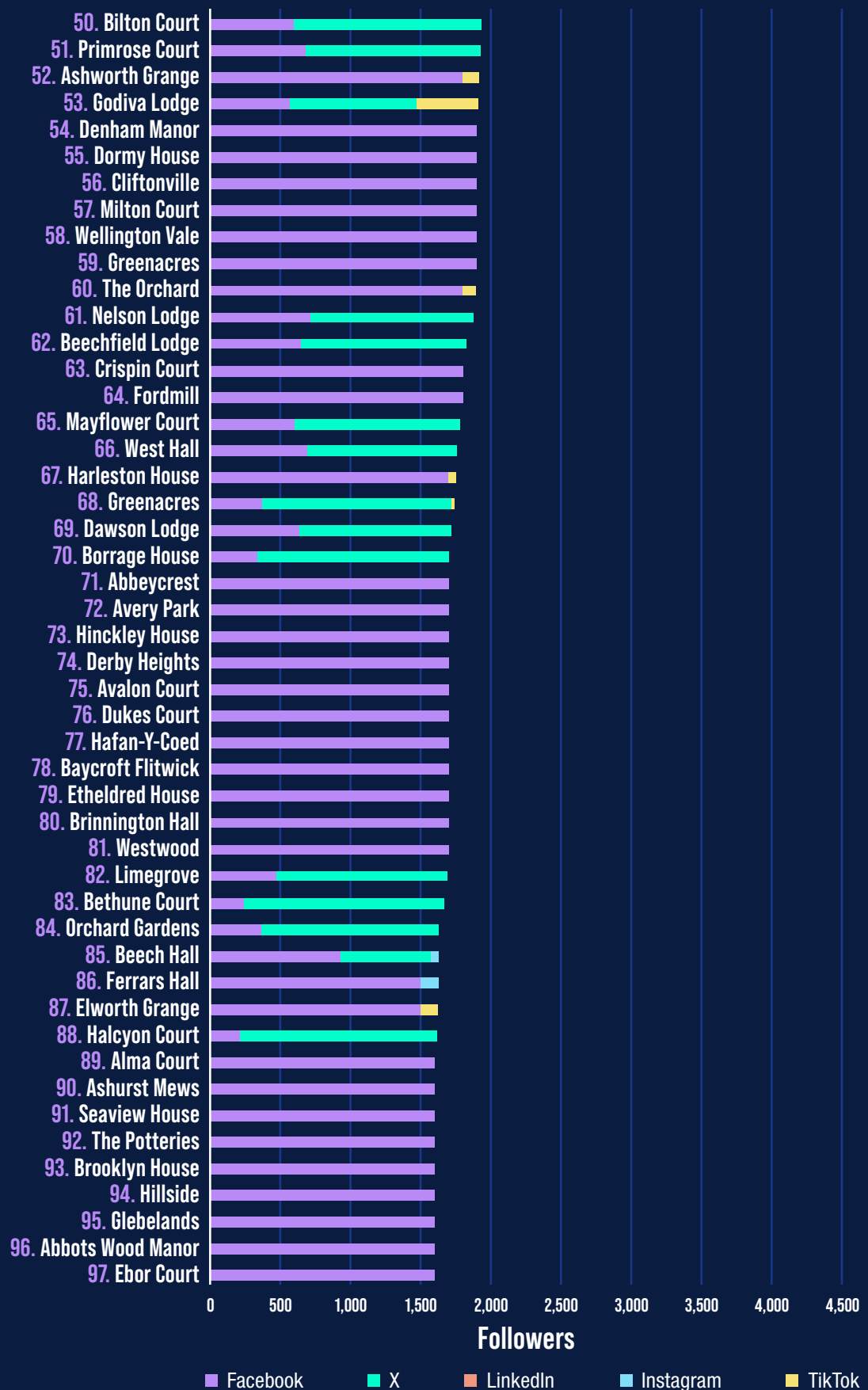
Two good examples of this fusion would be **Caring Homes** and **Hamberley Care Homes**. In the former, its group accounts account for around 53 per cent of followers across all social media, and in the latter group accounts account for around 42 per cent. Both combine the corporate and local blend that a hybrid method can facilitate.

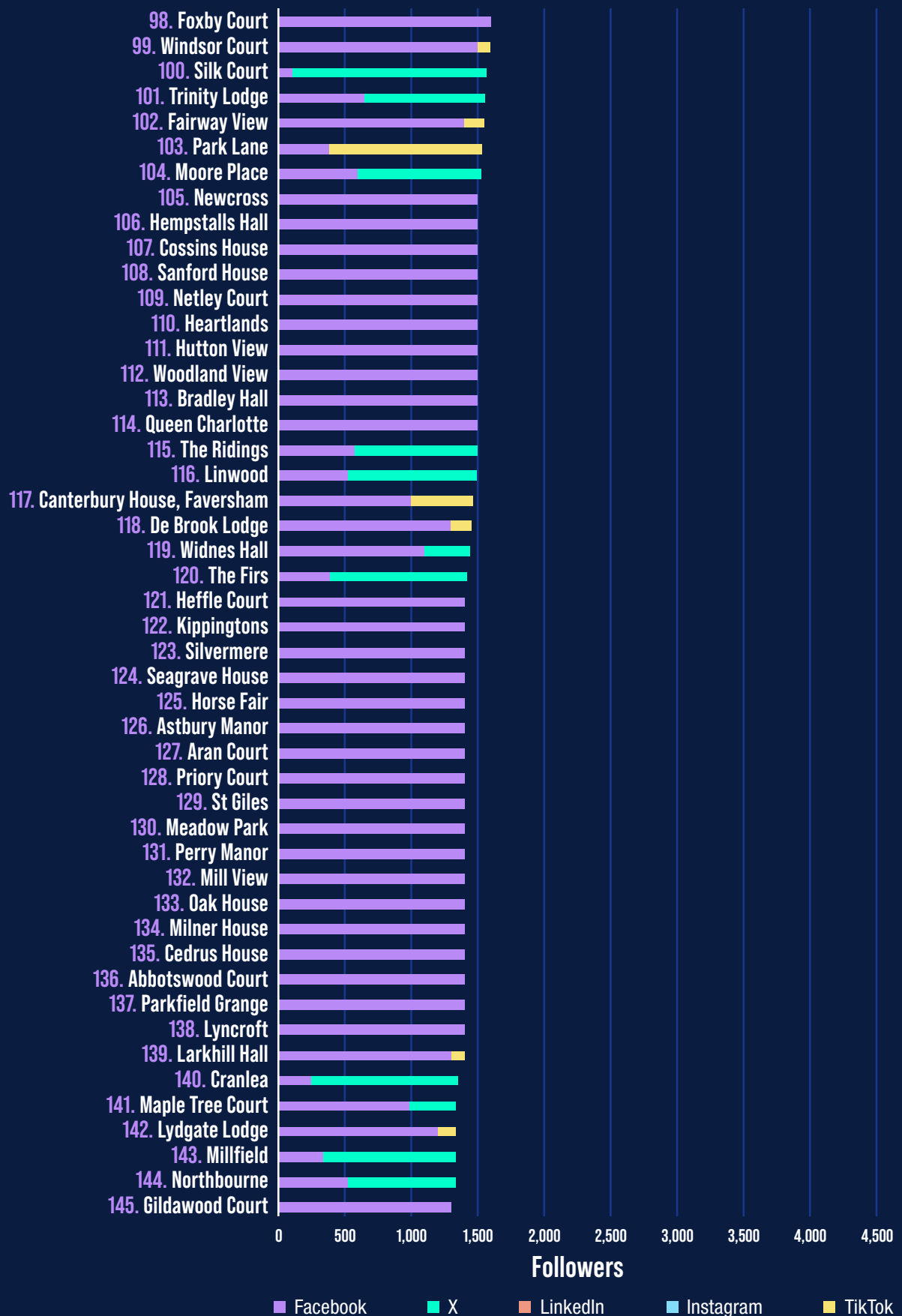
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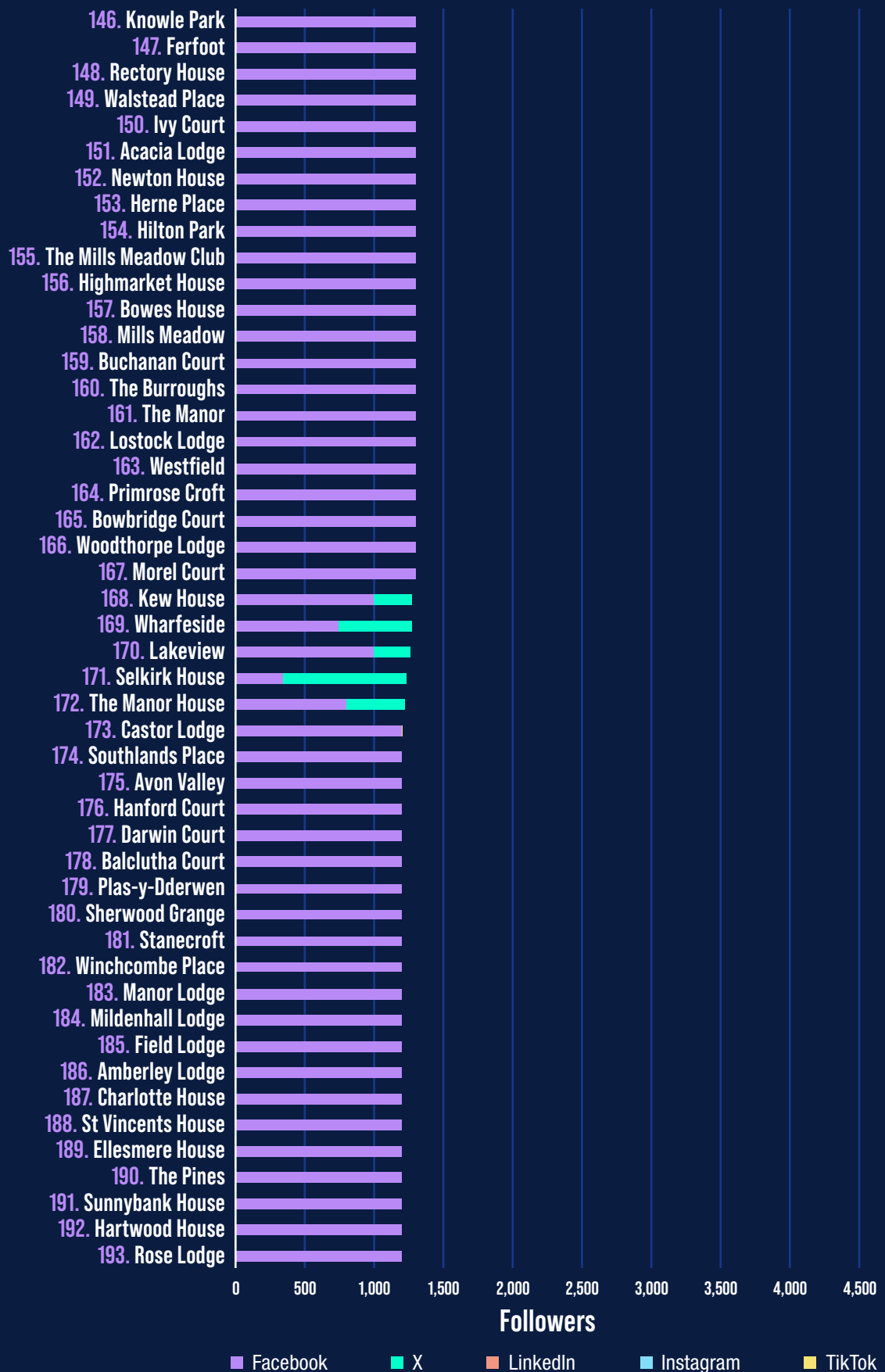
Individual Care Homes – Rankings 11 – 1,284.

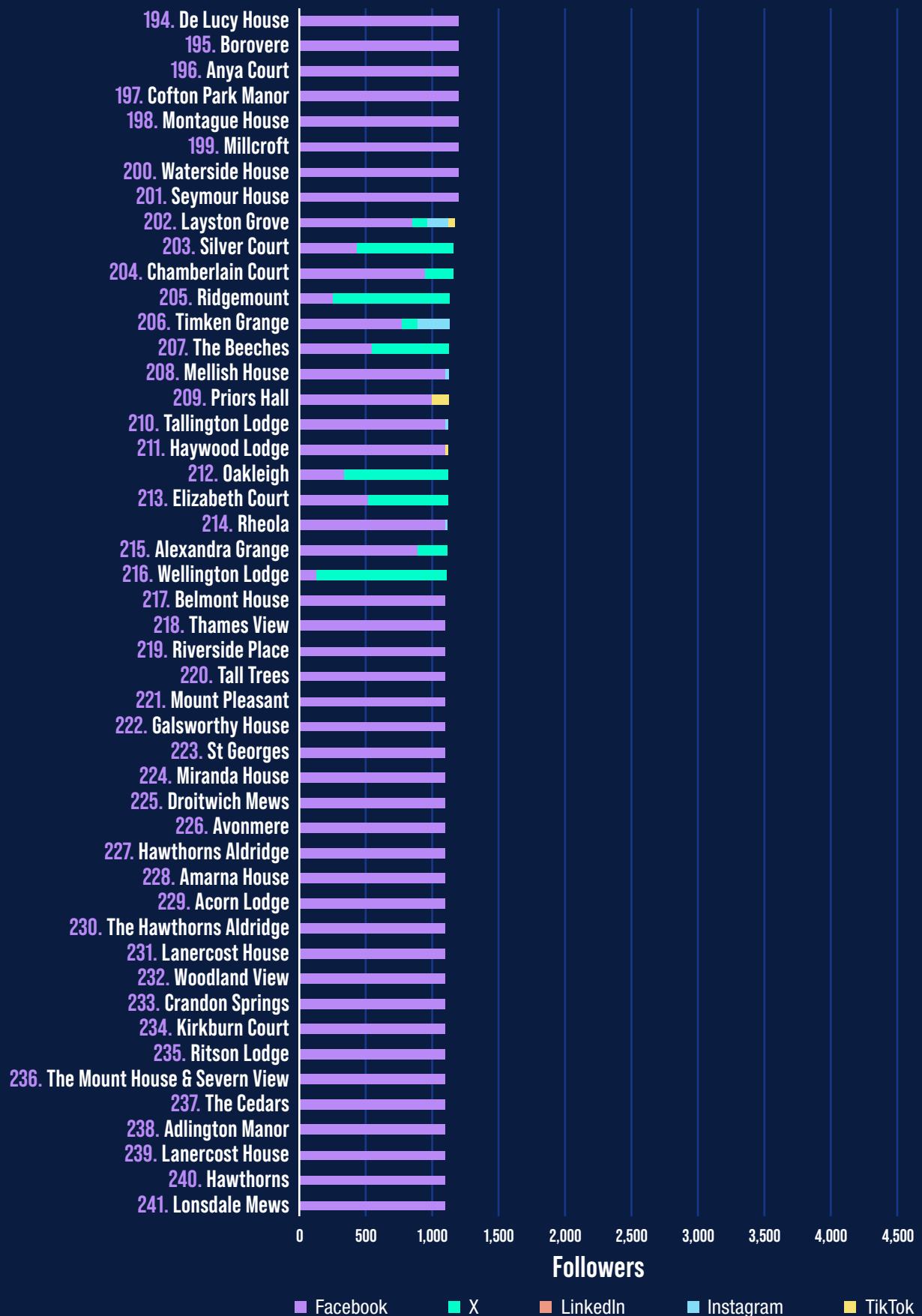
Total Followers by Individual Care Home

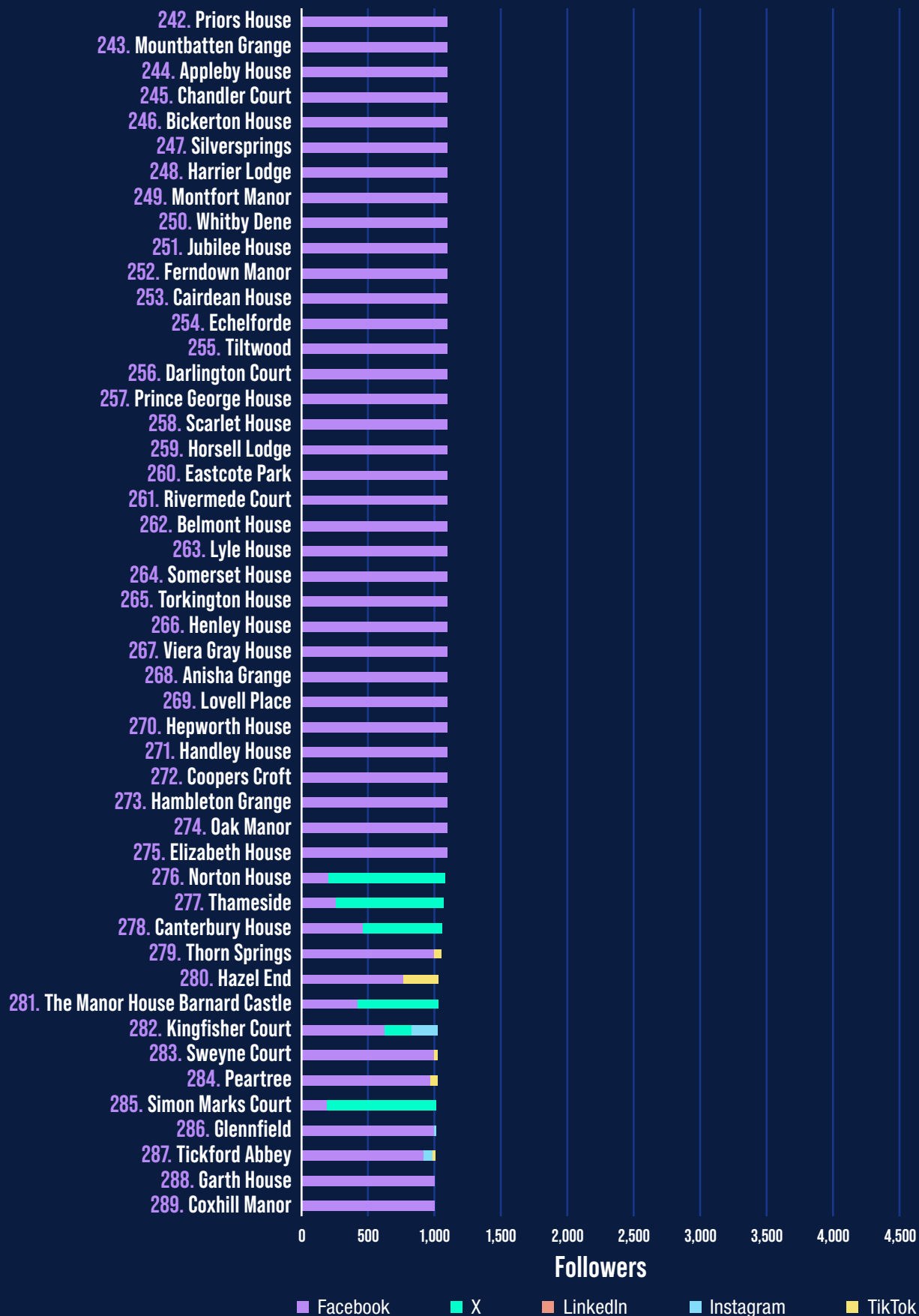


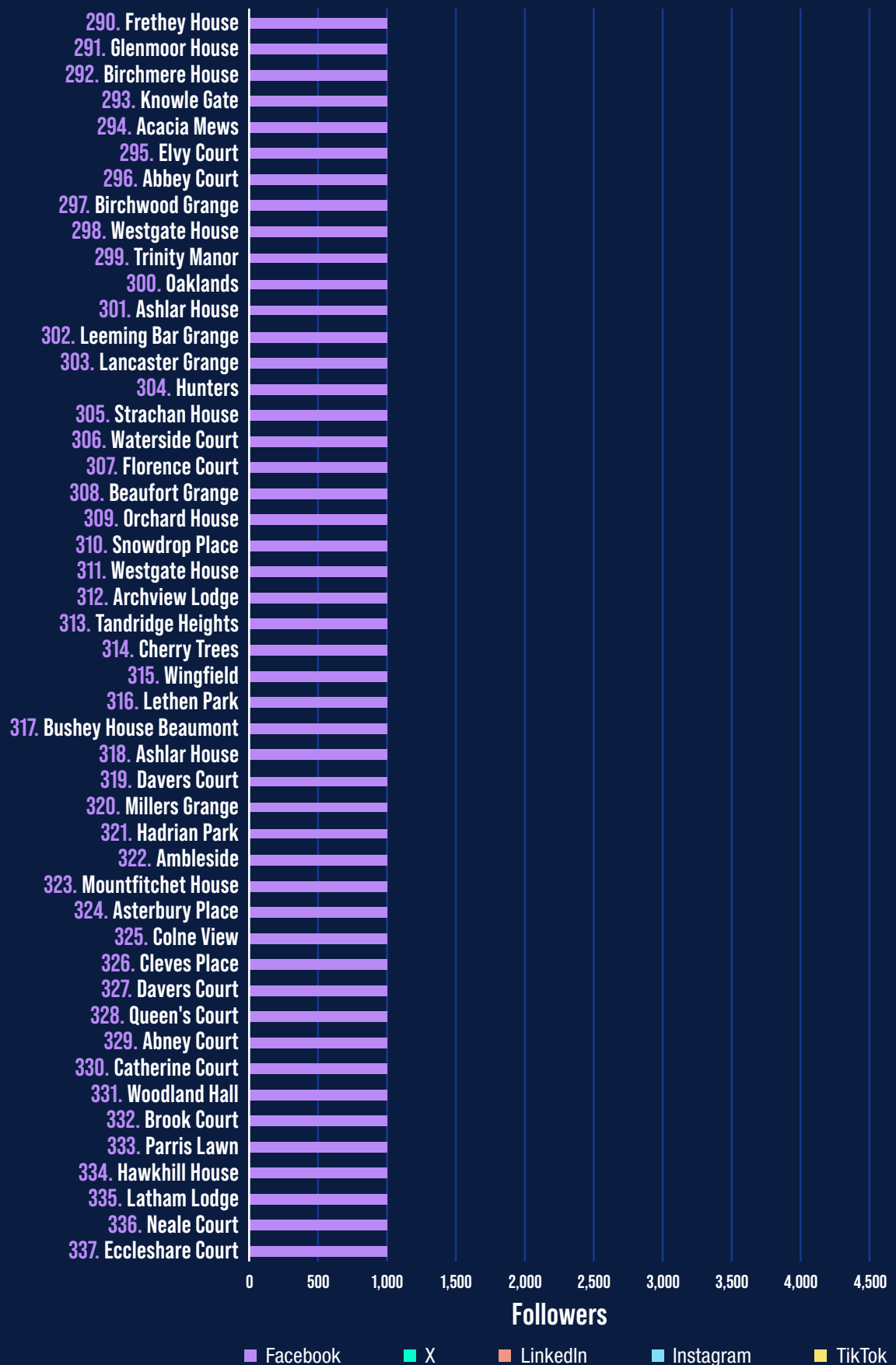


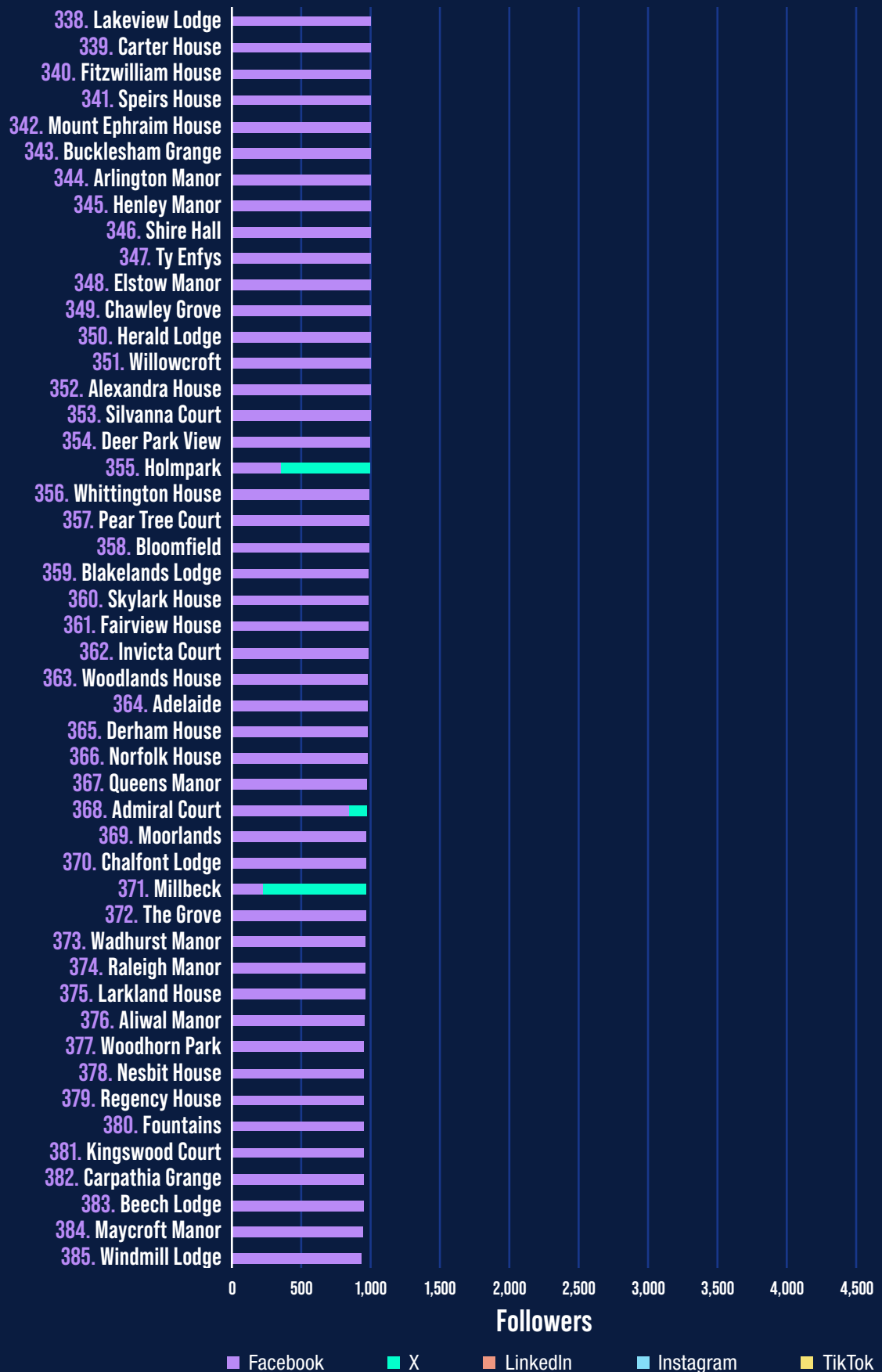


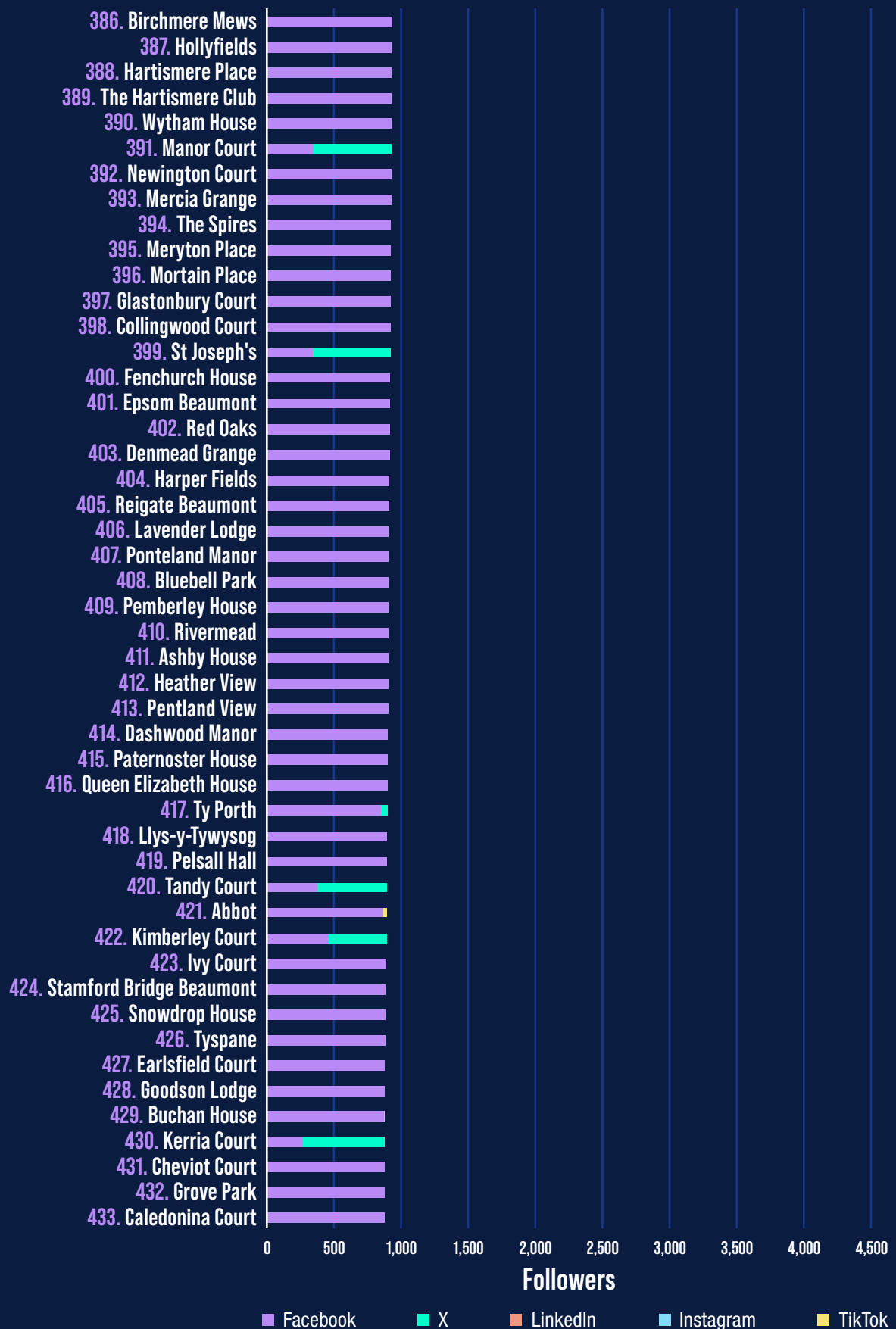


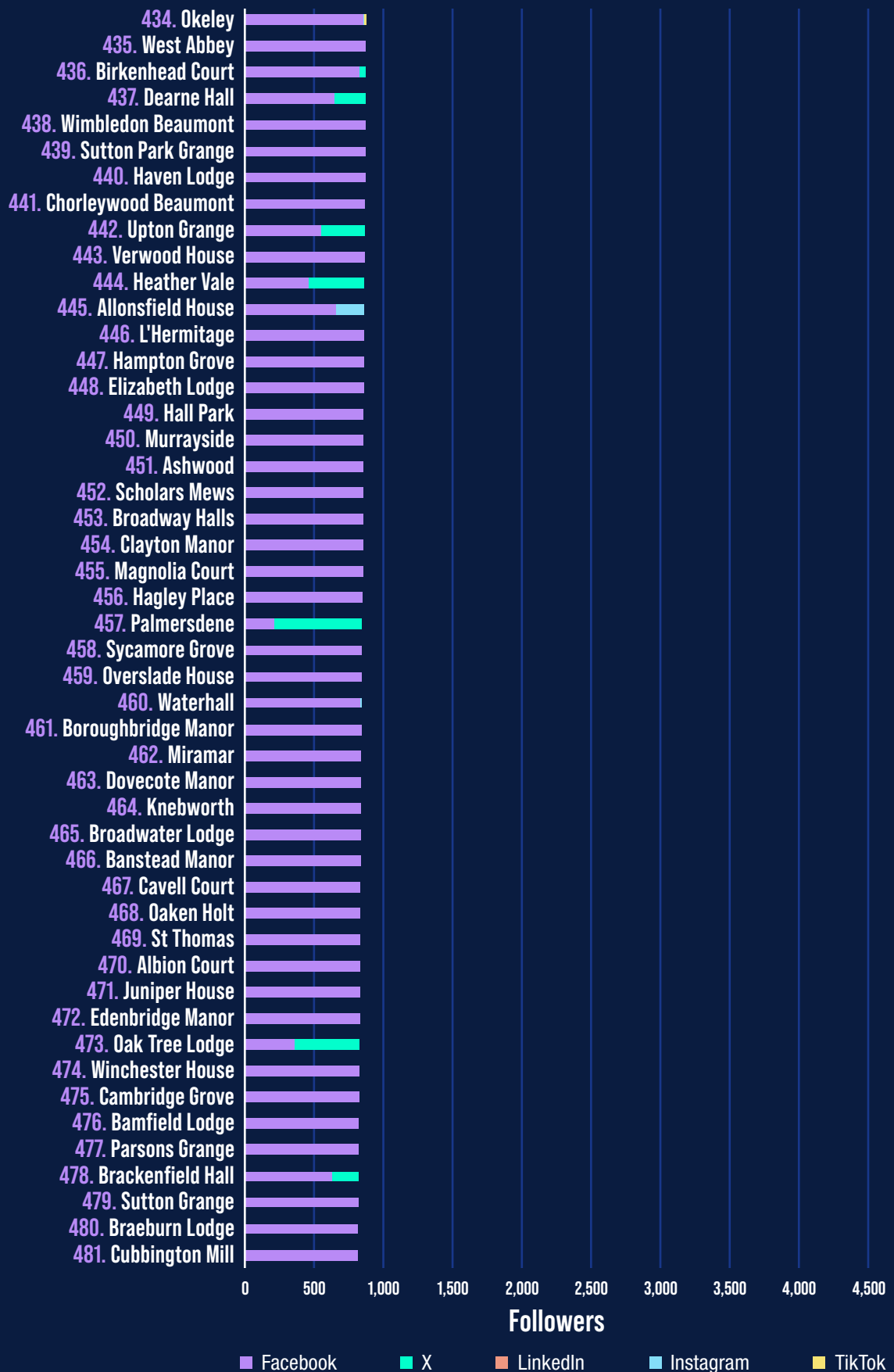


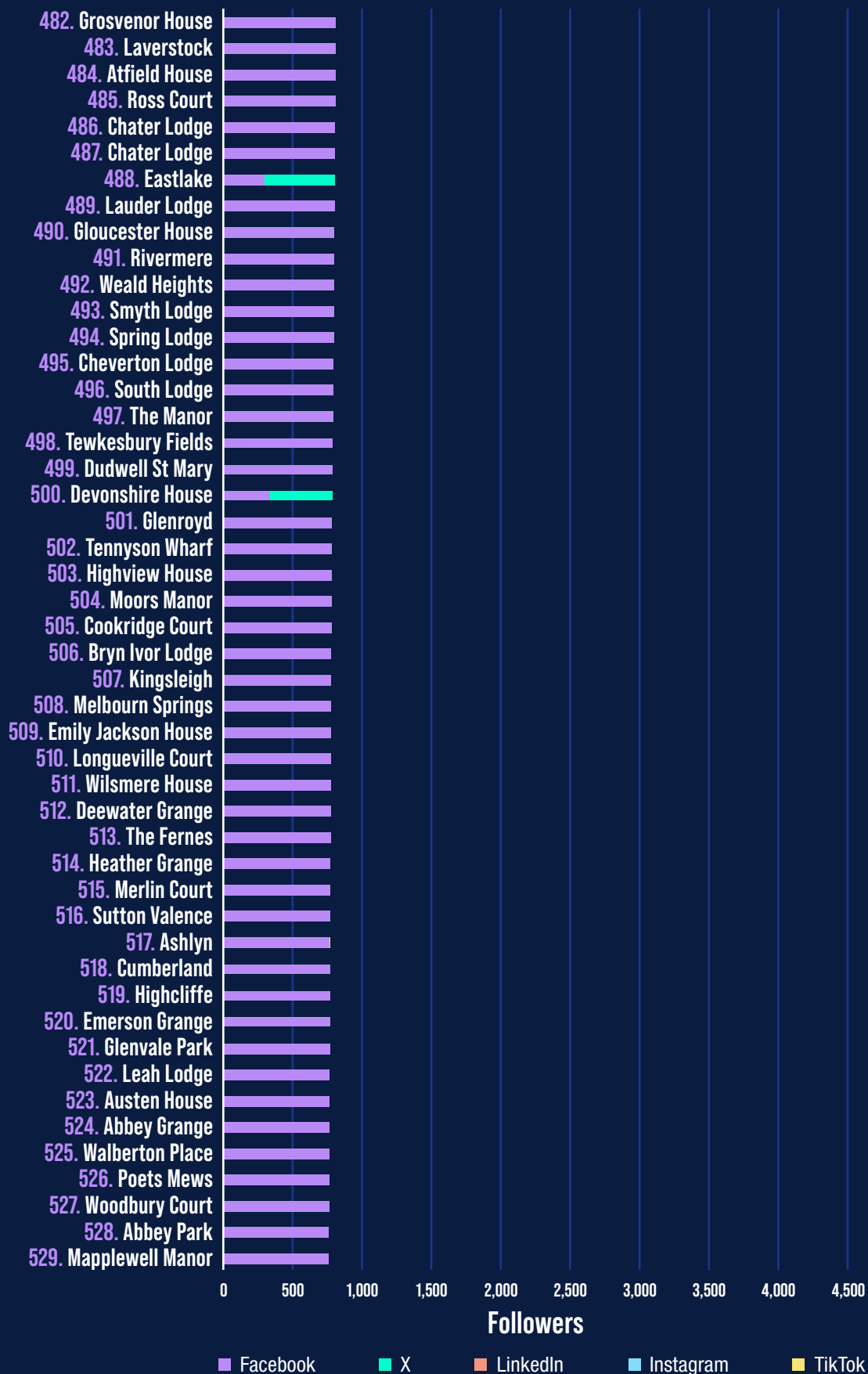


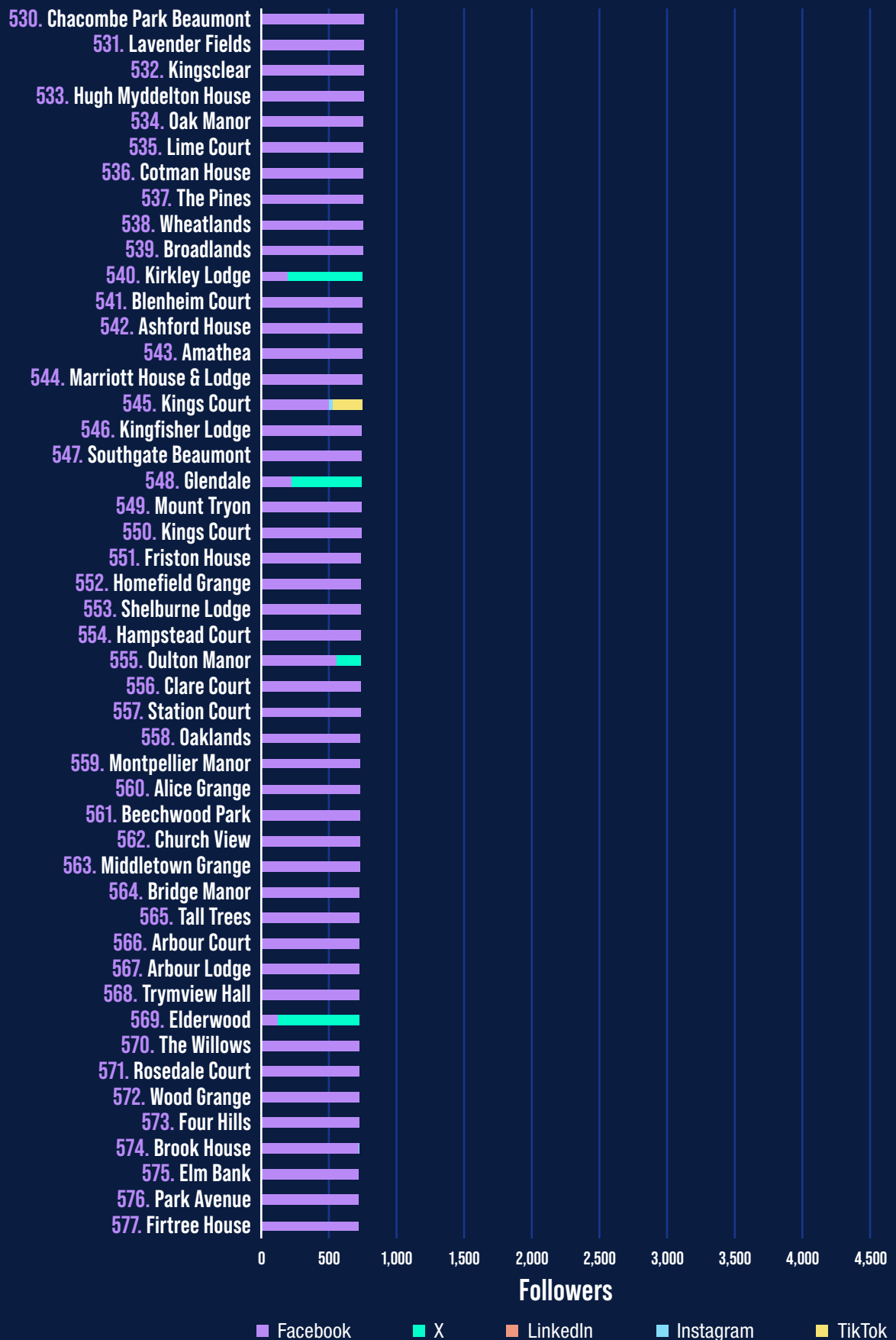


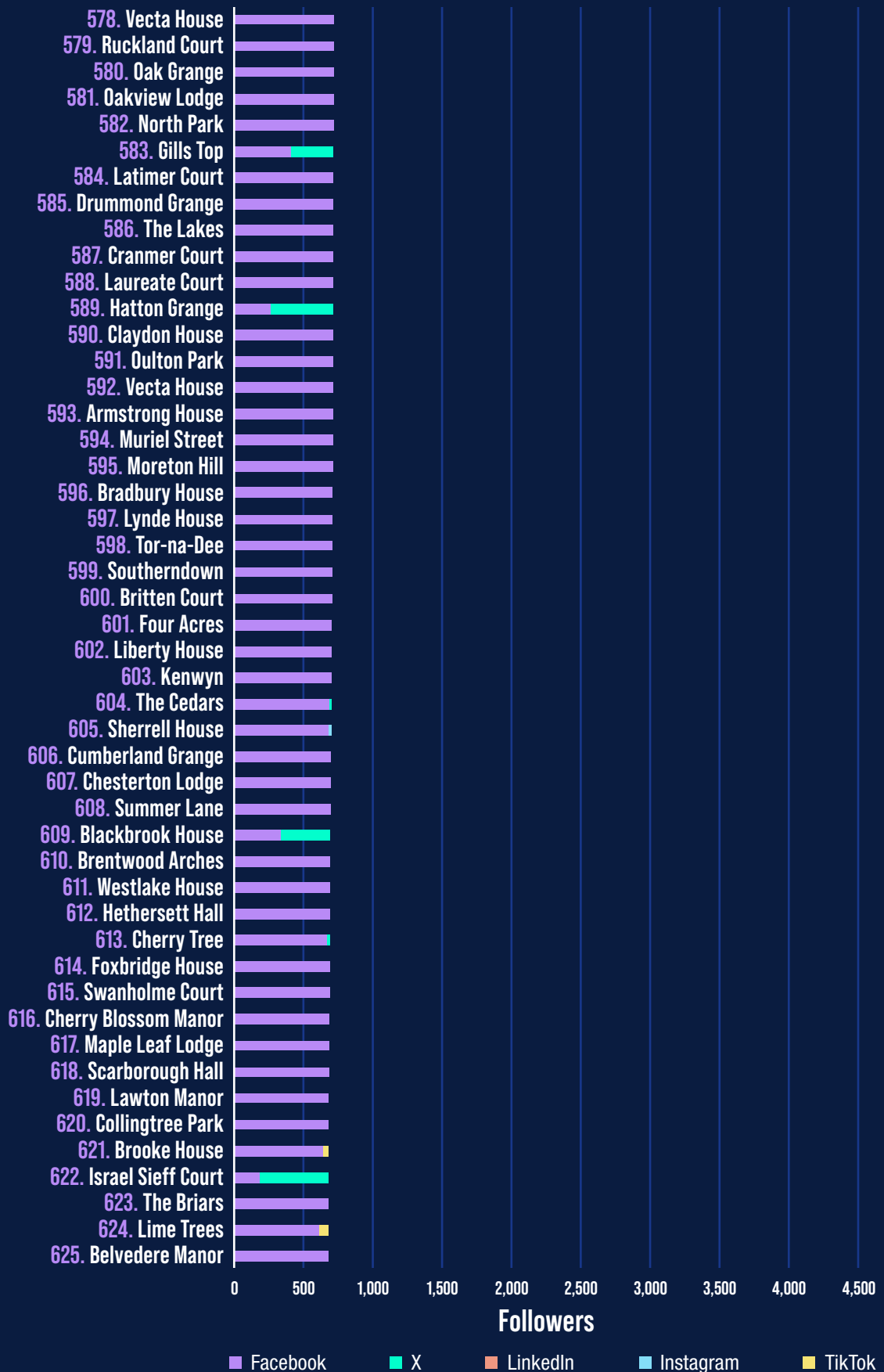


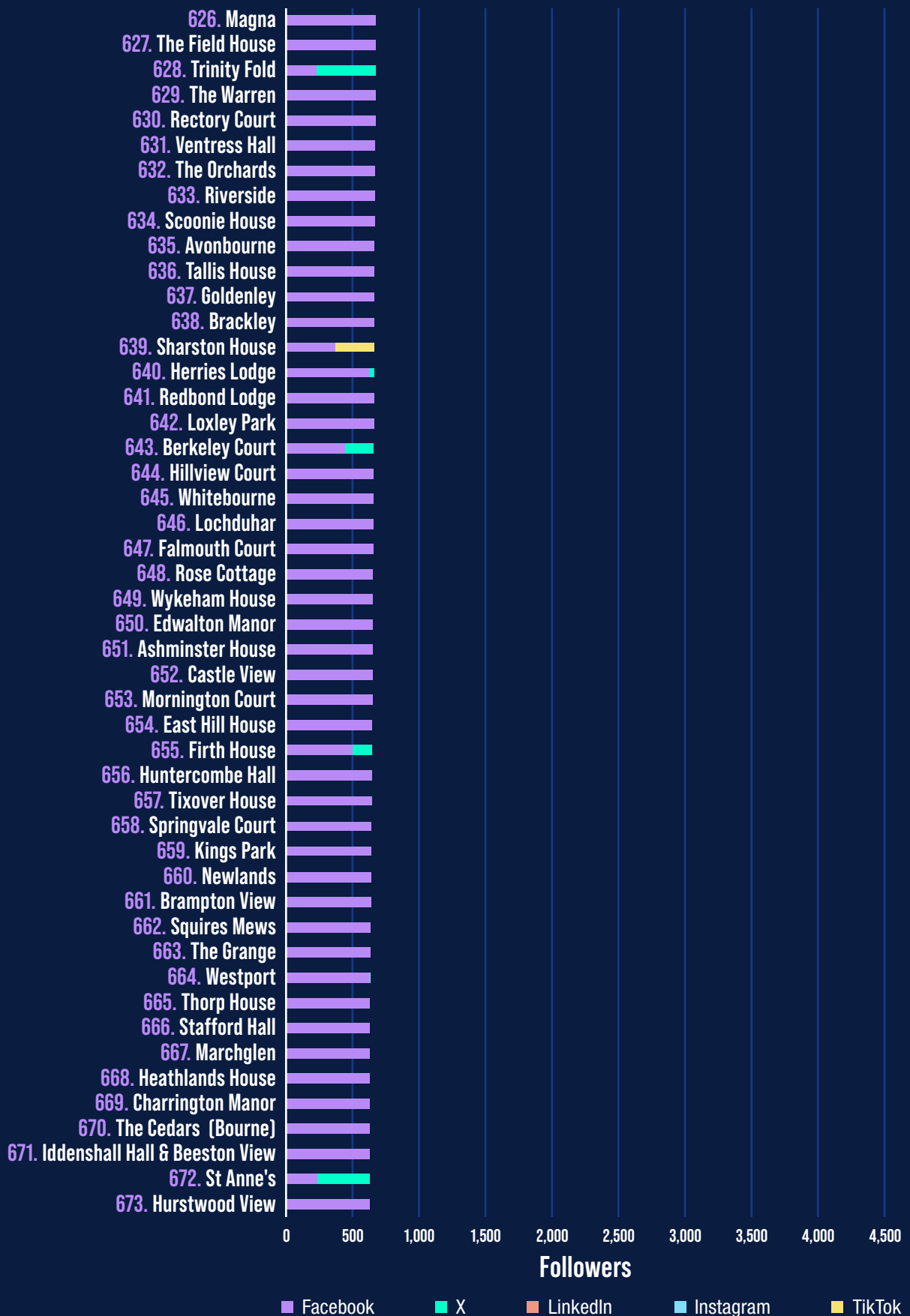


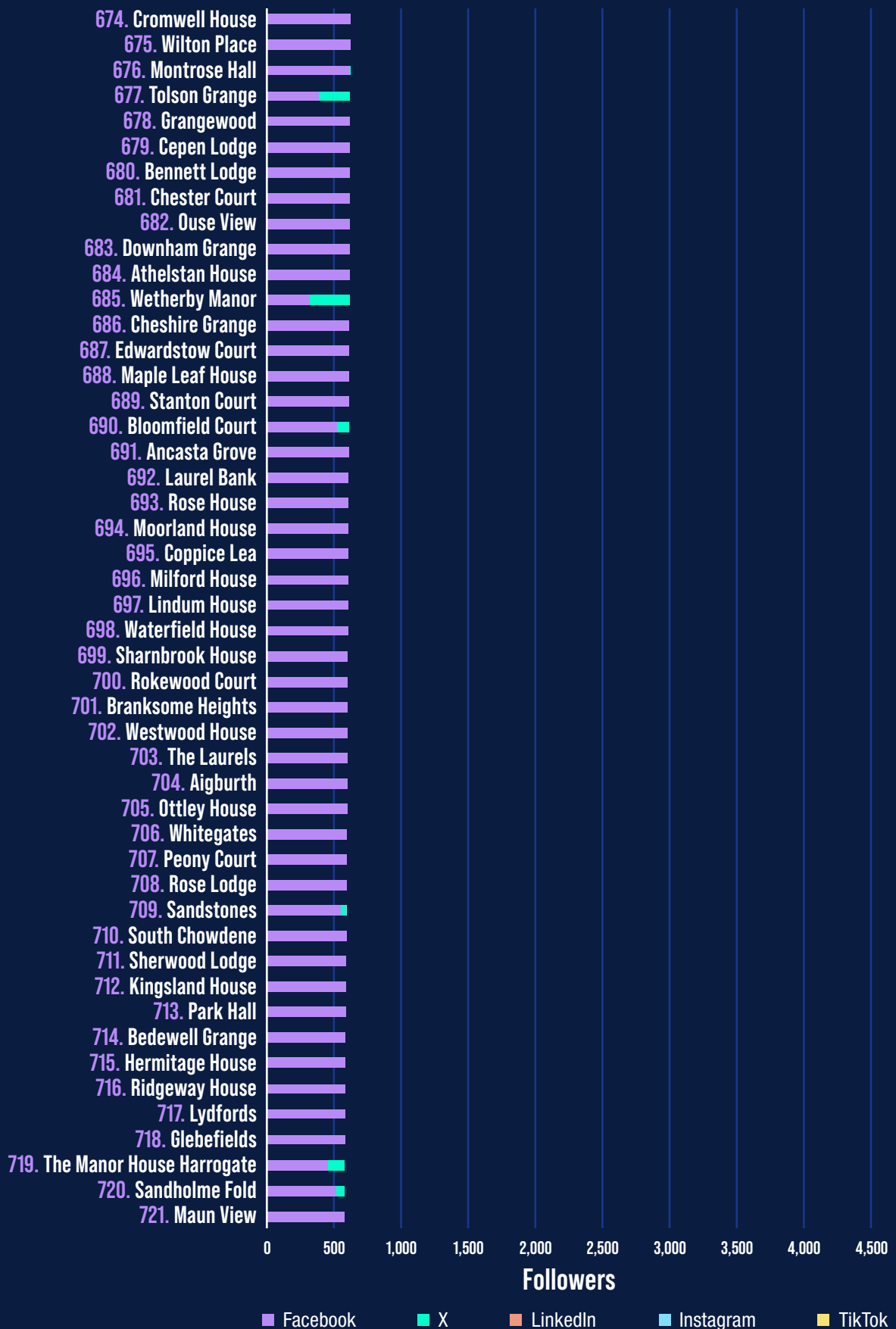


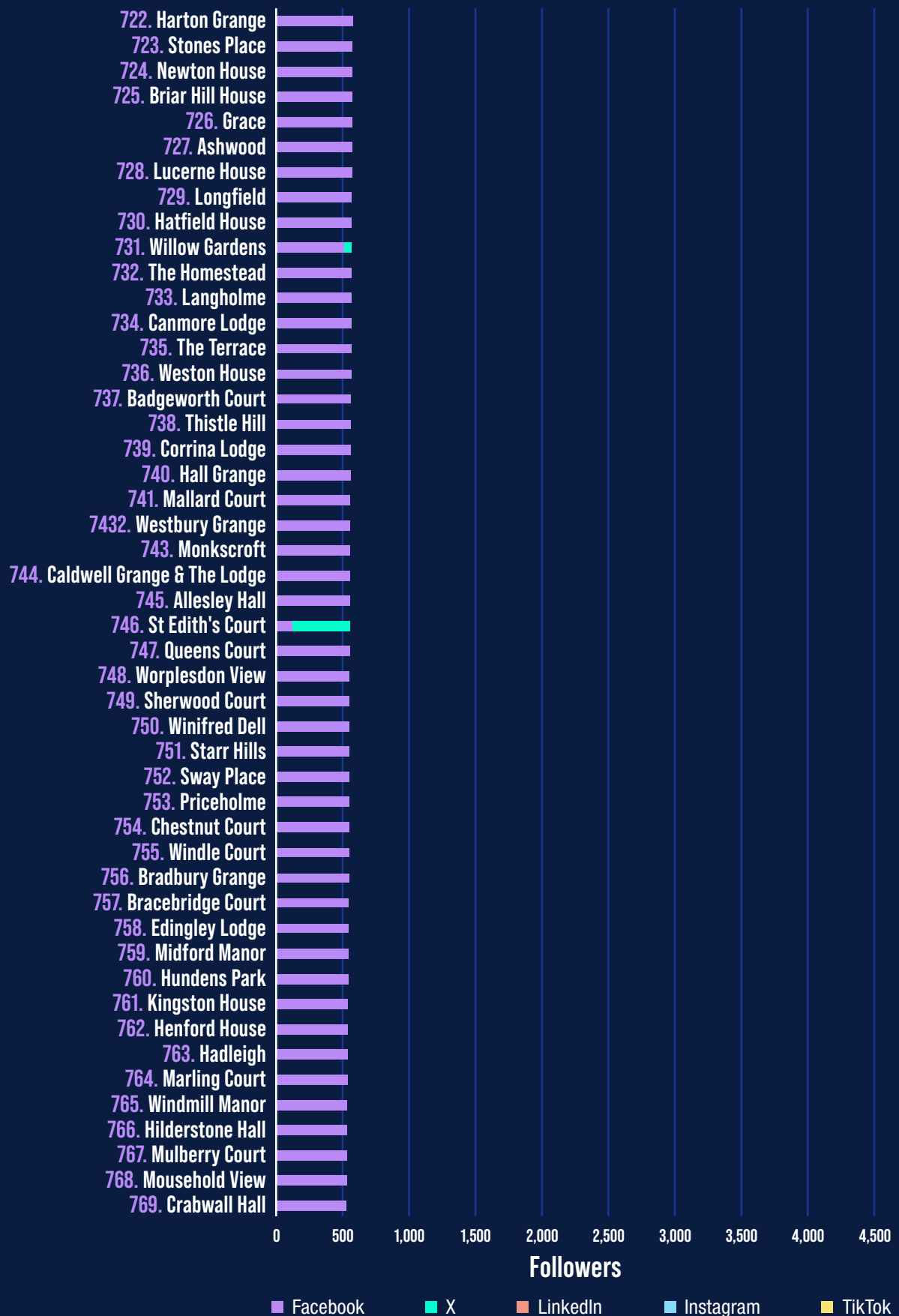


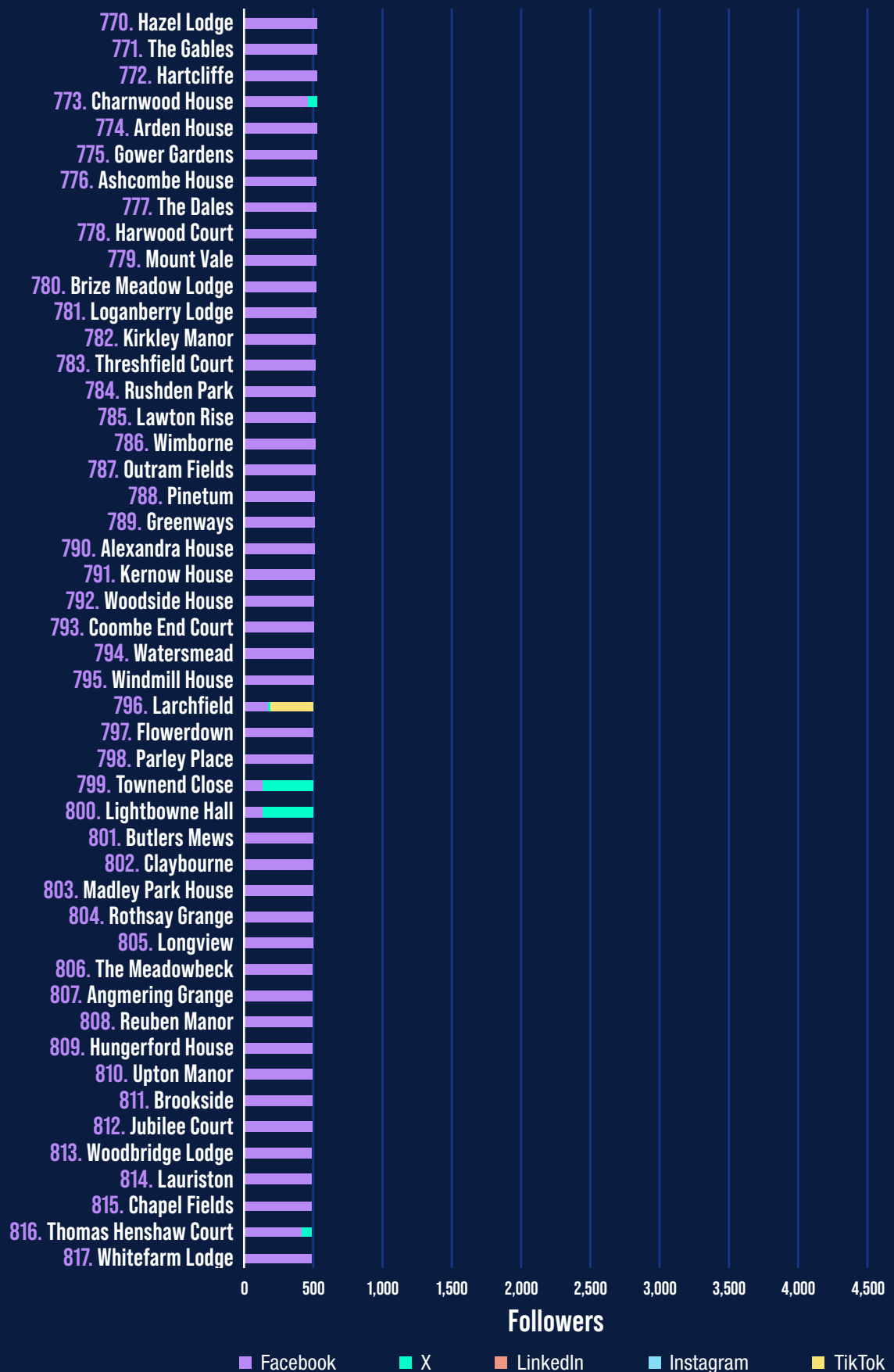


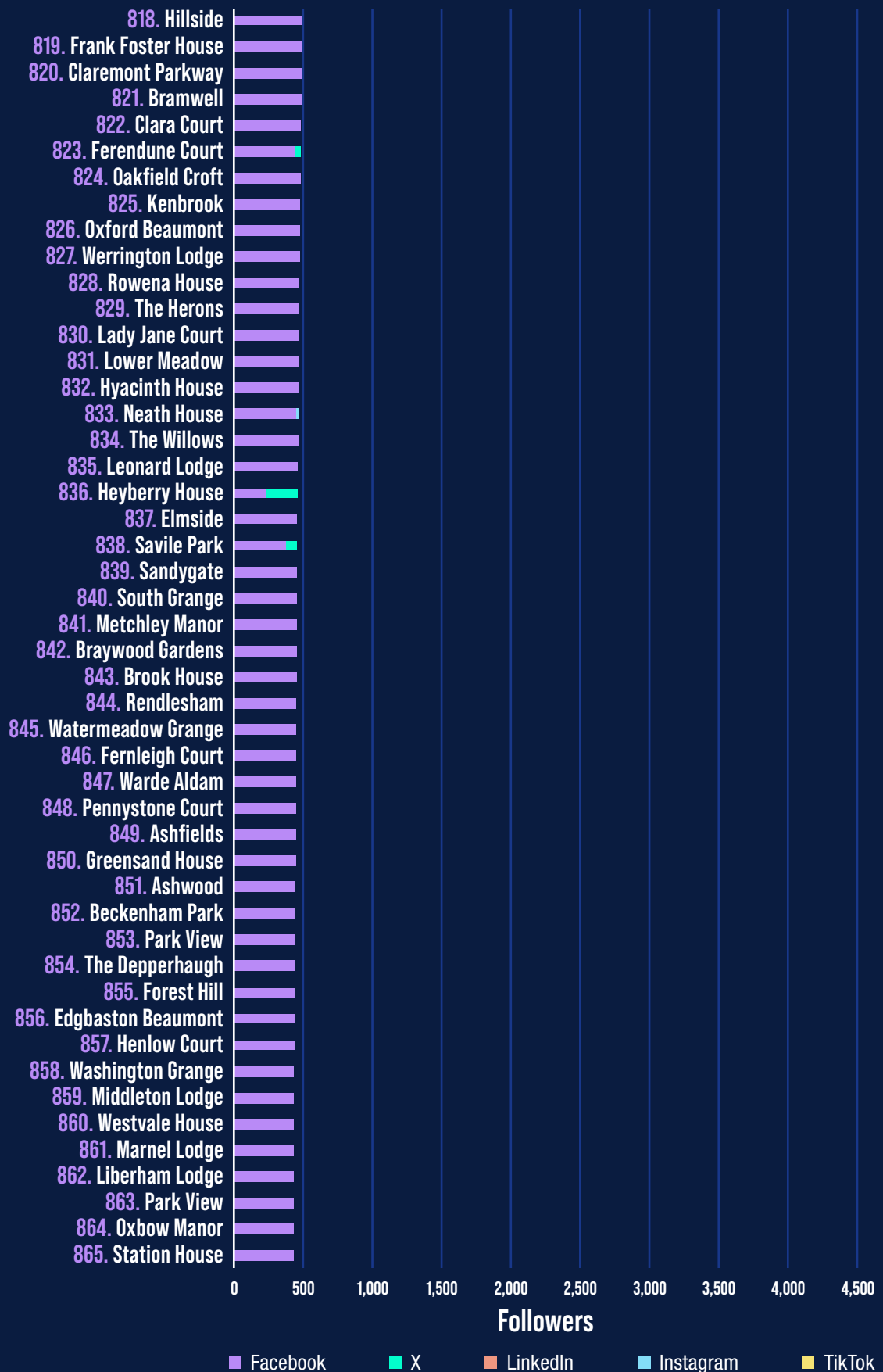


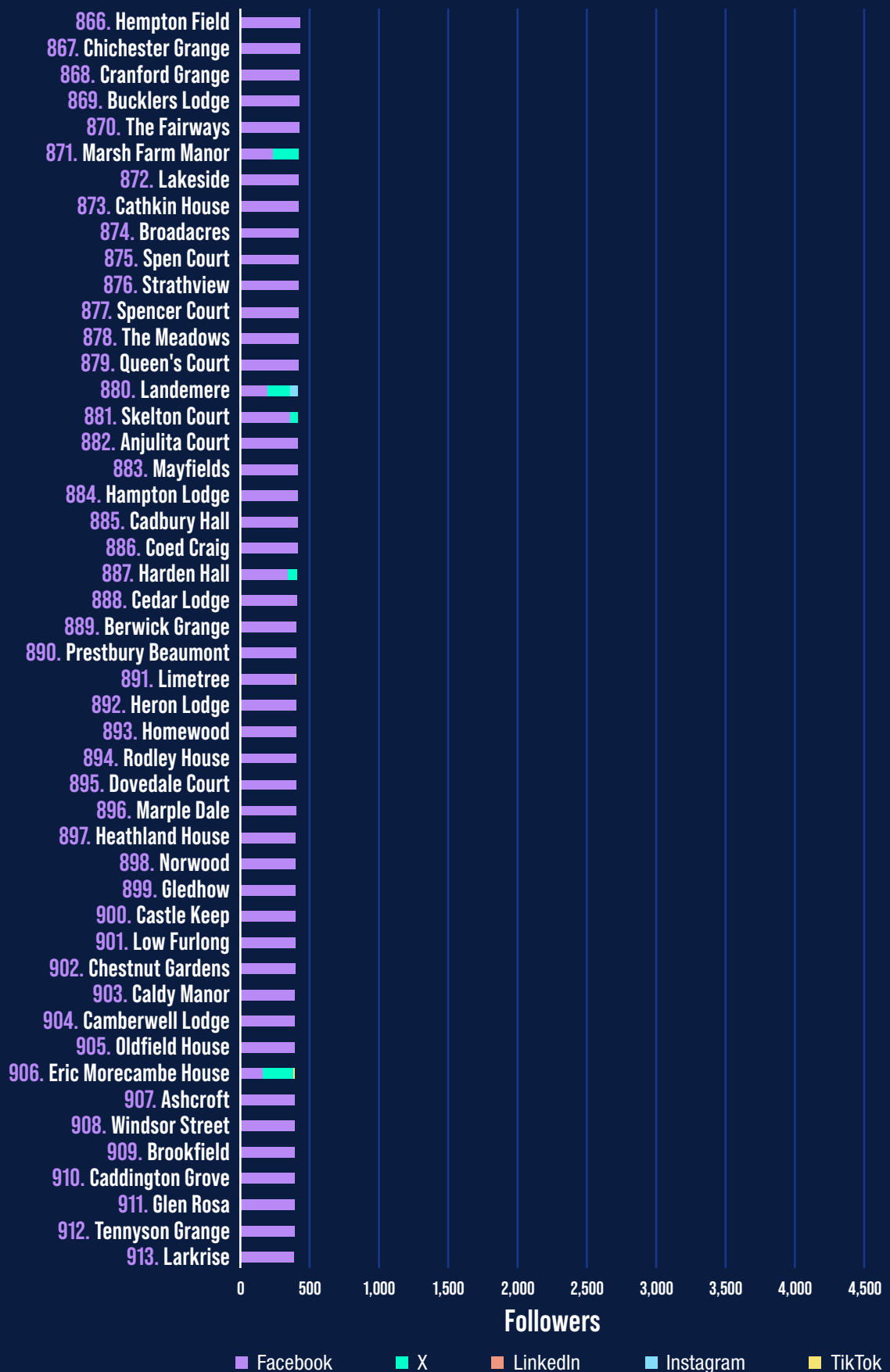


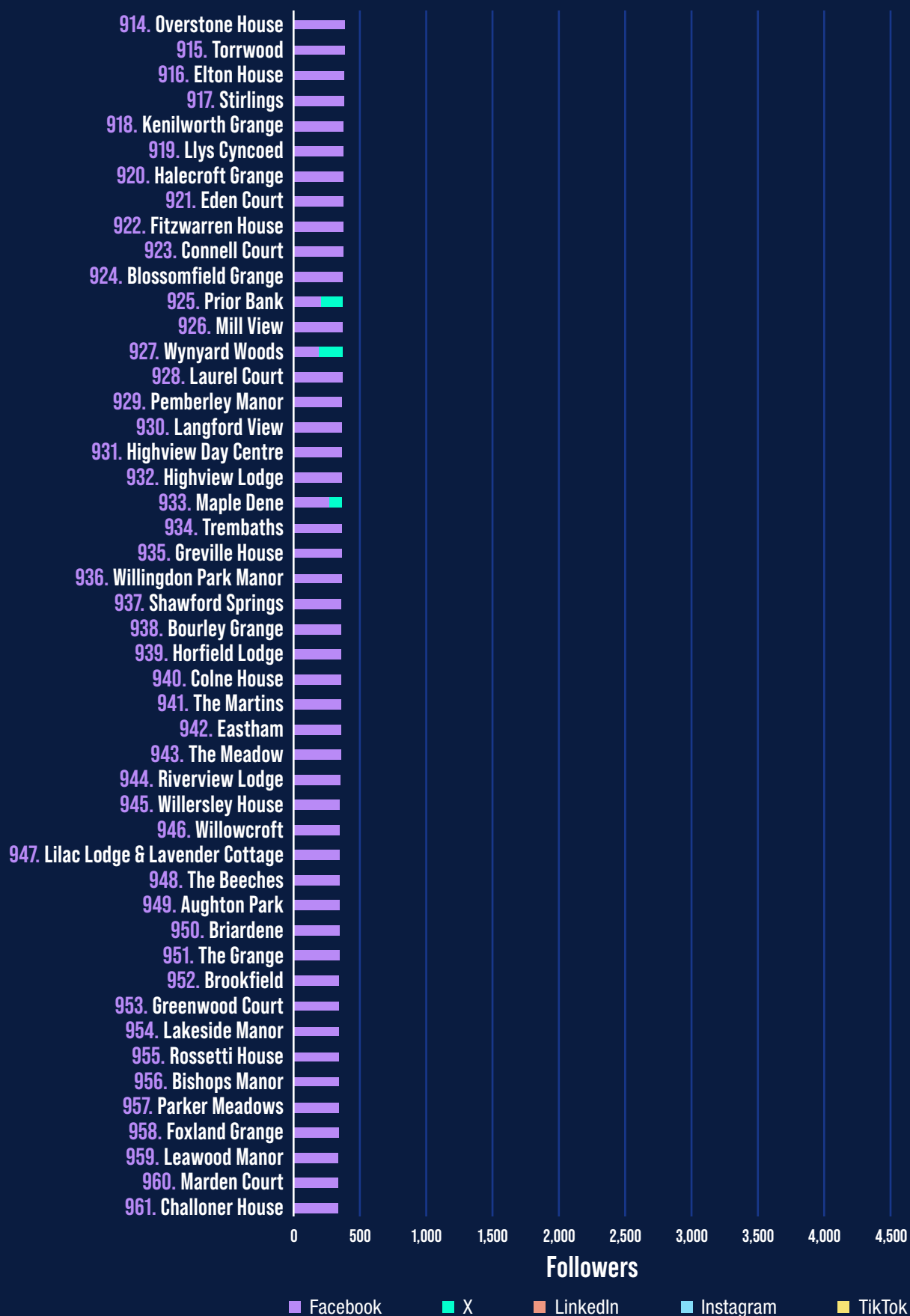


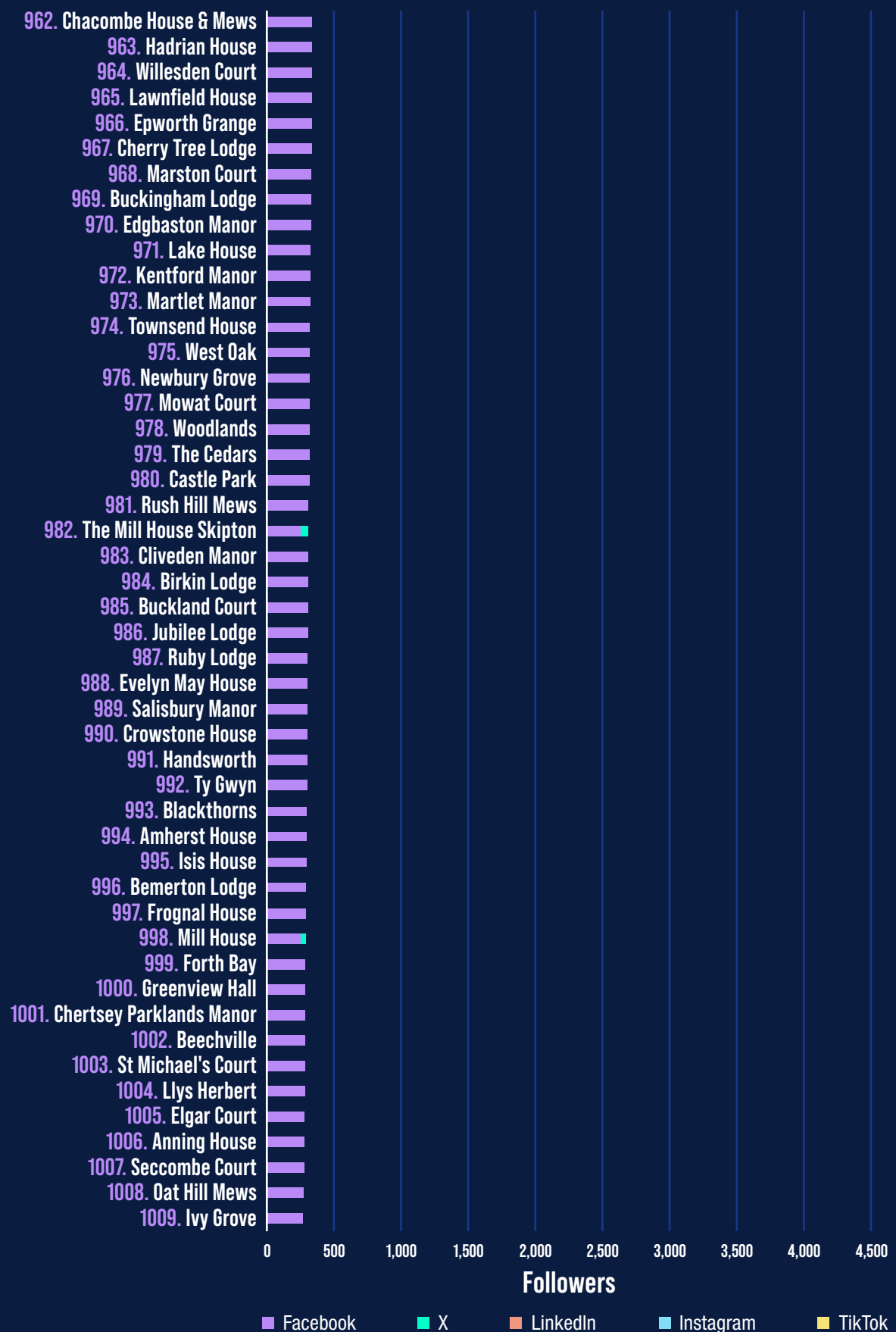


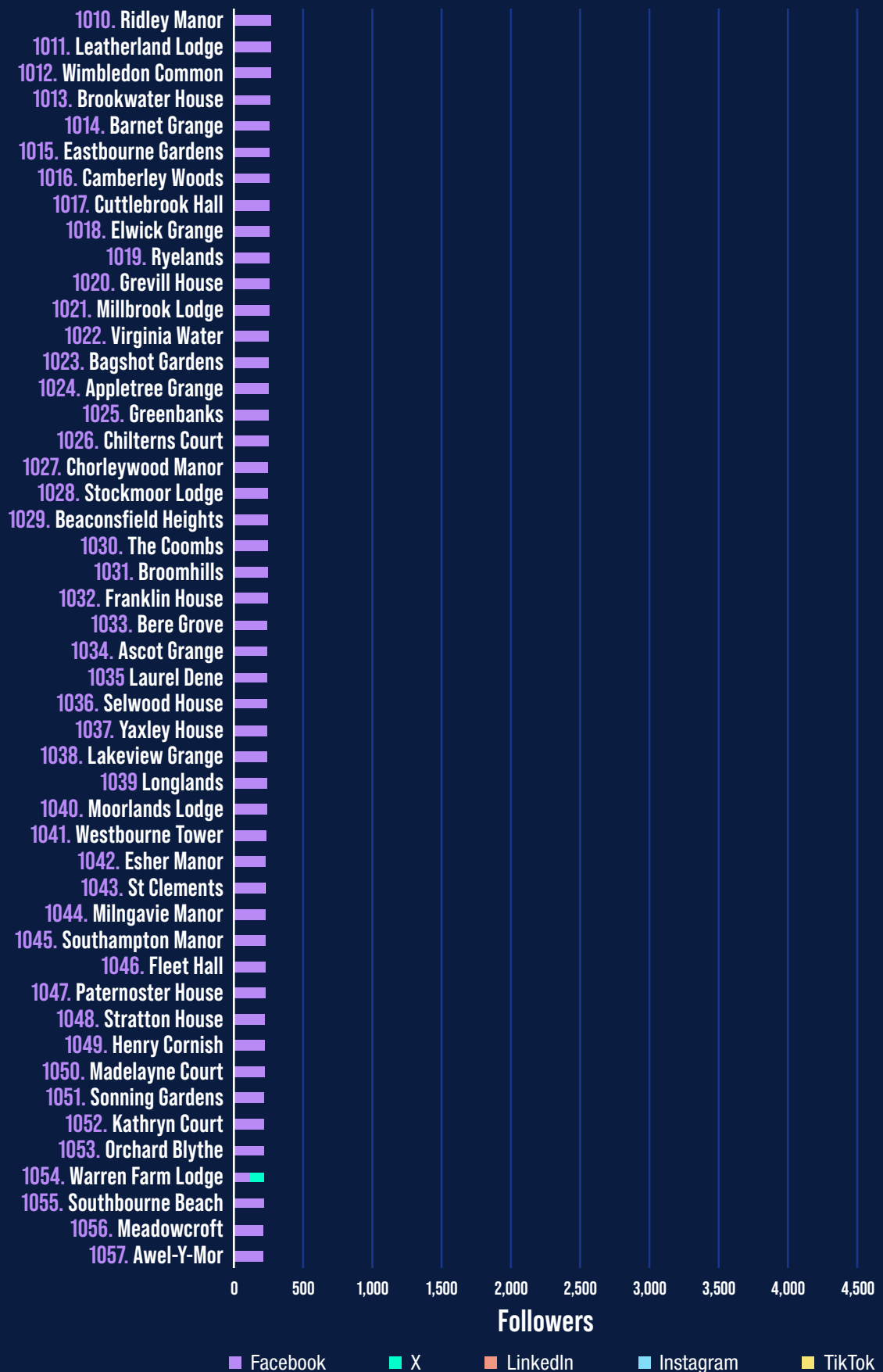


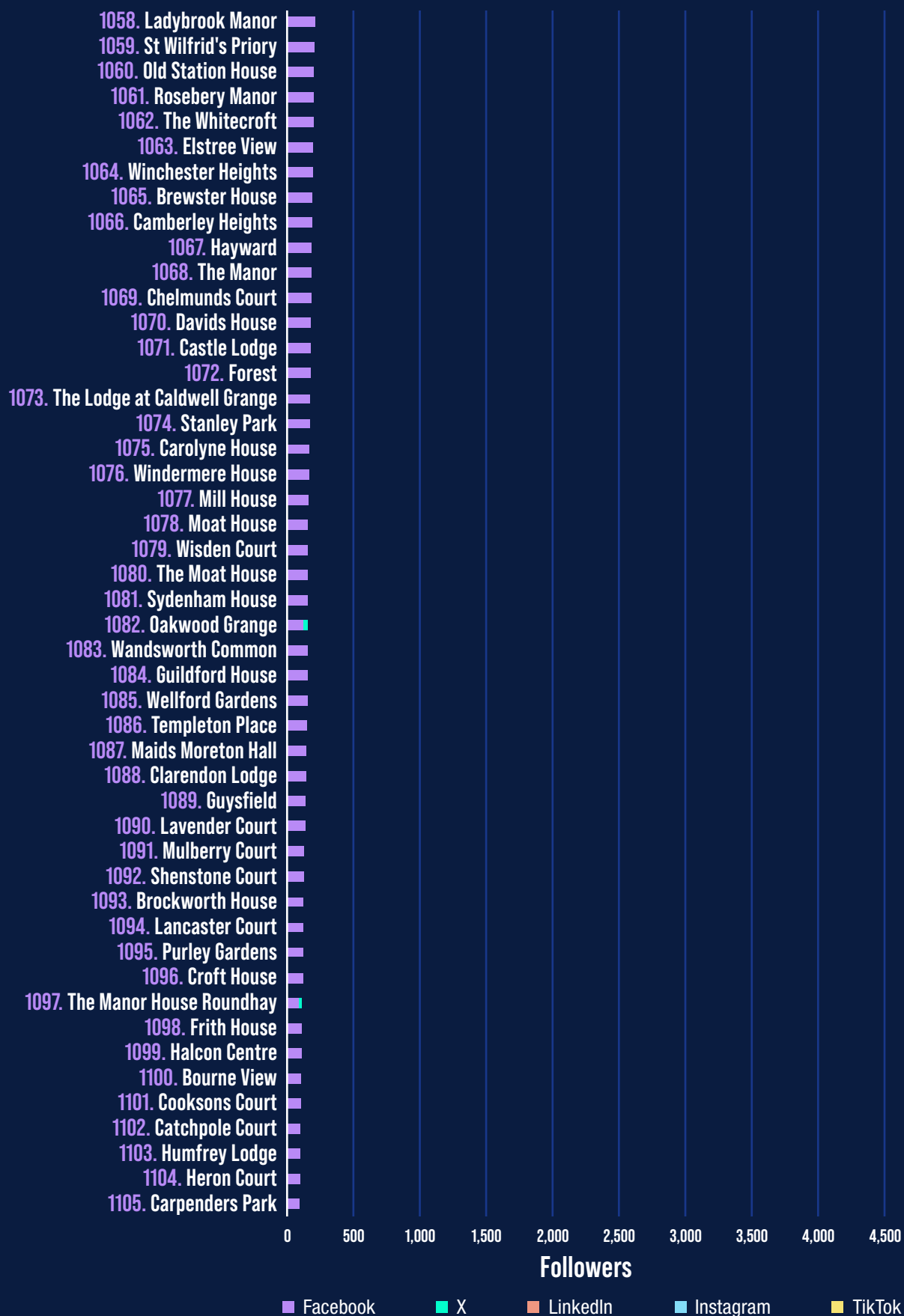


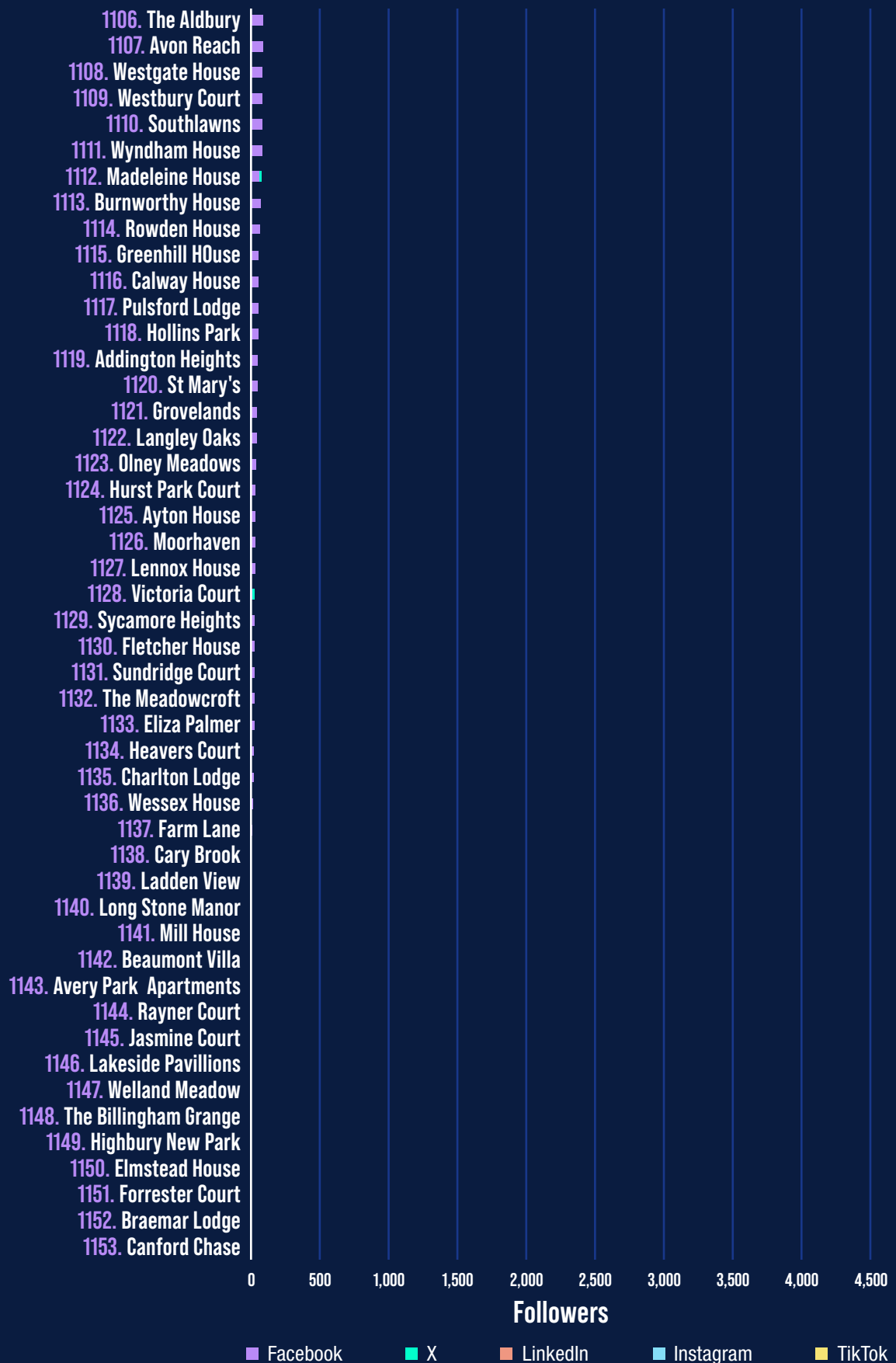


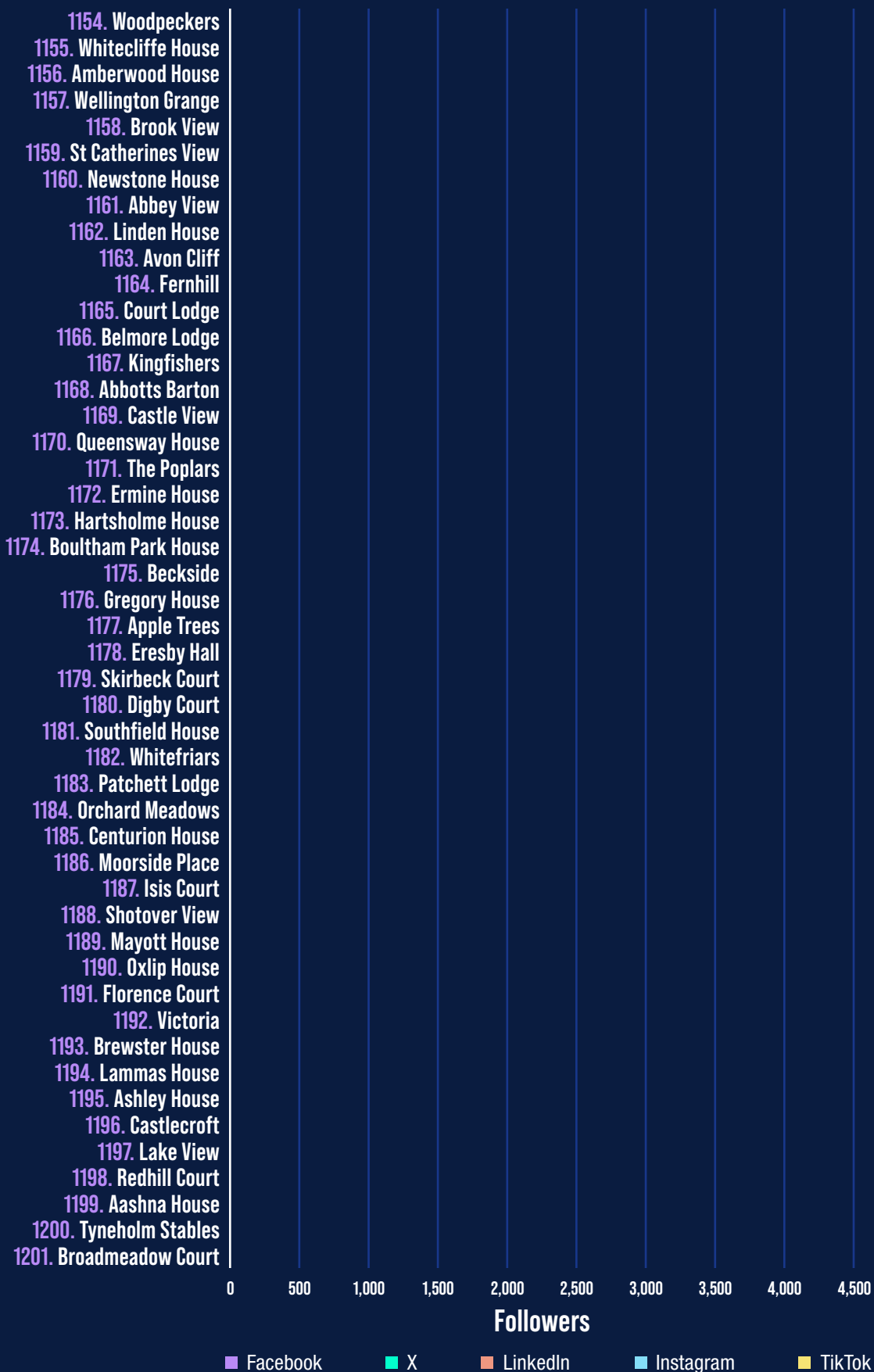


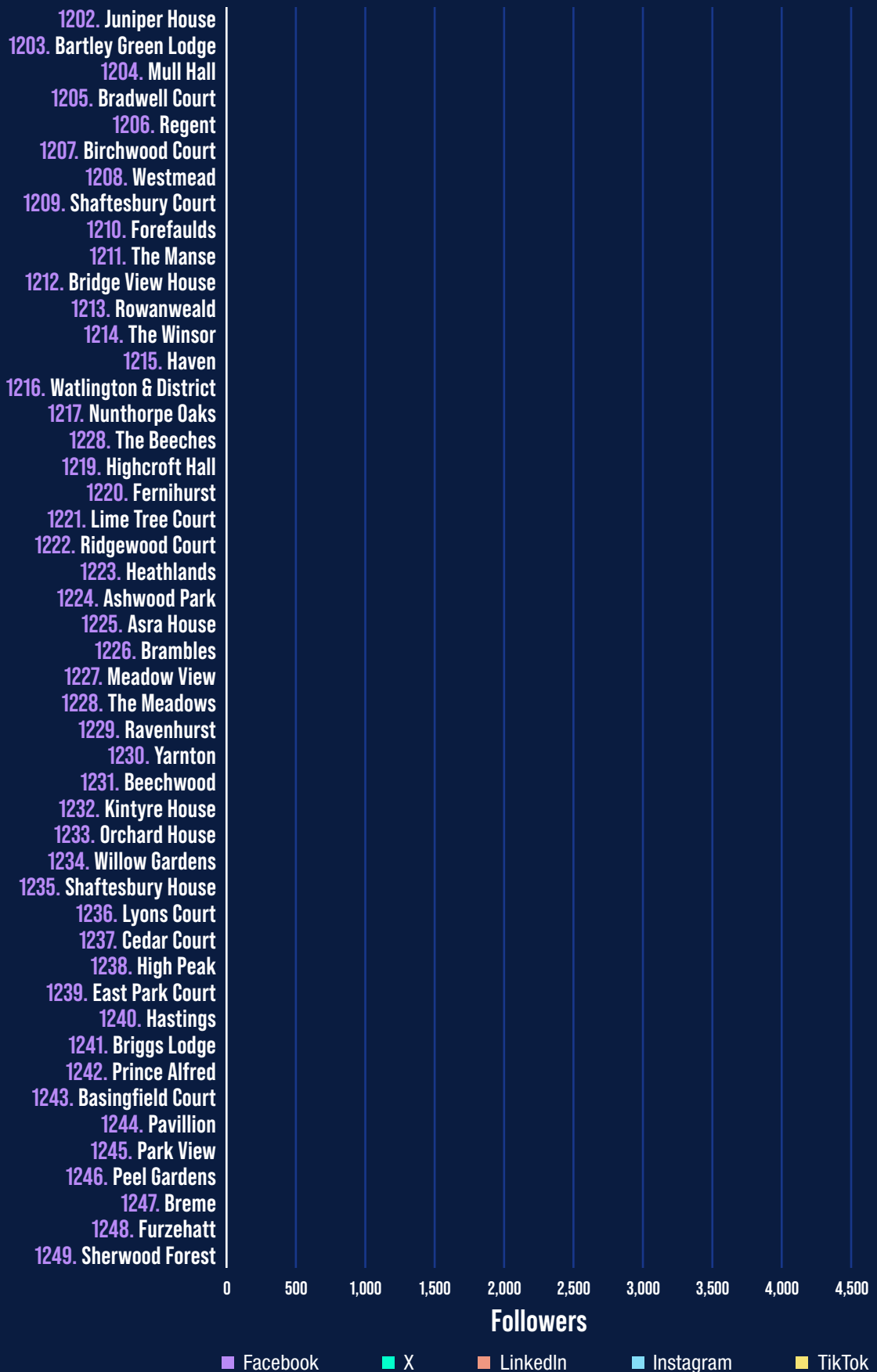


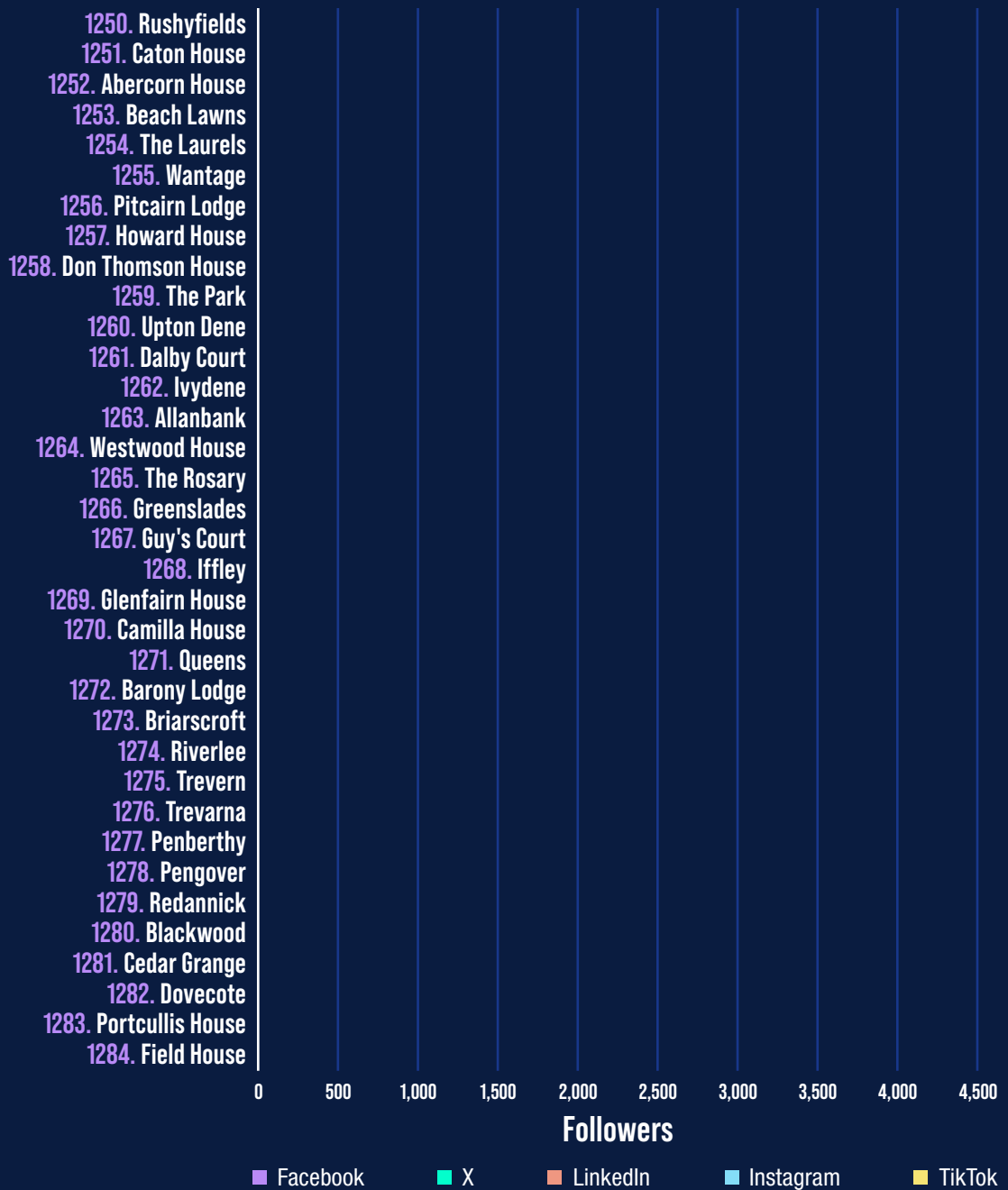












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