



**Charities Commission Number 1195980**

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

A guide for Trustees, members and volunteers on using social media to promote the work of the Friends of Hell Wath (FOHW) and in a personal capacity

(This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, at least once every two years. The Trustees will amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.)

# Background Information

## **What is social media?**

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

## **Why do we use social media?**

Social media is essential to the success of communicating FOHW's work. It is important for some members to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of FOHW's work.

## **Why do we need a social media policy?**

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to FOHW's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all trustees, members and volunteers and applies to content posted on both a FOHW device and a personal device. Before engaging in FOHW-related social media activity, all must read this policy.

## **Setting out the social media policy**

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of FOHW, and the use of social media by all members of the charity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help members support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

## **Point of contact for social media**

Our designated Trustee is Jeremy Dunford who is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to him. Other Trustees, members and volunteers can post content on FOHW's official channels as long as it is in adherence with this policy and subject, where appropriate, to permission from the designated trustee and editing/removal by this trustee.

## **Which social media channels do we use?**

FOHW uses the following social media channels:

Facebook: @fohwadmin

Twitter: @of\_wath

These accounts are used to promote the activities of FOHW and to foster dialogue with/and contributions from the wider Ripon community.

## Guidelines

1. The designated trustee is responsible for setting up and managing FOHW's social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the designated trustee will have access to these accounts.
2. There are no designated time limits for when posts will be uploaded. Response to contacts and comments made on FOHW channels will be within two days.
3. Be an ambassador for our charity. Ensure you reflect FOHW values in what you post and use our tone of voice.
4. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for FOHW, and accurately reflects FOHW's agreed position.
5. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help and engage with them
6. Take care with the presentation of content. Take care to avoid typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Check the quality of images. Where a mistake is identified ensure it is corrected immediately.
7. Always pause and think before posting. That said, reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
9. Don't post content about supporters or service users without their express permission. Content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from FOHW. Interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, must only be posted with the consent of a parent or guardian.
10. Always check facts. Do not automatically assume that material is accurate and take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.
11. Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.
12. Refrain from offering personal opinions via FOHW's social media accounts, either directly, by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about FOHW's position on a particular issue, please speak to a trustee.
13. Do not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials.
14. Do not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights must be obtained before publishing material.
15. You should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of FOHW. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness.
16. FOHW is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We have every right to express views on policy, including the policies of parties, but we can't tell people how to vote.
17. If a complaint is made on FOHW's social media channels, you should seek advice from the designated trustee before responding. If they are not available, then you should speak to the trustee chairperson.
18. When issues arise which might escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation, not acting can be detrimental to the charity.

The designated trustee regularly monitors our social media for mentions of FOHW so we can catch any issues or problems early. If there is an issue that could develop or has already developed into a crisis situation, the designated trustee will do the following:

1. Notify and consult with other trustees and Harrogate Borough Council.

2. An agreed response will be recorded in writing.
3. Only actions included in the agreed response will be taken.
4. Actions will be reviewed regularly, daily if needed.

If any member or volunteer becomes aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on FOHW's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the designated trustee immediately.

### **Additional guidelines for use of personal social media accounts**

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media, but FOHW trustees, members and volunteers are expected to behave appropriately and in ways that are consistent with FOHW's values and policies, both online and in real life.

Using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage everyone to share tweets and posts that we have issued and to make the most of opportunities to comment on or support FOHW and the work we do. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the designated trustee who will respond as appropriate.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive FOHW. Make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of FOHW. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about FOHW's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent FOHW's positions, policies or opinions."
2. Members who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at FOHW should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with the designated trustee.
3. Trustees must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing FOHW's view.
4. Please don't approach high profile people or organisations from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the charity, or to re-post or re-tweet, as this could hinder any existing or potential relationships. If you have information about high profile people that have a connection to our cause, please speak to a trustee.
5. If you are contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to FOHW, you should talk to the designated trustee immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.
6. Never use FOHW's logo unless approved to do so.
7. Always protect yourself and the charity. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time.
8. Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.

## Further information

### **Libel**

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether members are posting content on social media as part of their volunteering or in a personal capacity, they should not bring FOHW into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

### **Copyright law**

It is critical that everyone abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

### **Confidentiality**

Any communications that members make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that FOHW is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

### **Discrimination and harassment**

No-one should post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official FOHW social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

### **Under 18s and vulnerable people**

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, staff should ensure the online relationship with FOHW follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Trustees, members and volunteers should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. They should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and FOHW content and other content is appropriate for them. Please refer to our Safeguarding policy.

### **Responsibilities and breach of policy**

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of FOHW is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. Trustees retain the right to agree sanctions including, but not limited to, blocking from FOHW social media accounts, end of membership and/or trusteeship and referral to appropriate external authorities. Volunteers who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the designated trustee.

### **Public Interest Disclosure**

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, if a member releases information through FOHW's social media channels that is considered to be in the interest of the public, FOHW's whistleblowing policy must be initiated before any further action is taken.