



# Social Media Policy

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## Purpose

Social media use is governed by several laws. The charity has its own website and shares information using online platforms e.g. Facebook. This policy outlines how we use social media and how to avoid problems.

## The Law

The use of social media is covered by several UK laws, but social media has no national boundaries so could be seen in other countries. You may be breaking the law if you publish anything that falls into the following categories:

- Harassment - not leaving someone alone
- Menacing behaviour - writing something that may scare someone
- Threatening behaviour - making someone believe that you were going to hurt them
- Grossly offensive comments - making deeply unpleasant comments about a sensitive issue
- Libel - a post is potentially libellous if it is a false statement and may damage someone's reputation
- Defamation - users may be sued for defamation if they post an unsubstantiated rumour
- Data protection - breaching an individual's right to privacy
- Copyright - posting material without permission that is owned by another person or organisation

## Applicability

This policy applies to anyone working on our behalf, including trustees, staff and volunteers. Everyone is personally responsible for all online content they publish.

## Guidelines

**Do not breach privacy or security.** Do not publish personal information and never post about individuals without their consent. Individuals who may not be fully competent, perhaps due to a disability or illness, may not be able to give consent.

Do not make it easy for criminals by publishing information that they might use e.g. that you will be taking a lot of cash to the bank or working late on your own.

**Clearly state your opinions are your own.** Make it clear that your comments, opinions or messages are your own, so these will not be interpreted as those of the charity.

**Abusive Posts.** A troll is someone who intentionally causes upset, harm, or offence by provoking people online. People who are abusive usually try to provoke a reaction from you, so do not give them what they want. You can adjust your settings to not allow replies, use the relevant abuse reporting system, block them, and, if you think they are committing a crime, report them to the police.

**Disagreeing.** If you disagree with something and feel you should respond, always be courteous and do not personalise your response. Focus on the issue, not the person who wrote the post.

**Text and Symbols.** Always use appropriate text and symbols. An emoji e.g. 'lol' can add humour but do not use if you are making an important point as this would trivialise your message. Using multiple exclamations and lots of capital letters, bold and underling can be seen as 'shouting'.

**Think first, upload/message after.** If something is online, it stays there for a long time and can be traced back to you.

**Ask for a second opinion.** If you are not sure if and how you should comment on something, then contact a trustee for advice.

**Be politically neutral.** It is essential that we are politically neutral. We treat all recognised political parties with respect and support any of their initiatives that support our own aims. We do not actively support or promote any individual party.

**Ethics.** We are a charity so appearing to support or endorse unethical behaviour is inappropriate. Posts shall always be respectful and not cause embarrassment, offence or alarm.

**Respect copyright, fair use and other laws.** We will acknowledge the source and observe copyright laws. Images of crowds at events do not require the approval of everyone, but an image where a limited number of individuals are the subject matter of the image do. We will obtain written permission from the appropriate person if we use images of children or vulnerable adults.

**Don't be offensive.** Never be offensive to anyone for any reason. Extremist views, sexism, pornography, distressing or otherwise offensive imagery, racial/ethnic or religious discrimination, gender/sexual discrimination or disparaging comments against any minority group, such as the disabled or mentally ill are not acceptable under any circumstances.

## Availability

This policy is published on our website <https://www.colburymemorialhall.org.uk/> and shall be given to anyone who wishes to have a copy.

## Version Control - Approval and Review

This policy shall be reviewed and approved annually by trustees, following an incident or other significant factor.

Version No	Approved By	Approval Date	Main Changes	Review Period
1.0	Trustees	31.10.2025	First version approved	Annual