

# AGE UK EXETER

## Controlled Document

### Document Name: Social Media Policy

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Review Schedule: Every three years

Next review due: January 2025

Owner (Responsibility): Chief Executive Officer

Amendments to: Governance Officer

Revision History: See end of document.

Document Location: [www.ageuk.org.uk/exeter/about-us/policiesandguidelines/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/exeter/about-us/policiesandguidelines/)

## Document Description

This policy describes the rules governing use of social media at Age UK Exeter and sets out how staff must behave when using the Charity's social media accounts. It also explains the rules about using personal social media accounts at work and describes what staff may say about the Charity on their personal accounts.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the IT, Communications Systems & Monitoring Policy.

## Implementation and Quality Assurance

Implementation is immediate and this policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The policy will be reviewed every three years by the Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time. If you have any comments or suggestions on the content of this policy please contact the Chief Executive Officer via email at [info@ageukexeter.org.uk](mailto:info@ageukexeter.org.uk)

# **Social Media Policy**

## **1. ABOUT THIS POLICY**

- 1.1 This policy is in place to minimise the risks to our business through use of social media.
- 1.2 This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Wikipedia, Instagram and all other social networking sites, internet postings and blogs. It applies to use of social media for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect our business in any way.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Employees and volunteers of Age UK Exeter (the Charity) may be able to access social media services and social networking websites at work, either through Charity IT systems or via their own personal equipment.
- 2.2 This social media policy describes the rules governing use of social media at Age UK Exeter.
- 2.3 It sets out how staff must behave when using the Charity's social media accounts. It also explains the rules about using personal social media accounts at work and describes what staff may say about the Charity on their personal accounts.
- 2.4 This policy should be read alongside other key policies, including the Data Protection Policy and Confidentiality Policy.

## **3. WHY THIS POLICY EXISTS**

- 3.1 Social media can bring significant benefits to Age UK Exeter, particularly for building relationships with current and potential stakeholders.
- 3.2 However, it's important that employees who use social media within the Charity do so in a way that enhances the Charity's prospects without compromising its integrity.
- 3.3 A misjudged status update can generate complaints or damage the Charity's reputation. For example, employees and volunteers should avoid compromising the Charity's political impartiality, by not expressing party political views. There are also security and data protection issues to consider.

- 3.4 This policy explains how employees and volunteers can use social media safely and effectively.

**4. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Employees may use their personal social media accounts for **work-related purposes** during regular hours, but must ensure this is for a **specific reason** (eg competitor research). Social media should not affect the ability of employees to perform their regular duties.

- Use of social media accounts for non-work purposes is **restricted to non-work times**, such as breaks and during lunch. Employees should not use work computers for personal use.

**5. PROHIBITED USE**

- 5.1 You must avoid making any social media communications that could damage our business interests or reputation, even indirectly.
- 5.2 You must not use social media to defame or disparage us, our staff or any third party; to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties; to make false or misleading statements; or to impersonate colleagues or third parties.
- 5.3 You must not express opinions on our behalf via social media, unless expressly authorised to do so by your manager. You may be required to undergo training in order to obtain such authorisation.
- 5.4 You must not post comments about sensitive business-related topics, such as our performance, or do anything to jeopardise our trade secrets, confidential information and intellectual property. You must not include our logos or other trademarks in any social media posting or in your profile on any social media.
- 5.5 You should never post photographs or images of staff colleagues, volunteers, clients or third parties without their express permission and understanding and this must be in writing.
- 5.6 You are not permitted to add business contacts made during the course of your employment to personal social networking accounts.
- 5.7 Any misuse of social media should be reported to the CEO.

**6. GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

- 6.1 You should make it clear in social media postings, or in your personal profile, that you are speaking on your own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal e-mail address.

- 6.2 Be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that you are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see.
- 6.3 If you disclose your affiliation with us on your profile or in any social media postings, you must state that your views do not represent those of your employer (unless you have been authorised to speak on our behalf as set out in paragraph 5.3). You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to clients and colleagues.
- 6.4 If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from posting it until you have discussed it with your manager.
- 6.5 If you see social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on us, you should contact your manager.

## 7. COPYRIGHT

Age UK Exeter respects and operates within copyright laws. Users may not use social media to: Publish or share any **copyrighted software, media or materials owned by third parties**, unless permitted by that third party.

If staff and volunteers wish to **share content published on another website**, they are free to do so if that website has obvious sharing buttons or functions on it.

Share links to **illegal copies** of music, films, games or other software.

## 6 SECURITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Employees should be aware of the security and data protection issues that can arise from using social networks.

## 7 MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY

Users must not:

- Share or link to any content or information owned by the Charity that could be considered **confidential or commercially sensitive**.
  - This might include details of key customers, or information about future strategy or marketing campaigns.
- Share or link to any content or information owned by another charity or person that could be considered **confidential or commercially sensitive**.
  - For example, if a competitor's marketing strategy was leaked online, employees of Age UK Exeter should not mention it on social media.
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- Share or link to data in any way that could breach the Charity's **data protection policy**.

## 8. BREACH OF THIS POLICY

- 8.1 Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.
- 8.2 You may be required to remove any social media content that we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action.

### Revision History

Revision date	Summary of Changes	Other Comments
25.10.16	Versions 1-2, formulation of new document. Reviewed by IGC on 25 October.	Subject to a few amendments recommended to the Standards Board for onward transmission to the Board.
31.10.16	Reviewed by Standards Committee	Amendments to section 9. Recommended to the Board for approval.
8.11.16	Reviewed by Board.	Approved Next review due November 2018.
7.1.2022	Reviewed using HR Express template. No changes.	Approved by the Board of Trustees on 10 February 2022  Next review due January 2025