



Knutsford G.R.O.W. (Garden Regeneration Over Ward Community Association) Registered charity no.1091285
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Social Media Policy & Procedure

Introduction

Social media is an ideal way for Knutsford G.R.O.W. (Garden Regeneration Over Ward Community Association) ['GROW'] to share news, reach new supporters and interact with others.

It is important that all Trustees / Coordinators / volunteers ['you'] take steps to safeguard GROW when using social media. Having a policy in place about acceptable use and giving guidelines to Trustees / Coordinators/volunteers about both business and personal use will help to protect GROW.

This policy must be read in line with other policies provided by GROW including, but not limited to, the Disciplinary, Grievance and Complaints policy, IT policy and all policies relating to discrimination, bullying and harassment.

You must follow the rules established in this policy in relation to all forms of social media. Failure to comply with this policy could result in disciplinary action.

Definition of Social Media

Social media is a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other and allows the sharing of data in a public forum.

Social media covers, but is not limited to, X, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and Flickr, Instagram and any other applications considered 'social media'

Business use of social media

You will be advised if you are expected to make use of social media as part GROW day to day activities and in what forums such use is allowed or not allowed.

If you are unsure about the suitability of a post you wish to make to please discuss it prior to posting with the Chairman.

You may contribute to the Organisation's social media activities. You may be requested to provide blogs or articles for publication. Alternatively, if you have something you would like to contribute to the social media controlled by the Organisation please contact the Chairman.

If you are contacted for comments about the Organisation for publication anywhere, including social media, you must discuss your response with the Chairman to ensure it is appropriate and compatible with the values of the Organisation.

Dealing with abusive, incorrect or damaging posts

When using social media it is important to protect the reputation of GROW at all times. One of the downsides of social media is that some individuals (often known as trolls) can post abusive or damaging posts on social media. Should this occur on any of the organisations social media accounts the following actions should be taken:

- Report the post to the Chairman / Volunteer Manager
- Do not respond to the post – however tempting
- Report the post to the relevant social media provider
- Block the individual
- In the case of serious threats or posts which are considered to be inciting hatred or terrorism should be reported to the police.

Responsible use of social media

If you are required to use social media for business use, or part of a Volunteer role, remember that you are representing GROW at all times and must therefore ensure the communication has a purpose and is intended to benefit GROW.

In both business and personal use of social media you must:

- a) Use your common sense before you post anything and think about what you are saying to the world at large.
- b) Ensure that you do not post any disparaging or defamatory statements about: i) Our Organisation ii) Our Coordinators and Volunteers (current or past) iii) Our existing, potential or previous beneficiaries iv) Our suppliers or competitors v) Any person or organisation that has any connection with our Organisation
- c) Refrain from posting images or links with inappropriate content.
- d) Refrain from breaching confidentiality.
- e) Refrain from revealing any trade secrets or confidential information either relating to our Organisation or a third party.
- f) Refrain from any breach of copyright.
- g) Not use social media to bully, harass or discriminate against any party.

- h) Refrain from posting any religious or political viewpoints.
- i) Refrain from entering into contractual arrangements.
- j) Refrain from any illegal activity.
- k) Refrain from on line fights, personal attacks or hostile postings.

The golden rule - *ask yourself whether what you are about to post could cause offence to anyone or damage the reputation of the organisation. If the answer is yes, or you are not sure, then do not make the post.*

Social media in your personal life

GROW recognises that people use social media in a personal capacity. Whilst you are not acting on behalf of the Organisation, you must be aware that your actions might damage the reputation of the Organisation.

You are allowed to state that you work with / volunteer for the Organisation, however, your online profile / username must not contain the name of the Organisation.

You must not, under any circumstances, use your Organisation email address in any form of personal social media or on the internet at all in your personal capacity. You must set up your own personal email address.

GROW discourages you from discussing your ‘working’ life via social media, however, if you choose to do so remember the golden rule.

If you believe that your conduct outside of your working life could impact on your professional life think carefully about your privacy settings, consider friend / follower requests carefully giving consideration to who their friends and followers may be, remove tags on photographs or alternatively refrain from the use of personal social media altogether.

Breaches of this policy

Any breach of this policy may result in the Disciplinary, Grievance and Complaints policy and procedure being used to resolve the matter.

The Organisation reserves the right to require you to remove a posting from any social media forum and any failure to comply with this request may result the Disciplinary, Grievance and Complaints policy and procedure being used to resolve the matter.

Remember the golden rule: Ask yourself whether what you are about to post could cause offence to anyone, damage your reputation or that of the organisation. If the answer is yes, or you are not sure, then do not make the post.

POLICY DATED 13th December 2023

REVIEW DATE : *2 years after date of policy*