

6th Torbay Social Media Policy

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What is social media?

Social media is the collective term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create, share and interact with content (words, images and videos), as well as network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media platforms include [Facebook](#), [X](#) (formerly Twitter), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [TikTok](#).

Why should we use social media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Scouts' work: to further our charity's purpose, promote our work, support our fundraising goals and participate in campaigns. It is important for volunteers to participate in social media to openly share how Scouts supports young people and volunteers, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of Scouts' work.

Building an engaged online community can lead to more significant long-term support and involvement from supporters.

Why do we need a social media policy?

Social media is a fast-moving online world, where nuance and context can be easily lost. While social media brings the Scouts to a wide audience, it can also present risks. We want to ensure that all volunteers using social media represent and reflect Scouts in the best way possible. It is also important to mitigate risks such as reputational or legal concerns associated with the use of social media to protect our volunteers, supporters, staff, work and reputation.

Failure to comply with this policy could expose Scouts to reputational risks as well as putting volunteers and members at risk.

Who is this social media policy for and what is its scope?

This policy is intended for all volunteers and Trustees, and applies to content posted on both official 6th Torbay social media accounts and personal social media accounts when their use becomes associated with Scouts. Before engaging in Scouts-related social media, volunteers must read this policy.

This policy also applies to online blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, and messaging based apps, such as WhatsApp. Social media can be accessed in various ways, including from a desktop or laptop computer, tablet or smartphone. This policy applies to the use of all such devices.

Code of Conduct Headlines

- I will not insult, harass, bully or intimidate individuals or organisations
- I will not post content that is harmful, offensive, discriminatory, or defamatory.
- I will respond to others' opinions respectfully and professionally
- I will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly
- I will not knowingly post inaccurate information
- I will be considerate, kind and fair
- I will always ensure my activity does no harm to the organisation or to others
- I will champion Scouts and its services

Using 6th Torbay social media

Know our social media guardians

The Group Lead Volunteer has overall ownership of these accounts and only those volunteers authorised to do so by the Group Lead Volunteer will have administrative access to these accounts. These volunteers are known as 'Social Media Managers'.

Volunteers must not create or manage any other social media channels, groups or pages on behalf of 6th Torbay without express permission from the Group Lead Volunteer. This is to ensure brand consistency for users and the appropriate safeguarding and monitoring processes are in place.

When a volunteer who has had admin access to social media accounts leaves the organisation, the passwords for the accounts will be changed.

When posting

Volunteers must ensure they reflect Scouts values in what they post and that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for Scouts.

Volunteers must ensure permission is granted by people identifiable or mentioned in social media posts. This includes other volunteers, young people and parents.

Volunteers posting content relating to a particular event or activity must have approval from the event or activity organiser before doing so. In most circumstances this will be a verbal agreement.

Using personal social media

Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive Scouts and, more importantly, you. Think about your personal reputation as well as the reputation of Scouts'. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions.

Be aware of your association with Scouts and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the public, members of the movement, colleagues, partners and funders.

Avoid posting material which might be construed as contrary to or conflicting with Scouting values.

Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. Remember that a simple 'like' can draw attention to your personal accounts. What you publish is widely accessible and could be around for a long time, so do consider the content, and your privacy, carefully.

Help us to raise our profile

We encourage volunteers to share our posts. You might see opportunities to comment on or support Scouts' work: Where appropriate, and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage volunteers to do this as it helps users connect to us and raises our profile.

At the same time, take care to think about Scouts' reputation. If your personal social media account is not professional or otherwise appropriate for our audiences, please do not use it to amplify or promote our work, as to do so brings risks both to you personally and to Scouts. Similarly, if the content you see is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the Group Lead Volunteer who will respond as appropriate.

Staying safe

Adult volunteers need to be especially careful about those they accept as 'friends' or 'followers' on social media. These sites are essentially designed for peer-to-peer contact and often enable 1:1 messaging.

The [Yellow Card](#) Code of Conduct for Adults is clear: 'Do not plan to be alone with a child or young person in Scouts, either online or in person', and this includes 1:1 messaging on social media.

Where a volunteer's social media profile is public, it's important that adult volunteers ensure their online content is suitable for viewing by children, young people and their parents.

If a child or young person makes direct 1:1 contact with an adult volunteer, the adult volunteer should not respond to the message. Instead, they should use their 6th Torbay email to answer the question if appropriate, or otherwise contact their line manager and a discussion should take place with the young person's parents and carers, explaining why it's not appropriate.

Group chats involving young people

Group chats involving young people are an effective way of communicating. For example, they may be used to organise an event, arrange an activity or simply keep everyone informed about the term's programme.

- All group chats involving young people must be approved by the Group Lead Volunteer who will keep a log of active chats.
- Group chats must have at least two adult volunteers involved, one of which must be a Team Leader or higher. The Group Lead Volunteer can override the latter requirement at their discretion.
- The Code of Conduct Headlines applies to group chats.
- Remember, creating a group on some platforms (such as WhatsApp) will mean that an individual's mobile number is shared and can be seen by everyone in the group. Check with parents, carers and young people that they consent to this, otherwise this is a data breach.

Further Requirements

Confidentiality

Any communications that volunteers make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only (e.g. a WhatsApp chat used by leaders for programme planning) or information that Scouts is not ready to disclose yet, such as the draft details of an event.