

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

- I.1. Social media means any facility for online publication and commentary including, but not limited to, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.
- I.2. Social media provides a unique opportunity to communicate the DSWA's work. It is important to engage with our audience, participate in relevant discussions and raise the profile of the DSWA's work.
- I.3. Every social media post or interaction speaks on behalf of the association. Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.
- I.4. This policy applies to all staff members, volunteers and trustees of DSWA who use social media while working.
- I.5. The DSWA uses Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn and has approximately 25 accounts including the main DSWA accounts and Branch ones.

Policy

- 2.1. Be an ambassador for our brand. Staff and volunteers should ensure they reflect the DSWA values in what they post. Information disclosed should not bring DSWA into disrepute. You are representing the DSWA with every post.
- 2.2. All DSWA social media accounts should have the current DSWA logo in line with brand guidelines. All Branch accounts must be clearly named e.g. DSWA [Branch name] Branch. Titles such as [Branch name] Dry Stone Walling Association are misleading and should not be used.
- 2.3. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for the DSWA, and accurately reflects the Associations agreed position.
- 2.4. Staff & volunteers should refrain from offering personal opinion via DSWA accounts either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about the DSWA's position on a particular issue, please speak to the DSWA Office.
- 2.5. Staff & volunteers should never remove criticism of the DSWA; indeed, legitimate criticism should be responded to.
- 2.6. As an online spokesperson for the DSWA, you are a vital asset for monitoring the social media landscape. If you come across positive or negative remarks about DSWA forward them to the DSWA Training & Education Coordinator.
- 2.7. Always check facts. Users should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being aware of photo manipulation.
- 2.8. In highlighting areas into which DSWA social media output must not stray, the following guidelines should apply:
 - Restrict posts and tweets to publicising DSWA activities.

- No politics. Do not post, share, or retweet opinions or comment. Staff or volunteers who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from the DSWA and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
 - Policy – if you must mention DSWA policy, stick to published positions. Don't drift into any arguments on policy.
 - No elections. DSWA must not endorse any individual candidate for any election.
 - No internal DSWA material. Don't talk about the Associations internal processes or employment matters.
- 2.9. Do not post or share any content which could be defamatory. Defamation is the act of making a statement about a person or company that is considered to harm reputation, for example by lowering other's estimation of the person or company, or by causing them to lose their rank or professional standing.
- 2.10. DSWA should ensure clear acknowledgement in any video, blog, forum or other social media content if such content or any part of it is paid for, commercially sourced or if a post is endorsing a product or partner company by way or 'product placement'.
- 2.11. New social media accounts must not be created without the prior approval of DSWA's Head Office.
- 2.12. Appendix A covers photography and video on any DSWA social media account. Staff & volunteers should ensure they do not breach this guidance before posting or sharing such content.
- 2.13. Do not publish or share any copyrighted software, media or materials owned by third parties, unless permitted by that third party.
- 2.14. Do not share or link to any content or information owned by the charity that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive.
- 2.15. Charity social media accounts should be protected by strong passwords that are changed regularly and shared only with authorized users.

APPENDIX A

Photography /video

1. Particular care should be taken with the use of photographs or video footage on social media, above and beyond copyright issues.
2. Please ensure that photographs meet with the best practice and walling standards set out by the DSWA.
3. Do not include photographs of groups or individuals without specific permission, preferably written, from everybody in the picture if that picture would allow individuals to be identified.
4. Do not use pictures of children (under 18) without being satisfied that permission has been granted by the legal parent or guardian (in writing). DSWA Training & Education Coordinator can provide permission slips.
5. Photographs and videos should be of high quality.
6. All relevant rights for usage of any photograph or video must be obtained before publishing.
7. If a landowner has granted permission for an event to take place on their private property, photos can be taken unless the landowner has explicitly stated otherwise. For private gardens or buildings, permission from the landowner should be sought before any photography occurs due to privacy law.

APPENDIX B

Industry – Accepted Dos and Don'ts for Social Media

1. The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) has published a list of *Dos and Don'ts* for posting on social media. This list, edited for DSWA purposes, is by no means exhaustive, but aims to cover the basics.

DO –

2. **Engage in conversation:** Interacting with audiences and stakeholders through various social media channels is a rewarding part of building a brand online. Creating a proactive and reactive content plan, and regularly contributing to relevant conversations, are both key to creating a strong dialogue.
3. **Be consistent:** If practitioners confuse their audience, they will lose their audience. Different social media platforms lend themselves to different tones of voice. It is good practice to ensure your various social media profiles keep the style and tone of voice as consistent as possible – this will help an audience identify with you and engage.
4. **Correct errors openly and in a timely manner:** Always admit errors and openly 'put them right'. It is advisable to tackle an online issue or crisis as soon as possible to stop it escalating out of control.
5. **Be respectful:** Always seek permission when updating information of uploaded images and videos featuring colleagues or clients to various social media platforms. Always seek written permission for any copyright protected content.

DON'T –

6. **Forget that a social media presence becomes part of a brand legacy:** Posts, pictures, images, tweets, status updates (content in general) can stay online forever. Plan ahead and think about which messages to share via social media channels and their lasting legacies the DSWA.
7. **Make an audience uncomfortable:** It is good to be authentic, develop a tone of voice and provide a hint of personality, but continuously being grumpy or openly criticising people can put an audience off, and deter them from engaging.
8. **Rewrite your social media history:** Do not delete negative comments on social media channels unless they contravene the terms and conditions of the social media platforms containing them (e.g. racial hatred comment on a Facebook Page status update). In all cases understand your legal position, review the social media platform's terms and conditions and apply a measured view – will deletion or allowing the comments to stand serve to escalate potential issues?

Issue / Revision	Date	Description/Comments	Prepared By	Checked By
Rev A	May 2024	New Policy	K Dymock	
Rev B	22-07-24	Reviewed & Updated	P Clayton	P.Kirkup