



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS

A guide for volunteers on using social media to promote the work of Teenage Cancer Trust and in a personal capacity.

This policy supports the following principles:

1. Teenage Cancer Trust's volunteers should be aware of the impact social media can have on those viewing it, and therefore act responsibly and with caution regarding security measures.
2. Teenage Cancer Trust's volunteers should be mindful of the potential risks and impacts of social media, and this should shape how it is used and monitored.
3. Non-compliant use of social media will be deemed by Teenage Cancer Trust could result in action under the Disciplinary Policy.

This is a temporary policy whilst the 'main' Teenage Cancer Trust social media policy (originally written with staff members in mind) is reviewed and revised to cover volunteers. This policy is subject to amendment where appropriate.

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Introduction

What is social media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat and any other online communication tool.

Why does Teenage Cancer Trust use social media?

Social media is essential for communicating with the public about Teenage Cancer Trust's purpose, values, achievements, plans, impact and day to day work. It is a crucial tool for mass market engagement, and as the charity discovered through Stephen's Story can act as a lead generation and conversion tool resulting in significant income. This is why we maintain organisational accounts across a range of channels.

Why do we need a social media policy?

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to Teenage Cancer Trust's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all volunteers and applies to content posted on both a Teenage Cancer Trust device and a personal device.

Internet access and monitoring usage

There are currently no access restrictions to any of our social media sites in the Teenage Cancer Trust office or on any of our devices. However, when using one of our devices in your volunteer work, it is important that volunteers refer to our [Acceptable use of IT devices policy](#) (nb: this link will only work if you have access to our IT systems)

Point of contact for social media

The Digital team within Marketing & Communications is responsible for the day-to-day scheduling, publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to the Digital Engagement Manager or Digital Engagement Executive.

Which social media channels do we use?

National channels maintained by the Digital team:

- Facebook: www.facebook.com/teenagecancertrust
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/teenagecancer
- Instagram: www.instagram.com/teenage_cancer
- YouTube: www.youtube.com/teenagecancertrust
- LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/412328/
- Snapchat: teenagecancer

We use these social media accounts to share news with our supporters and to encourage people to become involved in our work. We use each channel slightly differently as they reach different demographics of audiences. For example, on Instagram our followers are 71% women and 29% men with 62% aged 18-34. Facebook is similar (70% women, 29% men with 55% of aged 18-35), but our most engaged group are women aged 45-65+. YouTube bucks the trend with a split of 80% men and 20% women.

Regional Facebook pages

Alongside our national social media channels, there are also seven additional regional Facebook pages. These are owned by the charity, and monitored by the Digital team, but maintained by the regional teams. These are:

- [North West & Cumbria](#)
- [South West & South Wales](#)
- [The Midlands](#)
- [Yorkshire, The Humber and the North East](#)
- [South East](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [East Anglia](#)

Facebook groups

We also have a number of closed and open Facebook groups e.g. for challenge events and young persons. These are set up by the Digital team but maintained by the Fundraising or Policy team.

Volunteers should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of Teenage Cancer Trust without explicit permission in writing from the Head of Digital Engagement. The reason for this is that to do so creates a range of potentially risky issues from confusion around messaging and brand awareness to the need for additional resource to moderate such channels. By having official social media accounts in place, the Digital team can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

If a complaint is made on social media about Teenage Cancer Trust, volunteers should never respond in a personal capacity. We may choose to respond from the organisational account, but this should be discussed with the Digital Engagement Manager before any action is taken, and they may decide to escalate to senior management. All complaint responses should come from the organisational account(s), never a personal account.

Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation. Examples might include an accident at one of our events or negative media coverage. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity.

The Digital team regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of Teenage Cancer Trust so we can catch any issues or problems early. If there is an issue that could develop or has already developed into a crisis situation, the Digital team will alert the Deputy Director of Communications and/or the Deputy Director of Marketing immediately.

If you become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on Teenage Cancer Trust's social media channels or elsewhere, we encourage you to flag these with your volunteer manager as soon as possible. Your volunteer manager will in turn alert a member of the Digital or Communications teams.

Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. Teenage Cancer Trust volunteers are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with Teenage Cancer Trust's values and policies, both online and in real life. **If you make it public on your profile that you volunteer for Teenage Cancer Trust, you must make sure you follow the following guidelines.**

1. Be aware that anything you say could affect how people perceive Teenage Cancer Trust. **You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Teenage Cancer Trust.** If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about Teenage Cancer Trust's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Teenage Cancer Trust's positions, policies or opinions."
2. Volunteers who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at Teenage Cancer Trust should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their volunteer manager. Similarly, volunteers who want to start blogging and wish to say that they volunteer for Teenage Cancer Trust should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their volunteer manager.
3. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with Teenage Cancer Trust and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the general public, colleagues, partners and funders.
4. Teenage Cancer Trust works with several high-profile people, including celebrities, journalists, politicians and major donors. **Please don't approach high profile people from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the charity,** as this could hinder any potential relationships that are being managed by the Fundraising, Corporate or Marketing and Communications teams. This includes asking for retweets about the charity. If you have any information about high profile people that have a connection to our cause, or if there is someone

who you would like to support the charity, please speak to your volunteer manager, who will liaise with the Music/Celebrity or Corporate team to share the details.

5. If a volunteer is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to Teenage Cancer Trust, they should talk to their volunteer manager immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

6. Teenage Cancer Trust is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing Teenage Cancer Trust, volunteers are expected to hold Teenage Cancer Trust's position of neutrality. Volunteers who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from Teenage Cancer Trust and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

7. Never use Teenage Cancer Trust's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the Design team.

8. Do not include mention of Teenage Cancer Trust in your usernames or handles. E.g. @JohnSmithTCT.

9. When using hashtags keep them short and relevant. Do not use excessively, one or two hashtags per tweet is best.

10. Always protect yourself and the charity. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. When you are using social media sites at work, it is important that you do so safely.

11. Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. **Don't insult people or treat them badly.** Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.

12. We encourage volunteers to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support Teenage Cancer Trust and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage volunteers to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to your volunteer manager, who will prompt the Digital team to respond as appropriate.

13. In some roles volunteers might use social media to make links in their local community or communicate with Corporates. The same best practice rules apply to these.

14. If a young person you have met through volunteering asks to be "friends" or for you to follow them on social media, you should decline this request explaining (if necessary) that this is not permitted under our safeguarding policy. **For this reason, we also recommend volunteers turn off or limit their direct messaging function on Twitter to followers-only.**

Further guidelines (legal bits)

Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether staff and/or volunteers are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring Teenage Cancer Trust into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright law

It is critical that all staff and/or volunteers abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. When using social media they must never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

Confidentiality

Any Communications that staff and/or volunteers make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that Teenage Cancer Trust is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

Discrimination and harassment

Volunteers should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Teenage Cancer Trust social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

Volunteers should refer to the information in our [bullying and harassment policy](#) and if there are any concerns raise them with the safeguarding team.

Lobbying Act

Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law. However, the Lobbying Act, which was passed in January 2014, states that during national elections (known as regulated periods) spending on campaigning activities may be regulated.

Charities which spend more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, during the regulated period, need to register with the Electoral Commission. To abide by the Lobbying Act, campaigning activities on social media must not be seen as intending to influence people's voting choice. During these periods, all campaigning activity will be reviewed by the Digital Engagement Manager.

Use of social media in the recruitment process

Recruitment should be carried out in accordance with the Volunteering Policy, and associated procedures and guidelines. Any advertising of vacancies should be done through the Volunteering team, who will work with the Digital team where necessary.

There should be no systematic or routine checking of applicant's online social media activities during the recruitment process, as conducting these searches might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics, such as religious beliefs or sexual orientation, played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with Teenage Cancer Trust's [equity, diversity and inclusion policy and procedure](#).

Protection and intervention

The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook. However, if a volunteer considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately (check the Volunteer Handbook for these details).

Under 18s and vulnerable people

Young and vulnerable people run risks on social networking sites. They may be at risk from being bullied, making sensitive personal information available on their profiles, or from treating anonymous online 'friends' as if they were real friends and becoming targets for online 'grooming'.

When communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, employees should ensure:

- they have referred to the information in our [safeguarding policy](#) and if there are any concerns raise them with the safeguarding team.
- an online relationship with a Teenage Cancer Trust employee follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship
- only the official Teenage Cancer Trust accounts should directly communicate with individual young people on social media.

Responsibilities and breach of policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of Teenage Cancer Trust is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For volunteers, breaches of policy may trigger problem solving action, depending on the severity of the issue. Volunteers who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from their volunteer manager.