



Social Media Guidelines for Volunteers

1. Introduction

The following guidelines are taken from the SDCVS social media policy and provide volunteers with common sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.

This policy is intended for all volunteers and applies to content posted on both a South Derbyshire CVS device and a personal device.

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 Wikipedia, Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), LinkedIn, Instagram, Threads, TikTok, Snapchat and any other online communication tool which may include WhatsApp, Telegram, Messenger, Signal, Skype.

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 South Derbyshire CVS'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 carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

Point of Contact for Social Media

The Communications Manager, or duly delegated representatives, are 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 Communications Manager or CEO.

2. Personal Use of Social Media

- a) This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise.
- b) South Derbyshire CVS volunteers are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with South Derbyshire CVS Core Values and Policies, both online and in real life. **If you make it public on your profile that you volunteer for South Derbyshire CVS, you must make sure you follow the following guidelines.**
- c) We recognise that volunteers may occasionally wish to use social media for personal activities at the office or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems.
- d) We authorise such occasional use during rest breaks if it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content and does not interfere with employment responsibilities or productivity.
- e) **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.
- f) While using social media at work, circulation of chain letters or other spam is prohibited.
- g) Circulation of or posting commercial, personal, religious or political solicitations, or promotion of outside organisations unrelated to the charity's business is also prohibited.

3. Protecting our Business Reputation

- a) **Volunteers who have a personal BLOG, video log (VLOG) or website which indicates in any way that they work at South Derbyshire CVS should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager.** Similarly, volunteers who want to start blogging and wish to say that they volunteer for South Derbyshire CVS should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager.
- b) **Volunteers must not post defamatory statements about our charity, our clients, suppliers and or vendors and other affiliates and stakeholders.**
- c) **Volunteers should also avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage our business reputation, even indirectly.**

- d) **Volunteers should make it clear in social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf.** Write in the first person and use a personal email address when communicating via social media.
- e) **Volunteers are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media.** Remember that what you publish might be available to be read by the masses (including the charity itself, future employers and social acquaintances) for a long time. Keep this in mind before you post content.
- f) **It is important that all volunteers use common sense and good judgement.** Be aware of your association with South Derbyshire CVS and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the public, colleagues, partners and funders.
- g) **Volunteers who state an affiliation as a Volunteer of South Derbyshire CVS, you must state that your views do not represent those of the charity.** For example, you could state, “the views in this posting do not represent the view of South Derbyshire CVS”.
- h) **Volunteers should avoid posting comments about sensitive business-related topics, such as the charities performance.** Even if the volunteer makes it clear that their views on such topics do not represent those of the charity, their comments could still damage our reputation. **If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from making the communication until you have discussed it with your line manager.**
- i) **Volunteers should not use South Derbyshire CVS’s logos or trademarks unless approved to do so.** Permission to use logos should be requested from the Communications Manager.
- j) Volunteers should report immediately to their line manager any content on social media or other online sources that reflects poorly on our charity or our stakeholders. **All volunteers are responsible for protecting our reputation.**
- k) **Volunteers are not permitted to add professional, or business contacts made during your volunteering to personal social networking accounts.** This may include but not be limited to, Facebook, TikTok and Instagram.
- l) **If a young person, which a volunteer may 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 social media apps to family, friends or followers-only.
- m) **Volunteers should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of South**

Derbyshire CVS (or its services) without explicit permission in writing from the Marketing and Communications Manager. 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 organisation can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

- n) **If a complaint is made on social media about South Derbyshire CVS, their service and or staff, volunteers should never respond in a personal capacity.** We may choose to respond from the organisational account, but this should be discussed with the Marketing and Communications 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.**
- o) **South Derbyshire CVS 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 South Derbyshire CVS, volunteers are expected to hold South Derbyshire CVS's position of neutrality. Volunteers who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from South Derbyshire CVS and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
- p) **If a volunteer is contacted by the press about past or previous services, community projects or their social media posts that relate to South Derbyshire CVS, they should talk to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.**

4. Respecting Colleagues, Clients, Partners and Suppliers

- a) **Volunteers should ensure that their profiles and any content they publish/post are consistent with the professional image South Derbyshire CVS presents to clients, colleagues, partners and suppliers.**
- b) **Volunteers should not publish/post anything** that their colleagues or our clients, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders would find **offensive**, including **discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity.**
- c) **Volunteers should not publish/post anything** related to their colleagues or our clients, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders without their prior written permission.
- d) **Volunteers are strongly reminded that social media sites are not an appropriate place to air business concerns, grievances or complaints.** Such concerns, grievances or complaints should be raised with a manager or formally through our grievance procedure.

5. Monitoring

- a) **South Derbyshire CVS reserves the right to periodically monitor external postings on social media and other online sites.** All volunteers who have a profile (for example, on LinkedIn or Facebook) must not misrepresent themselves or their role with South Derbyshire CVS.

6. Responsibilities and Breach of Policy

- a) **All volunteers are responsible for their own compliance with this policy.**
- b) Participation in social media on behalf of South Derbyshire CVS is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect.
- c) For volunteers, breaches of policy may trigger problem solving action, depending on the severity of the issue. Such action will in accordance with the SDCVS Volunteer Problem Solving Policy.
- d) Volunteers who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from their line manager

7. Further Legal Guidelines

a) Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print.

Volunteers who are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, should not bring South Derbyshire CVS into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

b) Copyright Law

It is critical that all 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.

c) Confidentiality and Data Protection

Any communications that volunteers make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality, defame, or make derogatory comments about our business or its clients, colleagues, partners and suppliers, or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach Data Protection and or UK GDPR legislation.

For example, information meant for internal use only or information that South Derbyshire CVS is not ready to disclose yet.

For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

8. Review & Monitoring

- a. The policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if there are legislative changes
- b. Minor changes to the policy such as job titles resulting from organisational changes can be updated at any time.

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Next review due	August 2026