Social Media Policy

The purpose of this policy is to help anyone who is involved with The it Group 23 understand how to use social media effectively and well to avoid problems.

Social media use is governed by a number of laws. Equally, we have a very positive reputation, and this is extremely important in delivering our charitable work.

The Law

Use of social media is covered by a number of UK laws and social media has no national boundaries, so posts may well be read in other countries. As a very simple guide, a social media post (or potentially repost) may be considered breaking the law if it contains anything that may fall into any of the following categories:

- Harassment – not leaving someone alone.

- Spreading malicious rumours.Harassment – not leaving someone alone.

- Menacing behaviour – writing something that may scare someone.

- Threatening behaviour – making someone believe that you were going to hurt them.

- Grossly offensive comments – making deeply unpleasant comments about a sensitive issue.

- Libel - a post is potentially libellous, if it is a false statement and may damage someone's reputation.

- Defamation - users may be sued for defamation, if they post an unsubstantiated rumour about someone.

THE FIX IT GROUP 23

- Data protection – breaching an individual's right to privacy.

- Copyright – posting material without permission that is owned by another person or organisation

Our Spokespeople

We have a number of spokespeople to represent us:

- Joanne Liversidge

- John Fitzgerad

- Paul Worth

If you were to post on an issue related to our work or to use our logo or refer to us in your posts, people may think you were speaking on our behalf. Even if you do not speak on behalf of The Fix it Group 23, you are personally responsible for all online content you publish.

Social Media Guidelines

Do not breach privacy or security

Do not post personal information, such as someone's home address, and never post about individuals without their consent, unless there is little if any doubt it would be given. Remember that individuals who may not be fully competent, perhaps due to a disability or illness, such as dementia, may not be able to give consent.

Don't make it easy for criminals, by posting information that they might use. For example, that the lock on the front door has broken (again), you will be taking a lot of cash to the bank or working late on your own.

Clearly state your opinions are your own

If you are not a spokesperson, make clear that your comments, opinions or posts are your own, so these won't be interpreted as our position. This statement could appear on your profile.

Appear human

Observing certain guidelines does not mean you have to sound like a robot. Speak in the first person; bring your personality to the forefront.

Write using our 'tone of voice'

Where possible, when communicating with the public, media or government, use our 'tone of voice'.

We are passionate in supporting our community and like to laugh as much as anyone else, but we're professional, courteous, positive and respect the right of others to hold opinions that are different to ours.

Abusive Posts

A troll is someone who intentionally causes upset, harm, or offence by provoking people online. Be careful not to confuse a troll with someone who is critical and/or upset. There will be people who have valid concerns or have a genuine complaint that may come across as angry and irate. Look at their social media to see what they post and how they reply. Trolls often have a profile picture that is an object, rather than a person, or no profile image at all.

People who are abusive are usually trying to provoke a reaction from you, so don't give them what they want. Besides, you are unlikely to convince them they are wrong. Post separately to address the issue. You can also adjust your settings to not allow replies, use the relevant abuse reporting system, block them and, if you think they are committing a crime, report them to the police.

Disagreeing

If you disagree with something and feel you should respond, always be courteous and do not personalise your response. Focus on the issue, not the person who wrote the post. If you simply 'poke someone in the chest',

you won't get a positive response. And no issue was ever solved without a solution, so offer one.

Text and Symbols

Using emoji, 'lol' etc can help add humour to a fun post, but don't use it if you are making an important point, as this would trivialise your message. And using multiple exclamations, and lots of capital letters, bold and underline is 'shouting', you would not be taken seriously.

Think first, upload after

If something gets online, it stays there for a long time. Social media posts can now appear in Google search results. So that off-hand post or opinionated blog post can all be traced back to you.

Ask for a second opinion

Not sure if and how you should post or comment on something relating to The Fix it Group 23, contact the Events and Publicity Manager for advice.

Be politically neutral

It is essential that we are not only politically neutral but seen to be. We aim to influence the government and its agencies positively in support of our community and criticising them won't help us do that. Equally, we treat all recognised political parties with respect and support any of their initiatives that support our own aims, but we do not actively support or promote any individual party

Respect copyright, fair use and other laws

Using imagery? Make sure you acknowledge the source and observe copyright laws.   Images of crowds at events don't require the approval of each individual, but an image where a limited number of individuals are the subject matter of the image do. For example, an image of a band at a large cultural event, which includes the audience, doesn't require everyone in the audience's approval, but a small group of people, where they are

clearly the subject of the image would. It is particularly important that you obtain permission, if you wish to use images of children or vulnerable adults.

Don't be offensive

Do not be offensive to anyone, for any reason. Two good tests:

- If you wouldn't say it to their face, don't say it at all and:

- If you wouldn't want your mother to read it, don't write it.

Extremist views, sexism, pornography/distressing or otherwise offensive imagery, racial/ethnic or religious discrimination, homophobia or disparaging comments against any minority group would not be acceptable, under any circumstances, ever.

Meaning

Remember that the majority of our communication is through body language and voice tone/loudness etc, and the amount of written text in social media can be limited, so meaning can easily be lost. What may appear light hearted and funny to you, may potentially come across very differently on social media.

And take into account potential social and/or cultural differences in your audience who may be more sensitive to particular issues or subjects than the wider population.

Moderation of Posts on Our Social Media

We act as a platform, both online and off, for our community to debate issues that matter to them, and we actively encourage diversity of opinion. We believe that open, honest debate can help to address divisions and just because we don't agree with something, doesn't necessarily mean that we would remove it. For example, critical comments about our work are rare but, whilst we always respond in a balanced and measured way, we do not

remove these, even when we do not necessarily agree with these, subject to the guidelines below.

The community has diversity of views, some strongly held. There is nothing wrong in holding strong views, but that does not automatically make alternative views offensive. In general, as long as a post does not break the law, is a genuine contribution to a debate and is not offensive, we would not usually remove it.

Specifically, we will take down any post that falls into the categories below:

- Anything we believe may fall into any of the categories in the section above titled 'The Law'.

- Anything that contained views that we feel the majority of reasonable people would consider to be offensive.

We may also block those posting such material and/or report the issue to the relevant authorities.

Take Down Process

Any member of the management committee has the authority to remove posts that are obviously unacceptable.

Any request to take down a post is to be managed using our complaints (or other) policy.

Before a post is taken down, screenshot or otherwise record the post.

Fake Social Media Accounts and AI Bots

Social media bots can be helpful, but many are malicious and, with the advent of generative AI, are becoming increasingly difficult to spot. Here are some indicators that may indicate an account is a bot:

- A recent account creation date

- The account shows coordinated resharing and amplifying of posts between a small network of accounts

- Unrealistically fast response times to others, indicating that the account is almost always online

- Low-quality comments with limited and repetitive vocabulary

- Usernames with long, random number sequences

- Stolen profile images from real people or "patriotic" profile images (such as flags, weapons, political symbols)

- A high volume of reposted and shared content, with limited original posts

- Limited focus on content outside of a predefined set of hashtags and topics

We recognise that AI deep fakes can be difficult to identify but those using our social media will be made aware of the risk. We will not like, share or support in the comments any imagery or content that we reasonably suspect to be fake.

Guidance

Charity Commission E&W - Charities and social media.

Charity Commission: Managing online risk.

ICO: Content moderation and data protection.

Resources

UK Safer Internet Centre.

Digi Safe: Step-by-step digital safeguarding guide.

Facebook: Your child's online safety.

National Youth Agency: Safeguarding & Risk Management Hub.

NCPCC Learning: Protecting children from online abuse.

NSPCC Learning: Social media and online safety.

Version Control - Approval and Review

This policy was adopted by The Fix it Group 23, a community interest organisation.

Version Number	Approved By	Approval Date	Main Changes	Review Period
1.0	Board of Trustees	Nov 2024	Initial draft approved.	Annually