**Social Media Policy**

**Introduction**

Social media represents a vast online community where customers, partners, suppliers, and shareholders come together to share information, promote products and services, and exchange opinions and experiences. Gwent Wildlife Trust recognises the limits and risks of social media, and how it can affect our company's brand, public image, and core values. Therefore, we have created this social media policy to lay out a framework of tested social media guidelines and protocols.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this social media policy is to (a) outline the social media guidelines and protocols of the company, (b) define the rules that apply to both corporate and personal social media use, and (c) to explain the company's disciplinary action process for policy violations.

**Scope**

This social media policy applies to all Gwent Wildlife Trust employees, including paid interns, volunteers, contractors, and seasonal, part-time, and full-time employees. Gwent Wildlife Trust defines social media as any form of your own or someone else's blog, journal, personal website, social networking site, and/or chat room and includes instant messaging apps such as What’s App, Tik Tok etc.

**Corporate Use**

Employees that represent the company on social media are required to uphold the company's image, core values, and brand. Subsequently, Gwent Wildlife Trust expects all employees to always remain fair, professional, and polite to any Gwent Wildlife Trust partners, shareholders, customers, members, and/or suppliers.

There is specific guidance for charities during an election here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/pub](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities-cc9/charities-elections-and-referendums.)

**Social Media Guidelines:**

* Avoid speaking on and/or posting about subjects outside of the company's field of study.
* Reply to all comments in a timely manner.
* Correct or delete incorrect and/or misleading content.
* Adhere to the company's confidentiality agreement and anti-discriminatory policy.
* Avoid posting and/or sharing offensive, discriminatory, and/or false information.
* Not engage in any political activity which could be seen as biased or supporting a political party because as a charity we should not be seen to be supporting any political party.

Gwent Wildlife Trust’s Senior Press and Communications Officer is responsible for setting up an official social media calendar. The social media calendar must be approved by the Head of Fundraising and Communication. In cases where the company is set to announce major news or launch campaigns on social media, the Senior Press and Communications Officer must thoroughly review the content for any misleading or incorrect information.

**Personal Use**

While Gwent Wildlife Trust recognises that we may not prohibit our employees from posting personal opinions and content on private accounts, we do expect our employees to uphold the highest level of respect and adhere to our company's anti-discriminatory and harassment policies.

Furthermore, we ask all Gwent Wildlife Trust employees to:

* Clearly state that personal opinions and content on employees' social media accounts are not approved or supported by our company.
* Avoid posting intellectual property and confidential company information on personal social media accounts.
* Avoid discussing company-related information with customers on personal social media accounts.
* Avoid sharing abusive, offensive, and/or slanderous content.
* Adhere to financial disclosure laws.

**Disciplinary Action**

If a Gwent Wildlife Trust employee does not follow the guidelines set out in this social media policy, Gwent Wildlife Trust will have grounds to take disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Policy violations include:

* Overlooking job obligations and deadlines due to excessive use of social media in the workplace.
* Releasing corporate information on social media channels, both personal and corporate.
* Posting inappropriate content and subject matter on corporate social media channels.
* Posting offensive comments
* Neglecting to reply to clients online.
* Posting false information and personal opinions on corporate social media channels.
* As a charity we cannot be seen to support any particular political party. see pt 4.1 in this document: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities-cc9/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities

Each offence or policy violation will be thoroughly investigated by the Chief Executive and the HR and Volunteering Officer before disciplinary action is finalised. Disciplinary action may include a reprimand, written warning, and/or termination.