

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

A guide for staff on using social media to promote the work of
Leasowe Community Centre Trust
and in a personal capacity

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, at least once a year.
Leasowe Community Centre Trust
will amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

Date of last review: January 2026

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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 and Instagram.

- **Why do we use social media?**

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Leasowe Community Centre's Trust work. It is important for some staff to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of Leasowe Community Centre's Trust work.

- **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 Leasowe Community Centre's Trust 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 *staff members of all levels, volunteers and trustees*, and applies to content posted on both a *Leasowe Community Centre Trust* device and a personal device. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, staff must read this policy.

- **Setting out the social media policy**

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Leasowe Community Centre Trust, and the use of social media by staff in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help staff support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

- **Internet access and monitoring usage**

There are currently no access restrictions to any of our social media sites in the Leasowe Community Centre Trust office. However, when using the internet at work, it is important that staff refer to our [*policy name i.e. IT Policy*]. You are permitted to make reasonable and appropriate use of personal social media activity during your lunch breaks. But usage should not be excessive and interfere with your duties.

- **Point of contact for social media**

Marie Scott – Centre Manager is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to the centre manager. No other staff member can post content on Leasowe Community Centre Trust official channels without the permission of the Chair Person.

- **Which social media channels do we use?**

Leasowe Community Centre Trustees have the following social media channels:

- www./Leasowecommunitycentre.co.uk
- <https://www.facebook.com>

We use these social media accounts for the provision of up to date information on all our aspects relating to our operational service delivery. The main aspect is for our target audience to be aware of information and upcoming events.

Leasowe Community Centre Trust has a Facebook account which it uses to share news with supporters and parents to encourage people to become involved in our work.

Guidelines

- **Using Leasowe Community Centre Trust social media channels — appropriate conduct**

- 1) Marie Scott is responsible for setting up and managing Leasowe Community Centre Trust social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the Chair Person will have access to these accounts
- 2) Be an ambassador for our brand. Staff should ensure they reflect Leasowe Community Centre Trust values in what they post and use our tone of voice. Our brand guidelines set out our tone of voice that all staff should refer to when posting content on Leasowe Community Centre Trust social media channels.
- 3) Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for Leasowe Community Centre Trust, and accurately reflects Leasowe Community Centre Trust agreed position.
- 4) Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images.

- 5) Always pause and think before posting. That said, reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
- 6) If staff outside of Leasowe Community Centre Trust wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should speak to Paul Townley about this.
- 7) Staff shouldn't post content about supporters or service users without their express permission. If staff are sharing information about supporters, service users or third-party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from Leasowe Community Centre Trust. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, staff must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.
- 8) Always check facts. Staff 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 wary of photo manipulation.
- 9) Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.
- 10) Staff should refrain from offering personal opinions via Leasowe Community Centre Trust social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about Leasowe Community Centre Trust position on a particular issue, please speak to the Chair person.
- 11) It is vital that Leasowe Community Centre Trust does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.
- 12) Staff should not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.
- 13) Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of *[charity name]*. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, the *[team name]* can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

- 14) Leasowe Community Centre 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. We have every right to express views on policy, including the policies of parties, but we can't tell people how to vote.
- 15) If a complaint is made on Leasowe Community Centre Trust social media channels, staff should seek advice from the Centre Manager before responding. If they are not available, then staff should speak to the Chair of the board.
- 16) Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation. Examples might include: *[include example crisis situations for your charity]*. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity.

The centre manager regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of Leasowe Community Centre 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 centre manager will do the following:

- Contact the Chair-Person
- Contact Wirral Borough Council media

If any staff outside of the Leasowe Community Centre Trust become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on The Trust social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Chair Person immediately.

- **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. Leasowe Community Centre Trust staff are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with LPYCA values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive Leasowe Community Centre Trust. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Trust. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about The Trust's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Leasowe Community Centre Trust positions, policies or opinions."

2. Staff who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at Leasowe Community Centre Trust should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager. Similarly, staff who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for Leasowe Community Centre Trust should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager.
3. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with Leasowe Community Centre 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. If a staff member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to *[charity name]*, they should talk to the *[team name]* immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.
5. Leasowe Community Centre 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 Leasowe Play Youth & Community Association, staff are expected to hold LPYCA's position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from LPYCA, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
9. Never use Trust's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the Chair
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. You can find more information on your responsibilities when using our website in our *IT Policy*.
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 staff 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 Leasowe Community Centre Trust and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage staff 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 the Marie Scott who will respond as appropriate.

Further guidelines

- **Libel**

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

- **Copyright law**

It is critical that all staff abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. 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 make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that Leasowe Community Centre Trust is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date. Please refer to our *[policy name i.e. Confidentiality Policy]* for further information.

- **Discrimination and harassment**

Staff should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Leasowe Community Centre 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

- **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 staff member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the centre manager immediately.

- **Under 18s and vulnerable people**

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, staff should ensure the online relationship with Leasowe Community Centre Trust follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Staff should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. Staff should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and Leasowe Community Centre Trust content and other content is appropriate for them. Please refer to our *[policy name i.e. Safeguarding Policy]*.

- **Responsibilities and breach of policy**

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of Leasowe Community Centre Trust is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For staff, breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Please refer to our *HR policy* for further information on disciplinary procedures. Staff who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Chair.