



# WILLIAMSBURGH

HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

### **Revision History**

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## 1. Introduction and Definition

Social Media is the term used to describe forms of electronic communication such as a website and social media channels used for networking, through which users can interact with each other in various ways, through sharing content, opinions, knowledge and interests. In doing so, social media offers the potential for direct, two-way communication and engagement.

Social Media is one of Williamsburgh Housing Association's (WHA's) main channels for engaging with our customers.

WHA recognises the importance of these platforms as a business tool to assist us to participate in online conversations with our tenants and other stakeholders. We are committed to ensuring that our staff and Committee members use social media in the right way just as we would do with traditional media. This policy sets out how we will use social media and what standards we will work to.

This Policy and its associated Guidelines (see appendix 1) applies to all staff and committee members for both business and personal social media accounts. It also will help to mitigate some of the risks associated with the use of social media including protecting WHA's reputation, privacy, confidentiality, and interests.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Committee Code of Conduct
- Dignity of Work Policy
- Freedom of Information policies
- Tenant Participation Strategy (not on website)
- General Privacy Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Information Security & Acceptable Use Policy

WHA currently uses the following social media platforms:

- Business Website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Tiktok
- Youtube
- LinkedIn

The policy will also cover any new social networking platforms which will be developed in the future.

A core of 'named staff' will be responsible for the management of all social media content produced on behalf of WHA. This is to ensure that the content is consistent with our values and that it does not conflict with information already been communicated through more traditional media. Named staff will be given appropriate training to ensure they feel confident updating content on social media sites.

Permission should be sought from the Head of Finance & Corporate Services to create a business social media account.

WHA will ensure that resources are provided to monitor our social media sites and to ensure that any contact is responded to in a prompt and accurate manner.

Social media is also changing and growing and to allow us to keep up to date with changes, we will review this policy in two years.

## **2. Policy Objectives**

We will use our social media presence to post regular content covering the following areas:

- information about WHA's activities and services.
- to seek feedback on our performance and services we provide.
- to share information which may be of use to our tenants and other stakeholders.
- to share our achievements and success stories.
- to reduce our carbon footprint.
- to contribute to campaigns and debates on housing related matters.
- promote discussion with our tenants and other stakeholders on topics related to our service delivery.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Chief Executive Officer has the overall responsibility for WHA's social media platforms. 'Named staff' will:

- Be aware of their responsibilities as defined within this Policy and comply with WHA's Social Media Guidelines (Appendix 1).
- Take personal responsibility for any content published on social media.
- Not use WHA's social media for personal reasons - any reports of inappropriate activity will be investigated.
- Ensure that any posts comply with the data protection principles.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities** (continued)

- Take care not to publish information e.g., reports, documents etc. that are meant to be confidential.
- Ensure that individuals are not identified without their approval and ensure that the correct consent has been obtained.
- Ensure that they do not use insulting, offensive, or racist language or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in normal day to day life.
- Identify themselves as part of WHA and only use business email addresses. In doing so, they should be aware that any views expressed by them will reflect on WHA.
- Report any threats, abuse or harassment from members of the public using WHA's accident, incident or near miss reporting procedures.
- Remove, as soon as it is discovered, any contact which is rude, offensive, or insulting.
- Not download any software, shareware, or freeware from any social media sites.
- Understand that ownership of all WHA social media accounts rests with WHA.
- Respect any copyright, fair-use, and financial disclosure laws.

### **4. Personal Social Media Accounts**

Personal social media accounts are the responsibility of the individual who creates and uses them, and WHA takes no responsibility for these. However, if you choose to make your personal profile public, be mindful that your digital identity could be traced back to your employment with WHA . Staff and Committee members should be cautious before putting anything on posts which may damage our reputation or breach our Social Media Guidelines.

Social media is just another form of communication but with one exception, this communication is much more public and is accessible to both solicited and unsolicited views.

You must not use your personal social media account(s) to criticise your colleagues, Committee members, our tenants, or other stakeholders. Nor should you say anything which would bring WHA and its work into disrepute including revealing private or confidential information relating to WHA. If any such comments are made, you will be asked to remove them and depending on their nature may result in disciplinary action.

Serious breaches of this Policy may also result in disciplinary action.

WHA's logo is the property of the association and should not be used on any personal social media accounts, except for LinkedIn.

## **5. Freedom of Information**

A person or organisation has the right to request information and WHA as a "public body" has a legal obligation to comply with this requirement under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

WHA has systems in place to handle these requests and an email address through which information requests can be submitted. However, it is still possible that WHA's social media accounts might be used to submit a Freedom of Information request.

Named staff should screen all social media content. If a request is made these should be passed immediately to the Corporate Admin section for logging and to decide whether the request is valid or not and to start any actions required to process with the request.

## **6. Complaints**

A person or organisation has the right to raise a complaint and social media may be used to raise such complaints. 'Named staff' should screen all social media content and complaints should be forwarded to the relevant section to log and start the complaint process in line with the Complaints Handling Policy.

## **7. Equalities**

Whether relating to the way we provide services to customers, employ and support staff, or work with partners and stakeholders, we strive to ensure that all people we interact with are treated equally, irrespective of their sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other social attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

This policy is designed to support fair treatment of our staff and committee members.