

Cycling UK's Social Media Policy

Prepared by: Hannah Duncan, digital and social media officer

Reviewed and approved by: Laura Mason, head of
communications

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Introduction

This social media policy describes the rules governing its use at Cycling UK.

Cycling UK wants staff, volunteers and contractors to be able to enjoy the benefits of social media whilst understanding the practices we expect.

The policy sets out the rules of how staff, volunteers or contractors must behave when using social networking sites. It also sets out how employees can use these platforms safely and effectively.

You might like to read this advice alongside our Complaints Procedure, Social Media Data Protection Guidelines and Staff Handbook.

General advice

Staff, volunteers and anyone representing the charity on social networking sites should apply the same standards of conduct online as they are expected to apply in their work offline.

Before staff and volunteers start to use social media on behalf of the charity they should be familiar with privacy settings of the social networking sites to ensure that they are secure and appropriate for privacy, the content and intended audience.

Overall, any content (including videos and images) put out on social media should relate to directly to the charity's aims and objectives. For example:

- Share advice, guidance, campaigns and stories developed by the charity
- Share content or studies created by other organisations that support the Cycling UK's objectives (but make sure that the content is read thoroughly and not just the headline, so you can ensure that article is appropriate)
- Support new initiatives, drives and membership recruitment

The communications team always welcomes and encourages new ideas and are happy to experiment with alternative ideas. If you have something you would like to try out on social media, please contact the digital and social media officer to discuss this before posting.

Try to be positive, upbeat and helpful in the language and style of your communications online. Join in conversations you think will help the organisation, refer to our website and what we do as often as you can. If you are unsure about what to say, or whether to get involved contact the head of communications or social media officer.

Remember our tone should be friendly, enthusiastic, and concise. When we speak on behalf of Cycling UK we should communicate with energy, positivity and clarity.

Content in the public domain can be shared indeterminately

Due to the nature of social media, the platforms are in the public domain and it is not always possible to know when or where your content is being viewed, shared, bookmarked, or commented on. There can be no expectation that posts will remain private and will not be passed on to other people, intentionally or otherwise. Material published online may have the potential to be available publicly, indefinitely.

All staff, volunteers and Cycling UK representatives are responsible for the content they post. This includes, but is not exclusive to words, videos and images that are shared in an online environment. Therefore, they are advised to consider whether any comment, image or video is appropriate and whether they would want the charity, fellow staff members, volunteers and anyone externally to see.

Responding to the audience

Never make any commitments or promises on behalf of Cycling UK without checking with the organisation first, in the first instance call the social media officer, digital and content manager or head of communications for advice.

Cycling UK is often involved with legal cases. Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation that the charity may be involved in or in dispute with without prior consent.

If you make a mistake online, apologise quickly and honestly and learn from it for future postings.

Be shrewd about protecting yourself, your privacy, and the charity's confidential information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully.

Disagreements online

When disagreeing with others' opinions, remain appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation online that looks as if it may be becoming hostile or aggressive, do not get overly defensive and do not disengage from the conversation abruptly; ask the digital and social media officer for advice or disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner that reflects well on the charity. If somebody is criticising the charity directly, we advise acknowledging their complaint publicly and taking the discussion offline.

If you want to write about another organisation, make sure you behave professionally, diplomatically, ensure you have the facts straight and you have permission from the digital and social media officer, digital and content manager or head of communications.

Social media is not the best way to respond to sensitive, confidential or complex issues. Take these conversations offline by obtaining an email address or phone number privately so you can discuss the issue further.

Accounts and authorised users

Only people who have been given permission to use Cycling UK's social media accounts may do so. Authorisation is granted by the digital and social media officer or head of communications.

Allowing only a select number of people on the accounts enables Cycling UK to meet the demands of the charity equally, ensures that the business objectives are met and that it remains consistent and cohesive.

Social media accounts related to the organisation must not be created without the permission of the digital and social media officer. Any employee who has a case for a new social media platform being created please put this to the digital and social media officer.

All passwords must be kept confidential and must never be shared unless you have written permission from the digital and social media officer. It is highly recommended that strong passwords are used and changed annually. If you decide to change the password please communicate this with anyone using the account who may be affected, and the digital and social media officer in advance.

Staff, volunteers or authorised users must not use a new software download or app with any of the social media accounts without prior written approval from the digital and social media officer. Never click on any links that you are not familiar with and look suspicious. Never connect a Cycling UK social media account to your personal bank details.

Use of social media in the office

The charity recognises that members of staff may occasionally wish to use social media for personal use at their place of work, by means of Cycling UK's IT resources. Such incidental and occasional use of these systems is permitted, provided that: it is not excessive, does not disrupt, distract or is intrusive to the conduct of Cycling UK's business and/or work colleagues (for example, due to volume, frequency or cost), such communications do not bring Cycling UK into disrepute.

Where appropriate, in accordance with the IT regulations and where the law permits, Cycling UK reserves the right to monitor use of social media platforms and take appropriate action to protect against any misuse that may be harmful to the charity.

Remember, even if you don't explicitly highlight your role with Cycling UK in your bio, if you use your social media account to post, reflect or comment on the charity's work, it will become clear you are a representative of the charity. Therefore you should always exercise caution in saying anything that might reflect negatively on the charity.

You may wish to include in your bio 'all views expressed are my own', however this disclaimer does **not** provide any legal protection, nor will it be a defence from disciplinary action if your comments are deemed to have brought the organisation into disrepute.

Code of Conduct

This code of conduct is intended to establish appropriate, safe and professional use of social media. Individuals who represent the Cycling UK brand or work under its banner are expected to adhere to the policy, including staff, volunteers, contractors or anyone representing Cycling UK online.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is:

- To encourage best practice online
- To ensure that all behaviour online is dealt with properly and professionally
- To ensure that the organisation is represented appropriately at all times

Using social media responsibly

Social media has many positive benefits and it is our aim to make sure that groups and clubs get the best out of these platforms. Below are a few rules that we have put in place to protect individuals or groups online and ensure best practice for the organisation.

Material which abuses or threatens others

Under no circumstances do we tolerate behaviour which abuses or threatens others. This includes conduct which is racially offensive or hateful. Any material which abuses or threatens a group or individual will be dealt with through the Cycling UK Complaints Procedure, which may result in termination of membership, account blocking or other.

Material that is illegal or contains vulgar abusive language, photos or videos

Material which contains vulgar, abusive language, photos or videos is not permitted and directly goes against Cycling UK's code of conduct. Any person who exhibits this behaviour under the Cycling UK name will be taken through our Complaints Procedure, which may result in termination of membership, account blocking or another other action decided by the charity.

Do not publish information that is confidential

Unless it has been agreed in writing by the charity, please do not publish confidential information that relates to a specific individual or the charity.

Protecting individual's identity

If relating to an individual here are a few examples of how you could breach their confidentiality by revealing the following online without their explicit permission:

- Phone number
- Home address
- Email address
- Age or date of birth
- Health issues
- Names or names of family members
- Hobbies

Ensure that individuals have permission to be represented online

When capturing images or videos from an event, make sure everyone featured is comfortable and has given their permission to be promoted online. You should always ensure anyone featured in a photograph has signed a [photo consent form](#).

If you do put a photo online without permission, please remove this immediately, upon request of the individual.

Below is an example of the types of social media sites that this code of conduct may refer to, this list is not exhaustive:

- Blogger
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn



- YouTube
- TikTok
- Pinterest
- Google Plus
- Reddit
- Tumbler

For further enquires please email publicity@cyclinguk.org or call the Cycling UK press phone on 07786320713.

Adhering to the policy

Employees or volunteers who do not adhere to this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. Where appropriate any breaches to the Cycling UK Social Media Policy may involve the police or other law enforcements.