



**Cirencester & District  
TALKING NEWS**

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY  
2026**

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# Cirencester & District Talking News ('C&DTN')

## Social Media Policy 2026

### Introduction

Trustees, volunteers and contractors of Cirencester & District Talking News (C&DTN) may access social media services and social networking websites when working on C&DTN projects. This policy sets out the rules for any reference to C&DTN on social media however it is accessed.

The provisions of this policy set out how trustees, volunteers and contractors must behave when using C&DTN's social media accounts and what individuals may say about C&DTN on their personal social media accounts.

This policy should be read alongside other key policies, including the Data Protection Policy.

### Why this policy exists?

Social media can bring significant benefits to C&DTN, particularly for building relationships with current and potential stakeholders. However, it is important that everyone who uses social media does so in a way that enhances C&DTN's prospects, image, and awareness levels, without compromising its integrity.

A misjudged post on social media that mentions C&DTN could generate complaints or damage the charity's reputation. By way of example, trustees, volunteers and contractors should not express party-political views that may compromise C&DTN's political impartiality.

This policy explains how trustees, volunteers and contractors can use social media safely and effectively.

## Policy scope:

This policy applies to all C&DTN trustees, volunteers and contractors who use social media for business or personal reasons. It applies wherever and however social media use takes place and applies to any post that mentions or identifies C&DTN directly or indirectly.

Social media sites and services include (but are not limited to) networks such as: X (previously Twitter), Facebook, Tik Tok, Flickr, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

## 1. Responsibilities:

Anyone who operates a C&DTN social media account or who mentions C&DTN on a personal social media account is responsible for following this policy. The Social Media Administrator (SMA) appointed by the trustees is responsible for ensuring requests for C&DTN assistance and support made via social media are followed up.

## 2. General social media guidelines:

- **The power of social media:** C&DTN recognises that social media offers a platform for marketing, raising awareness and staying connected with members and users of the service provided by C&DTN.
- **Basic advice:** Regardless of which personal or business social networks are used to mention C&DTN, posting as an individual or on behalf of C&DTN, following these simple rules helps avoid the most common pitfalls:
- **Know the social network:** Everyone should spend time becoming familiar with a social network before contributing to it. It is important to read any FAQs and understand what is and is not acceptable on a network before posting messages or updates.

- **If in doubt, don't post it:** Err on the side of caution when posting to social networks. If there is a possibility that an update or message might cause a complaint or offence, it should not be posted.
- **Be thoughtful and polite:** Many social media users have got into trouble by failing to observe basic good manners online.
- **Look out for security threats:** Social networks can be used to distribute spam and malware.
- **Don't make promises without checking:** Some social networks are very public, so do not make any commitments or promises on behalf of C&DTN without the prior approval of the SMA.
- **Handle complex queries via other channels:** Social networks are not a good place to resolve complicated enquiries.
- **Don't escalate controversies:** It is easy to post a quick response to a contentious status update and then regret it. Time should be taken before responding and if there is any doubt, don't post it. Always think twice before sending and if there is any doubt, refer the matter to the SMA.

### 3. Personal social media rules:

C&DTN trustees, volunteers and contractors posting material on their own social media accounts that mentions C&DTN must avoid making any posts that could bring C&DTN into disrepute or compromise its political neutrality.

Nothing should be posted or re-posted that may defame or disparage C&DTN, its trustees, volunteers, contractors, listeners, professional or charitable contacts. Photographs or images of a person should not be posted without their express permission and understanding.

Posts that mention or implicate C&DTN also need to abide by the rules set out in sections 9 – 11 below regarding copyright, confidentiality, security & data protection.

Any critical comments you have about C&DTN should be pursued through other routes – e.g. by phone or email and not via social media.

#### **4. Use of C&DTN social media accounts:**

This part of the policy covers all use of social media accounts owned and run by C&DTN.

#### **5. Authorised users:**

Only those who have been authorised to use C&DTN's social networking accounts by the SMA may do so. It will typically be granted when social media-related tasks form a core part of a volunteer's role. This will ensure that C&DTN's own official social media presence is consistent and cohesive.

#### **6. Creating social media accounts:**

New social media accounts in C&DTN's name must not be created unless approved by the SMA who shall not provide such approval without the agreement of the trustees.

#### **7. Purpose of C&DTN social media accounts:**

C&DTN's social media accounts may be used for a range of different purposes. For instance, C&DTN's social media accounts may be used to:

- Respond to simple end-user enquiries and requests for help (*see para 5.6 above on dealing with complex inquiries*).
- Share blog posts, articles and other content created by C&DTN.
- Share insightful articles, videos, media, and other content relevant to C&DTN, but created by others.
- Provide supporters or followers with C&DTN insight.
- Promote marketing campaigns and special offers.
- Support new product launches and other initiatives.

- To listen and participate in conversations.

## **8. Inappropriate content and uses:**

C&DTN's social media accounts must not be used to share or spread inappropriate content, or to take part in any activities that could bring C&DTN into disrepute or damage C&DTN's reputation.

Any critical comments about C&DTN should be pursued through other routes – e.g. by phone or email and not via social media.

## **9. Safe, responsible social media use:**

Any trustee, volunteer or contractor using C&DTN's social media accounts must NOT:

- Create or transmit material that might be defamatory or incur liability for C&DTN.
- Post messages, status updates or links to material or content that is inappropriate. This includes (but is not limited to) material such as pornography; racial or religious slurs; gender-specific comments; age-related comments; information encouraging criminal skills or terrorism; materials relating to cults, gambling, and illegal drugs. Inappropriate content includes any text, images or other media that could offend someone on the basis of religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Discuss colleagues, competitors, customers, or suppliers without their approval.
- Post, upload, forward or link to spam, junk email or chain emails and messages.

## **10. Creating social media accounts:**

C&DTN's social media accounts must be protected by strong passwords that are changed regularly and shared only with authorised users.

C&DTN trustees, volunteers and contractors must not use a new piece of software, app, or service with any of the C&DTN's social media accounts without receiving approval from the SMA.

### **11. Respect copyright:**

C&DTN respects and operates within copyright laws. Neither C&DTN's social media accounts nor personal social media accounts must be used to publish or share any copyrighted software, media or materials owned by third parties, unless permitted by that third party and approved by the SMA.

### **12. Maintain confidentiality:**

C&DTN's or personal social media accounts should not be used to share or link to any content or information owned by C&DTN that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive. This might include details of volunteers, or information about future strategies or marketing campaigns.

Content or information owned by another charity or person that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive must not be shared or linked.

Prior to giving any contractor access to C&DTN's social media accounts, a copy of this policy must be provided to the contractor who must agree in writing to abide by it.

### **13. Avoid scams and be aware of security & data protection:**

It is vital that users of both C&DTN's and personal accounts are aware of the security and data protection issues that can arise from publishing personal details or information using social networks. Personal data about anybody connected with C&DTN that could be harvested for identity fraud purposes.

Care should be taken to identify phishing attempts, where scammers may attempt to use deception to obtain information relating to C&DTN or those connected with it. Sensitive information should never be revealed through social media channels. Links in

posts, updates and direct messages that look suspicious should be ignored and reported to the SMA as should URLs contained in generic or vague-sounding direct messages.

## **14. Policy enforcement:**

### **14.1 Monitoring social media use:**

C&DTN reserves the right to monitor how social networks are used and accessed through C&DTN's IT and internet connections. Any such examinations or monitoring will only be conducted by persons authorised by the SMA.

All data relating to social networks written, sent, or received through C&DTN's computer systems will form part of official C&DTN records.

C&DTN can be legally compelled to show any information held by it to law enforcement agencies or other parties.

### **14.2 Potential sanctions:**

Knowingly breaching this social media policy is a serious matter. Users who do so will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of any involvement with C&DTN.

Trustees, volunteers and contractors may also be held personally liable for violating this policy. Where appropriate, C&DTN will involve the police or other law enforcement agencies in relation to breaches of this policy.