

Bohemia Walled Garden Association

Social Media & Website Policy

This is a comprehensive guide for the social media channels and the web site of the Bohemia Walled Garden Association. It is also for individuals using social media in a personal capacity as a representative of the Bohemia Walled Garden Association.

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

This policy is intended for all Volunteers of the charity. Before engaging in social media activity, you must read this policy, which contains guidance that will help you adhere to our standards.

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Contents

Introduction	4
What is social media?	4
Why do we use social media and what can we use it for?	4
Social media helps us to:	4
Why do we need a social media policy?	4
Responsibilities and breach of policy	5
Setting out the social media policy	5
Application	5
Which social media channels do we use?	5
Code of conduct headlines	6
Using Bohemia Walled Garden Association's social media channels — appropriate conduct	6
1. Know our social media guardians	6
2. Be an ambassador for our brand	6
3. Always pause and think before posting	6
4. Ensure brand consistency	6
5. Obtain consent	6
6. Put safety first	7
7. Stick to the law	7
8. Remain politically neutral	7
9. Check facts and be honest	7
10. Seek advice for complaints	7
11. Know what to do in a crisis	7
12. Use AI appropriately	7
Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct	8
1. Separate your personal views	8
2. Take care when publishing personal views	8
3. Discuss risks and conflicts of interest	8
4. Protect your personal reputation	8
5. Use your common sense and good judgement	8
6. Refer press enquiries	8
7. Keep your political activity separate from the charity	8
8. Protect your privacy	9
9. Help us to raise our profile (where appropriate)	9
10. Avoid logos or trademarks	9
11. Staying safe online	9
Further guidelines: using social media in a professional and personal capacity	10
Defamation	10

Copyright law	10
Confidentiality	10
Discrimination and harassment	10
Accessibility	10
The Lobbying Act	11
Use of social media in the recruitment process	11
Protection and intervention	11
Under 18s and vulnerable people	11
Engaging on emotive topics	11

Introduction

What is social media?

Social media is the collective term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create, share and interact with content (words, images, graphics and video content), as well as network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media platforms include Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, Twitch and TikTok.

Why do we use social media and what can we use it for?

Social media is a tool to publicise the Bohemia Walled Garden Association's work. It is important for designated Volunteers to participate in social media to engage with our audiences and raise the profile of Bohemia Walled Garden Association's work, using the charity's corporate accounts. Some Volunteers may also support the charity's work using their personal accounts, and many will have social media accounts for personal use.

Social media helps us to:

- Share our news, events and updates with our audiences
- Celebrate our successes
- Advertise volunteering opportunities
- Support our fundraising activities

Why do we need a social media policy?

Social media is a fast-moving online world, where nuance and context can be easily lost. While social media brings the charity to a wide audience, it can also present risks. We want to ensure that all Volunteers using social media represent and reflect the Bohemia Walled Garden Association in the best way possible. It is also important to mitigate risks (such as reputational or legal issues) associated with the use of social media to protect our supporters, Volunteers, work and reputation.

While we encourage the use of social media to support our communications, we have important standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe and adhere to. The difference between a personal and professional opinion can also be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to Bohemia Walled Garden Association's work. Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations and are subject to the same laws as other kinds of publication or commentary in the public domain.

Failure to comply with this policy could expose Bohemia Walled Garden Association to reputational damage as well as putting Volunteers and members at risk.

Responsibilities and breach of policy

Everyone is responsible for their compliance with this policy.

Participation in social media on behalf of Bohemia Walled Garden Association is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect.

Breaches of policy or inappropriate behaviour may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Volunteers who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach policies should seek advice from the Committee.

Setting out the social media policy

Application

This policy applies to all social media platforms used by Volunteers (including consultants, and freelancers) and trustees in a professional and personal capacity.

Social media can be accessed in various ways, including from a desktop or laptop computer, tablet or smartphone. This policy applies to the use of all such devices.

Which social media channels and websites do we use?

Bohemia Walled Garden Association uses the following social media channels:

Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/BohemiaWGA
X	https://x.com/bohemiawga
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/bohemiawga
BWGA Website	https://www.bohemiawga.org.uk

Code of conduct headlines

- I will respond to others' opinions respectfully and professionally
- I will not do anything that breaches the terms of my voluntary role
- I will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly using provided guidance
- I will disclose conflicts of interest where I am able
- I will not knowingly post inaccurate information
- I will be considerate, kind and fair
- I will always ensure my activity does no harm to the organisation or to others

Using Bohemia Walled Garden Association's social media channels – appropriate conduct

1. Know our social media guardians

The IT Co-ordinator is responsible for setting up and managing Bohemia Walled Garden's social media channels. The IT Co-ordinator has overall ownership of these accounts and only those authorised to do so by the trustees will have access to these accounts.

The IT Co-ordinator will uphold best practices for channel security with secure passwords that regularly change. Never give out the passwords for our channels without express permission from the IT Co-ordinator or Committee.

Social media shall be maintained with management tools supplied by the supplier (e.g. Meta Business suite) to avoid having social media passwords on multiple devices. This approach follows industry best practice.

2. Be an ambassador for our brand

Volunteers must ensure they reflect Bohemia Walled Garden's values in what they post and use our tone of voice. Delegated users are permitted to respond to comments on our social media posts on behalf of the organisation. All posts and comments should be attributed to the charity and not an individual. In special cases it may be appropriate for a Volunteer to make an individual comment as themselves, but this should be under the supervision, and with the approval, of the Committee or IT Co-ordinator.

3. Always pause and think before posting

When posting from Bohemia Walled Garden's social media accounts, you must respond to comments in the voice of our charity and not allow your own personal opinions to influence responses. Volunteers must not reveal their personal opinions via our accounts by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'reposting' as Bohemia Walled Garden's. If you are in doubt about Bohemia Walled Garden's position on a particular issue, please speak to the IT Co-ordinator or Committee.

4. Ensure brand consistency

Volunteers must not create or manage any other social media channels, groups, websites or pages on behalf of Bohemia Walled Garden Association without express permission from the Committee. This is to ensure brand consistency for users and the appropriate safeguarding and monitoring processes are in place.

Since we are a small garden and in line with other large organisations, we have decided that we will not follow other organisations on social media. Other individuals or organisations may choose to follow us in order to see our updates.

5. Obtain consent

Volunteers must not post content about supporters, members or partners without their, or their guardian's, express permission. If Volunteers are sharing information about supporters, or third-party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from the Bohemia Walled Garden Association. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, Volunteers must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.

6. Put safety first

It can be challenging working on social media and there may be times where Volunteers could be subject to unpleasant or abusive comments directed at the charity, our work or people. We encourage everyone who is on social media on behalf of the charity to be aware of our safeguarding practices to deal with online abuse and consult with Committee/IT Co-ordinator where necessary.

It is also vital that Bohemia Walled Garden Association does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials in pursuit of social media engagement. For example, a video of a stunt or visiting an unsafe location.

7. Stick to the law

Volunteers must 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.

8. Remain politically neutral

Bohemia Walled Garden Association is not associated with any political organisation or has no affiliation with or links to political parties.

We cannot endorse a political party or candidate. We must carefully manage the risk that we are perceived to have any party-political bias and should carefully consider any posts which might be perceived as such, for example, posts which talk about individual politicians or parties rather than policies.

9. Check facts and be honest

Volunteers should not automatically assume that material that's shared or included in any post is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification – for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it. But think first about how to manage any risk to the charity and its brand in doing so by consulting with the IT Co-ordinator Committee to craft the response.

10. Seek advice for complaints

If a complaint is made on social media channels or websites, Volunteers should seek advice from the Committee before responding.

11. Know what to do in a crisis

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.

The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity or our people.

If any Volunteer becomes aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on Bohemia Walled Garden Association's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Committee immediately. It is the responsibility of all Volunteers to report complaints or comments that could escalate into a crisis or have serious implications for the charity. Only the IT Co-ordinator/Authorised Volunteers are permitted to amend or delete content in a crisis.

12. Use AI appropriately

AI can be a valuable tool that can support our communications activities. However, Volunteers must ensure AI created content adheres to our Bohemia Walled Garden Association spirit.

Use of personal social media accounts – appropriate conduct

Personal social media use by Volunteers can sometimes be attributed to the charity or bring other risks for the charity or individual Volunteers. This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media, but instead flags up those areas in which risks or conflicts might arise. Bohemia Walled Garden Association Volunteers are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are considerate of Bohemia Walled Garden Association's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Separate your personal views

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

2. Take care when publishing personal views

Those in senior management including trustees and public-facing or specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing Bohemia Walled Garden Association's view.

3. Discuss risks and conflicts of interest

Volunteers who have a personal blog, social media profile or website which indicates in any way that they volunteer at the Bohemia Walled Garden Association should discuss any potential risk or conflicts of interest with the Committee. Similarly, Volunteers who want to start blogging and wish to say that they volunteer for Bohemia Walled Garden Association should discuss any potential risk or conflicts of interest with the Committee.

4. Protect your personal reputation

Think about your personal 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 the first to correct your own mistakes.

Remember that if you have a public profile with the charity, your personal social media accounts could be looked at by critics of the charity, and bear this in mind when posting.

5. Use your common sense and good judgement

Be aware of your association with Bohemia Walled Garden Association and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to others outside of the Association.

6. Refer press enquiries

If a Volunteer is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to Bohemia Walled Garden Association, they should talk to the Committee immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

7. Keep your political activity separate from the charity

When representing the Bohemia Walled Garden Association, Volunteers are expected to uphold Bohemia Walled Garden Association's positioning in being neutral. Volunteers who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from the Bohemia Walled Garden Association and understand and avoid potential risks and conflicts of interest. Volunteers should also inform the Committee about any such political activity.

8. Protect your privacy

Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. Remember that a simple 'like' can draw attention to your personal accounts. What you publish is widely accessible and could be around for a long time, so do consider the content, and your privacy, carefully.

All Volunteers who wish to engage with any of Bohemia Walled Garden Association's social media platforms are strongly advised to ensure that they set the privacy levels of their personal sites as strictly as they can and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect their own privacy. All Volunteers should keep their passwords confidential & complex, change them often and enable two factor authentication where available.

In their own interests, Volunteers should not post personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers.

9. Help us to raise our profile (where appropriate)

We encourage Volunteers to share posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support the Bohemia Walled Garden Association and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy (and taking into consideration the information above), we encourage Volunteers to do this as it helps users connect to us and raises our profile.

However, please take care to think about the reputation of the charity. If your personal social media account is not professional or otherwise appropriate for our audiences, please do not use it to amplify or promote the charity, as to do so brings risks both to you personally and to the charity.

10. Avoid logos or trademarks

Never use Bohemia Walled Garden Association's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos must be requested from the Committee and any content created must adhere to our brand guidelines.

11. Staying safe online

It can be challenging working on social media and there may be times where Volunteers could be subject to unpleasant or abusive comments directed at the charity, our work or people. We encourage everyone who is on social media to be aware of our safeguarding practices to deal with online abuse and consult with the Committee where necessary.

Volunteers should be vigilant regarding suspicious content or links and must not reveal personal, confidential or sensitive information about themselves, other Volunteers or supporters of Bohemia Walled Garden Association. Volunteers should be wary of fake accounts that may claim to be Bohemia Walled Garden Association and should immediately notify the Committee or IT Co-ordinator.

Care must also be taken to ensure that any links to external sites from our social media accounts are appropriate and safe.

Please consult our relevant policies and procedures for the safeguarding of our Volunteers on the BWGA Web site.

Further guidelines: using social media in a professional and personal capacity

Defamation

Defamation is when a false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published in print (such as in media publications) or online (such as Instagram Story, Facebook Live, Snapchat post). Whether Volunteers are posting content on social media as part of their volunteer role or in a personal capacity, they should not bring the Bohemia Walled Garden Association into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright law

It is critical that all Volunteers abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, when representing the charity. 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 Volunteers make must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that Bohemia Walled Garden Association is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date, or information from people who the charity has worked with which is private.

Discrimination and harassment

Volunteers should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Bohemia Walled Garden Association 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.

Accessibility

We endeavour to ensure our social media is as accessible as possible. This includes:

- Using plain English, accessible fonts and avoiding small text sizes

You can view more guidance on the government website: [planning, creative and publishing accessible social media campaigns](#).

The Lobbying Act

Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose but can never be party political. However, the BWGA social media sites will not be used for this purpose.

Use of social media in the recruitment process

Any advertising of vacancies should be done through the Committee and promoted through approved channels.

There should be no systematic or routine checking of candidates' online social media activities during the recruitment process, as conducting these searches might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics, such as religious beliefs or sexual orientation, played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with Bohemia Walled Garden Association's Equal Opportunities Policy.

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 Volunteer considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Committee and appropriate statutory authority 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 or radicalisation. We will not communicate with those under the age of 18.

All Volunteers have a responsibility to do everything possible to ensure that vulnerable and young people are kept safe from harm. If you come across anything online that could mean someone is at risk, you should follow Bohemia Walled Garden Association's safeguarding policies.

[The Online Safety Act 2003](#) has introduced measures to ensure children are protected online.

Engaging on emotive topics

Bohemia Walled Garden Association will not be involved in issues that provoke strong emotions.