



# Ravenstone Village Hall

## 17 – Social Media Policy

A guide for staff on using social media to promote the work of Ravenstone Village Hall and in a personal capacity.

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, at least once a year. Ravenstone Village Hall will amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

### 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, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn and Instagram.

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

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Ravenstone Village Hall's 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 Ravenstone Village Hall's 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 Ravenstone Village Hall's 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 trustees and staff, and applies to content posted on both a Ravenstone Village Hall 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 Ravenstone Village Hall, and the use of social media by trustees 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.

### **Point of contact for social media**

The Social Media 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 Social Media Manager. No other staff member can post content on Ravenstone Village Hall's official channels without the permission of the Social Media Manager.

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

Ravenstone Village Hall has a Facebook account which it uses to share news and publish events on its Facebook page and other local, public Facebook groups to encourage people to attend events, and to promote the availability for hire of the hall for local events. Posts are generally aimed at wide range of demographics, dependant on the event being promoted. The Facebook messaging feature is also used to respond to enquiries about the hall, including use as a first point of contact for enquires about booking the hall for hire.

Ravenstone Village Hall also maintains a website which provides additional information about the facilities provided by the hall and also allows download of a booking form and shows a diary of events that are currently booked.

## **Guidelines**

### **Using Ravenstone Village Hall's social media channels — appropriate conduct**

1. The Social Media Manager is responsible for setting up and managing Ravenstone Village Hall's social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the Social Media Manager will have access to these accounts.
2. Social media accounts are checked daily and responses to messages are usually responded to on the same day and certainly within 24 hours.
3. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for Ravenstone Village Hall, and reflects Ravenstone Village Hall's policies.
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. If staff apart from the Social Media Manager wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should speak to the Social Media Manager about this.
6. 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 Ravenstone Village Hall. 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.

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Staff should refrain from offering personal opinions via Ravenstone Village Hall's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about Ravenstone Village Hall's position on a particular issue, please speak to the Social Media Manager.
10. It is vital that Ravenstone Village Hall does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.
11. 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.
12. Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of Ravenstone Village Hall. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, the Social Media Manager can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.
13. Ravenstone Village Hall 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.
14. If a complaint is made on Ravenstone Village Hall's social media channels, staff should seek advice from the Social Media Manager before responding. If they are not available, then staff should speak to a trustee.
15. 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.
16. The Social Media Manager regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of Ravenstone Village Hall 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 Social Media Manager will discuss it with other trustees how to tackle it.
17. If any staff outside of the trustees become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on Ravenstone Village Hall's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Social Media Manager 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. Ravenstone Village Hall staff are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with Ravenstone Village Hall's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive Ravenstone Village Hall. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Ravenstone Village Hall. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about Ravenstone Village Hall's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Ravenstone Village Hall's positions, policies or opinions."
2. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with Ravenstone Village Hall and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the public.
3. Ravenstone Village Hall 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 Ravenstone Village Hall, staff are expected to hold Ravenstone Village Hall's position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from Ravenstone Village Hall, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
4. Never use Ravenstone Village Hall's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the trustees.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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 Ravenstone Village Hall 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 trustees 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 Ravenstone Village Hall 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 Ravenstone Village Hall is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

### **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 Ravenstone Village Hall 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 trustees 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 Ravenstone Village Hall 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 Ravenstone Village Hall content and other content is appropriate for them.