

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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 known as Twitter), TikTok and Instagram.

WHY DO WE USE SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating and advertising CDDG's work. It is important for some members to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of CDDG'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 CDDG'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 carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all members and trustees. Before engaging in group-related social media activity, members 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 CDDG, and the use of social media by members 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 members 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

Our committee 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 a member of the committee. No other member can post content on CDDG's official channels without the permission of the committee.

WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS DO WE USE?

CDDG uses the following social media channels:

- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/CarnonDownsDramaGroup>
- X - <https://twitter.com/carnondrama>
- Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/carnon_downs_drama_group/

CDDG's content may be made available on other social media channels where appropriate.

CDDG uses social media channels to share news with supporters, to encourage people to become involved in our work and to encourage participation of our events.

Guidelines

USING CDDG'S SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS — APPROPRIATE CONDUCT

1. The committee are responsible for setting up and managing CDDG's social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the committee will have access to these accounts.
2. Account users authorised by the committee will be responsible for monitoring social media channels for comments and responding when able.
3. Be an ambassador for our brand. Members should ensure they reflect CDDG values in what they post and use our tone of voice.
4. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for CDDG, and accurately reflects CDDG's agreed position.
5. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help and engage with them.
6. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images and any image rights.
7. Always pause and think before posting. That said, reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
8. Members should not post content about supporters without their express permission. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, members must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian, via a CDDG membership form or other means, before using them on social media. If you are unsure of the consent status of a CDDG member, please consult with the membership secretary.
9. If members 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 CDDG.
10. Always check facts. Members 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.
11. 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.
12. Members should refrain from offering personal opinions via CDDG's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by using CDDG accounts to 'like', 'share' or 'retweet' opinionated content. If you are in doubt about CDDG's position on a particular issue, please speak to the committee. This does not preclude members from using their personal accounts to share personal opinions.
13. It is vital that CDDG does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.
14. Members 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.
15. Members should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, X (formerly known as Twitter) accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of CDDG. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, the committee can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

16. CDDG 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.
17. If a complaint is made on CDDG's social media channels, members should seek advice from the committee before responding. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity.

If any members outside of the committee become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on CDDG's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the committee 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. CDDG members are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with CDDG's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive CDDG. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of CDDG. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about CDDG's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent CDDG's positions, policies or opinions."
2. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with CDDG and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the general public and members of CDDG.
3. If a member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to CDDG, they should talk to the committee immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.
4. CDDG 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 CDDG, members are expected to hold CDDG's position of neutrality. Members who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from CDDG, and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
5. Never use CDDG's logos unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the committee.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. We encourage members 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 CDDG 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 committee 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 members are posting content on social media as part of their role or in a personal capacity, they should not bring CDDG 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 members make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that CDDG is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Members should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official CDDG 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

LOBBYING ACT

Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law. However, the Lobbying Act, which was passed in January 2014, states that during national elections (known as regulated periods) spending on campaigning activities may be regulated.

Charities which spend more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, during the regulated period, need to register with the Electoral Commission. To abide by the Lobbying Act, campaigning activities on social media must not be seen as intending to influence people's voting choice. During these periods, all campaigning activity will be reviewed by the committee.

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 member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to the committee 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, members should ensure the online relationship with CDDG follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Members 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. Members should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and CDDG content and other content is appropriate for them. Please refer to our CDDG Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND BREACH OF POLICY

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of CDDG is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For members, breaches of policy will be referred to the committee. Members who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the committee.

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE

If a member releases information (whistle blowing) through social media channels about any aspect of CDDG's activities or governance that is considered to be in the interest of the public, CDDG's committee will be responsible for any further action or response. Any member that makes qualifying disclosures is entitled to not be subject to any detriment by reason of such disclosure.

Carnon Downs Drama Group Social Media Policy updated November 2023