



Wilmslow

Social Media Policy

Introduction

This document outlines the policy and guidelines for the use of social media by Wilmslow u3a members, interest groups, and trustees. In line with the founding principles of the u3a movement—self-help, mutual respect, and lifelong learning—this policy promotes a common-sense approach to online engagement, ensuring that our community remains welcoming, inclusive, and safe for all.

Social media includes, but is not limited to, platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, YouTube, and local community forums. This policy applies to both official accounts managed on behalf of Wilmslow u3a and personal accounts when interacting with or posting about u3a activities.

Core Principles & Code of Conduct

When using social media in a u3a context, members are expected to maintain the same standards of behaviour, courtesy, and respect that apply during physical meetings and interest groups. All posts, comments, and media must align with the following standard guidelines:

- **Respect and Inclusivity:** Treat all members with kindness and respect. Do not post content that is offensive, defamatory, abusive, or discriminatory on the grounds of race, gender, age, religion, or sexual orientation.
- **Accuracy and Honesty:** Ensure that posts and comments are accurate and do not deliberately spread misleading or false information about Wilmslow u3a, its members, or the Third Age Trust.
- **Non-Commercial and Non-Political:** Do not use official u3a channels, groups, or pages to promote private commercial interests, businesses, or political parties. Content should remain focused on the educational, social, and recreational objectives of our u3a.
- **Constructive Dialogue:** Avoid engaging in online arguments or escalating conflicts. Disagreements should be handled constructively, privately, or through the formal committee channels if necessary.

Privacy, Data Protection, and Copyright

Protecting the privacy and legal rights of our members is a vital responsibility when publishing content online:

- **Personal Data:** Do not post personal contact details, home addresses, or private emails of members on public social media platforms without explicit, prior permission.
- **Photographs and Media:** Always obtain verbal or written consent from members before publishing photographs or videos of them online. Special care must be taken during group outings and large meetings. If a member requests the removal of an image featuring them, it must be taken down immediately.
- **Copyright Alignment:** Ensure that any text, images, or music posted do not violate copyright laws. Whenever possible, use original material or content that is explicitly cleared for public distribution.

Management of Official and Group Channels

Official social media accounts, pages, or groups representing Wilmslow u3a or its specific interest groups must adhere to the following management structures:

- **Account Approval:** Any new official page or group created on behalf of Wilmslow u3a must be approved by the Committee. Group Leaders managing platforms for their specific interest groups (e.g., a WhatsApp group for a walking club) remain responsible for monitoring the activity within that group.
- **Administration:** All public-facing pages or official groups should ideally have at least two designated administrators/moderators. At least one member of the Wilmslow u3a Committee must be granted administrative or observer access to ensure continuity and oversight.
- **Moderation:** Administrators are responsible for reviewing posts and removing any content that violates this policy. Spam, commercial advertising, or inappropriate comments should be deleted promptly, and repeated offenders may be removed from the online group.

Personal Social Media Use

While members have full freedom to use personal social media accounts, they should remain mindful of how their posts reflect on the organisation. Members must not present their personal opinions as representing the official view or stance of Wilmslow u3a or the Third Age Trust. If identifying as a member of Wilmslow u3a online, individuals are urged to ensure their conduct reflects positively on our community.

Breaches of Policy

Inappropriate content or behaviour on social media can harm the reputation of Wilmslow u3a and conflict with our core community spirit. Minor infractions will typically be

addressed by a polite request from a group administrator or committee member to amend or remove the post. In cases of persistent or serious breaches, the matter may be referred to the Executive Committee, which may take action in accordance with Wilmslow u3a's standard complaints and disciplinary procedures.

Related documentation

For further guidance, the following resources and templates are available on the national u3a website (www.u3a.org.uk/advice):

- National u3a Social Media Advice and Best Practice
- Member Code of Conduct
- Data Protection and GDPR Policy Guidelines

Changes to the policy

This Policy is available on the Wilmslow u3a website. It may change from time to time to adapt to evolving platforms and national guidance. Members will be informed via the Newsletter and monthly meetings when any material changes are made to Wilmslow u3a's policies and procedures.

Queries regarding this policy

If you have any questions regarding this Policy, please direct your queries to secretary@wilmslowu3a.org.uk

Adoption and Review

This policy was adopted on 14th September 2026 and should be reviewed when there is a change to the national u3a guidance.