STEYNING DOWNLAND SCHEME

Social Media Policy

As Steyning Downland Scheme has a presence on Facebook and Twitter (albeit with a small following!) here are some guidelines for employees and volunteers around posting comments and articles to our social media sites.

DO

1. Think of Facebook and Twitter as an interactive extension of the Steyning Downland Scheme. They should reflect what we do and our core values – nature conservation, engaging people, protecting landscape – and be It's often the first and easiest way for people to learn about us and comment on things we do, share, and applaud your actions — and sometimes, criticize them.

2. Do share information about SDS, nature sightings, lovely photos, write ups of events – but keep them brief and to the point.   We can put links to longer postings on the SDS website and that will encourage people to use the website to find out more.

3. Do make sure that whatever you write you would be happy to say out loud in public – it's a good litmus text

4. Check your spelling and grammar before you hit send ☺

DON'T

Some of these are obvious – but worth putting down in black and white

1. Don't response or comment to a negative / or harassing comment on Twitter or Facebook. This is for two reasons, firstly an online 'argument' generates a virtual audience and will attract lots more people as the amount of comments grows.   Secondly – it's best to deal with the comments off line and not air the dirty laundry in public.   If you see anything negative please

let the SDS Manager know about it so that they can respond to the person – offline / privately. (See Appendix A for more guidelines on responding to posts)

2. Don't post anything that may harm the goodwill or reputation of the Steyning Downland Scheme or any disparaging information about the Steyning Downland Scheme.

3. Don't post photographs of children on Facebook and Twitter unless we have specific written permission from their parents / guardians. Also don't use surnames of children in posts.

4. Don't post photos of adults / volunteers unless you have their verbal permission.

5. Don't post personal opinions using the SDS Twitter / Facebook account.

Appendix A

Monitoring Conversations and Responding to Comments, taken from http://www.techsoup.org/support/articles-and-how-tos/creating-a-social-media-policy

Social media is a two-way conversation, so your policy should not just inform external communications — what your charity says and how you say it — but how you deal with what people say to, and about, you. Creating and publishing content means it's open to comments, both good and bad, and can be shared with other networks — often without your knowledge. How do you control your reputation and your brand?

You could choose to disable comments on your Facebook page, but then you'd miss out on one of social media's greatest benefits. Instead, develop a strategy for monitoring and responding to comments, both positive and negative. Who will respond? Will you do it publicly or take the discussion offline? Every comment is an opportunity to further craft your organization's personality and reputation and build relationships. Responding thoughtfully can turn a bad situation into a positive "customer service" moment and publicly correct misinformation.

A good way to develop a response policy is to practice with a series of hypothetical situations. How will you respond to posts that contain inaccurate information, vulgar or inflammatory language, or information that purposely or inadvertently identifies clients in a way that breaches their privacy?

Answering hypothetical questions will prepare you for real ones.

There are general guidelines you can use as a starting point. If you receive a complaint you can turn into a customer service moment or a post with misinformation in it, you should take the opportunity to respond. Determine who will do so and what they will say. Consider removing comments that will damage your community or that include vulgar or inflammatory language. Some negative posts are better left unanswered, especially if a response is likely to incite the poster into further action.

Don't just reply to negative comments — be a part of the conversation and reply to positive or neutral comments to create a rich, informative environment for your audience. Answer

questions that arise, invite others into the conversation, and thank people for participating. Your responses put a human quality to your content and can create a feeling of goodwill in your community. Let your organization's core values and mission inform your response policy.