

CITIZENS ADVICE REIGATE AND BANSTEAD SOCIAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy is intended to help everyone in the Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead make appropriate decisions about the use of social and digital media such as blogs, wikis, social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn), forums, message boards, comments on web articles or any other kind of social and digital media.

1. The purpose of social media

At the Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead we use social media to develop closer relationships with members of our community, which includes current and prospective clients, our staff and volunteers, our colleagues in other Citizens Advice organisations, journalists, policy-makers, campaign supporters and potential donors. We also use it to raise awareness of the great work we do.

The process of growing, building and nurturing an engaged and active online community is achieved by distributing content, encouraging engagement between community members and giving people a platform to communicate.

While we encourage the use of social media at our Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. This policy covers all individuals at all levels, including trustees, managers, advisers and volunteers.

2. Use of social media at work

You are permitted to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media websites from the Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead's IT equipment. You should ensure that usage is not excessive and does not interfere with your duties. Use should be restricted to your break times, unless this forms part of your responsibilities.

Access to particular social media websites may be withdrawn in the case of misuse.

See later sections on personal use and using social media on behalf of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead.

3. Monitoring use of social media websites

Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead maintains the right to monitor usage where there is suspicion of improper use. Examples of what might be considered improper use are given below, under General guidelines.

4. General guidelines

These guidelines apply to your use of social media both on behalf of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead and personally while not at work.

- Always be transparent and honest.
- Never represent yourself or Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead in a false or misleading way.
- Never do or say anything which could be viewed as discriminatory against, or harassment towards, any individual, for example, by making offensive or derogatory comments relating to: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- Never post images that could be viewed as discriminatory or offensive (or links to such content).

- Exercise good judgement. For example, it's best to ask permission to publish or report on conversations that may be private or internal to Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead.
- Protect client confidentiality at all times. Client stories are powerful, but consider the following before sharing on social media:
 - Anonymise client issues very carefully e.g. change or obscure details like gender, age and location of the client.
 - Consider commenting about things that happened on a different day.
 - Consider basing your message on several clients and not just one.
 - If an issue is very personal, or you think there is any possibility that someone can be identified, do not share it.
 - If clients are identifiable in any way – either in a photo or through the nature of the issue – you **must** seek their express permission before posting online.

5. Use of social media on behalf of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead

The following applies if you are using social media on behalf of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead or as a Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead representative.

- Never do or say anything that could compromise our core principles of independence, impartiality or confidentiality.
- Never do or say anything that does not comply with our equality and diversity values.
- Ensure that everything you say remains impartial and is not aligned with any particular political party or ideology.
- Take care with the presentation of content. Check quality of images and avoid typos, misspellings, and grammatical errors.
- Be careful not to breach copyright, for example by using someone else's images or written content without permission.
- Do not spam people by posting too often or with posts that are irrelevant or off-topic.
- Do not use slang or jargon (such as acronyms that only people within Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead understand).
- Do not link to internal-only websites (such as CABlink) in a public-facing post.
- Get facts right. If you're unsure, check with your manager /supervisor or Citizens Advice before posting.
- Ensure you adhere to Citizens Advice branding guidelines when using logos or other branded material.
- Bring value to your audience. Answer their questions, help them out and engage with them.
- Engender a sense of community. Create a platform where participants feel comfortable sharing, connecting and receiving help and information.
- Consider your audience – think about who your readers are before you publish to make sure you aren't alienating anyone.

6. Personal use

Even if your social media account is for personal use only, please be aware that any information you make public could potentially affect how people perceive Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead. In order to ensure that you act appropriately online and do not endanger the Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead 's reputation (or your own) while using social media in a personal capacity, please read these guidelines.

- Don't say anything you wouldn't be prepared to shout across a crowded room of your friends, family and colleagues.

- Be aware of your association with Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a member of staff or a volunteer, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues and clients.
- Where appropriate, make it clear that any views are your own, and not necessarily those of Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead.
- Spirited and passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and be the first to correct your own mistakes.
- Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, and Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead's confidential information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully.
- Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation or any parties that Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead or its staff may be involved in legal action with.
- Never comment on anything that may be considered to be a crisis situation for Citizens Advice Reigate and Banstead without the CEO or chair of the trustee board's permission.

7. Responsibilities

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. For employees, breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action depending on the severity of the issue. Volunteers may incur formal action as part of a separate procedure. Any breaches of policy should be reported to the CEO or chair of the trustee board so that appropriate action can be taken. This policy supplements our ICT Acceptable Use policy

Any questions about this policy should be directed to the CEO, Andrea dunhill, adun@carbs.org.uk