

## **Malvern Hills District Council's Social Media Policy**

We use social media sites to help communicate with residents, businesses and charities across the Malvern Hills district. It is important we use social media to engage regularly with local people in the region so we can keep you up to date and hear your views. Below are our Social Media guidelines.

Connect with us via [Facebook](#) and Twitter for regular news updates and information about your local area.

- [www.facebook.com/MalvernHillsUK](http://www.facebook.com/MalvernHillsUK)
- [www.twitter.com/#!/MHDCcomms](http://www.twitter.com/#!/MHDCcomms)

### **Social Media Rules and Guidelines**

#### **A safe online social media environment for everyone**

We will strive to keep our social media presence as open, honest and safe as possible and ask that everyone using our social media sites adhere to our guidelines, in order to achieve this.

To ensure our social media profiles remain tasteful, open and accessible to everyone, we ask that users do not post offensive comments or 'spam' links or images.

We will not tolerate aggressive, disruptive or offensive behaviour in our online communities. This includes posts that contain swearing or libellous statements. We reserve the right to remove any postings that break our basic guidelines, or the rules of the relevant social media sites, and we will remove any comments that:

- Are not civil, tasteful and relevant
- We consider are unlawful, libellous or defamatory, threatening, harassing or abusive, racially offensive, harmful, obscene or of a sexual nature
- Contain swearing
- Are repeat postings of images or messages or that try to solicit money, harass in any way or attempt to install viruses onto people's computer and any other form of "spamming"
- Contain material which promotes or might be interpreted as promoting, a political party or parties
- Advertise products or services
- Contain content copied from elsewhere, for which you do not own the copyright
- Publicise personal contact information or infringe upon personal privacy
- Impersonate another person, or an organisation that you do not represent.

We reserve the right to remove any post without warning and block anyone that ignores our social media rules.

We also reserve the right to remove offensive comments and block and report anyone who breaks our guidelines or the terms and conditions of a particular social media site.

As the nature of social media is continuously evolving, we reserve the right to change our social media rules and guidelines at any time.

#### **Monitoring, responding and replying**

We aim to encourage dialogue about Malvern Hills District Council matters and local issues on our social media profiles. Where possible and relevant we will reply in a courteous and timely manner to messages posted across the social media sites we use, but this may not

always be possible. We can't monitor our social media profiles 24 hours a day and during times of busy social media traffic, some comments may be missed or unanswerable.

### **Libel, slander and defamation**

We wish to encourage constructive dialogue through our social media sites. We will take down any statement that appears to be libellous or defamatory.

### **Pre-election period**

In the six week run up to elections councils have to be very careful not to do or say anything that could be seen to be supporting a political party or candidate. During this time council staff and council members must not write overtly political comments on social media sites or make postings that could appear to be attempting to influence peoples votes. We reserve the right to remove any such postings by council staff or members.

### **Staff Social Media Policy**

Malvern Hills District Council staff are encouraged where relevant to use social media via established organisation accounts, as a means to inform the public and foster openness and engagement with local communities, as well as to promote Malvern Hills District Council activities. We aim to train and encourage social media ambassadors to assist with engaging the local community and promote the council in our online forums.

Malvern Hills District Council staff are encouraged to use social media for work purposes in an open and honest way to engage with the public. Staff must at all times adhere to our social media rules and guidelines and are reminded that action may be taken as a result of distasteful or offensive postings, slanderous or libellous posts or comments that are political in nature, or may damage the reputation of Malvern Hills District Council or staff members.

Staff are also reminded that the personal use of social media sites for personal social interaction is not permitted during working hours.

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### **Like us on Facebook:**

- [www.facebook.com/MalvernHillsUK](http://www.facebook.com/MalvernHillsUK)

### **Follow us on Twitter:**

- [@MHDCcomms](https://twitter.com/MHDCcomms)