



Older People Active Lives

## Social Media Policy

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## 1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how social media should be used responsibly at OPAL Services. It is designed to:

- Protect the reputation of the charity.
- Safeguard service users, staff, trustees, and volunteers.
- Encourage safe and positive use of online platforms.
- Ensure compliance with charity law, safeguarding guidance, and data protection rules.

This policy applies to all trustees, employees, and volunteers when:

- Using official OPAL Services social media accounts.
- Posting on personal social media accounts in a way that refers to, or could be linked with, OPAL Services.

## 2. General Principles

Treat others with respect and dignity online, as expected in all other areas of OPAL Services' work.

Remember that online activity can reflect on the charity, even if made in a personal capacity.

Protect confidentiality — never share personal details about colleagues, volunteers, trustees, or service users without explicit consent.

Be mindful of safeguarding responsibilities when posting or sharing content that involves children, vulnerable adults, or members.

## 3. Use of Official OPAL Accounts

Only authorised staff/volunteers may post on OPAL's official social media accounts.

Content should:

- Promote OPAL's mission and activities positively.
- Be accurate, respectful, and inclusive.
- Avoid political campaigning or content that could compromise the charity's neutrality.
- Passwords for official accounts will be managed securely and changed regularly.
- Images or videos of service users will only be shared with written consent.



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#### **4. Personal Use of Social Media**

Staff, trustees, and volunteers are free to use social media personally but should avoid:

- Posting comments that could damage OPAL's reputation.
- Sharing confidential or internal information.
- Presenting personal views as those of OPAL Services.
- If you mention your role with OPAL, you should make clear that your views are your own (e.g. "views are my own").
- Do not engage in arguments, harassment, or offensive behaviour online.

#### **5. Safeguarding and Data Protection**

Never share photos or information about service users without explicit, recorded consent.

Do not accept or send "friend requests" to service users via personal accounts as this risks blurring professional boundaries.

Follow OPAL's Safeguarding Policy and Data Protection Policy when using social media.

#### **6. Inappropriate Use**

Examples of misuse include (but are not limited to):

- Posting discriminatory, offensive, or threatening comments.
- Sharing confidential information.
- Using OPAL logos, branding, or accounts without permission.
- Cyberbullying or harassment of colleagues, volunteers, members, or others.

Breaches may result in action under OPAL's disciplinary or volunteer management procedures. Serious breaches may also result in referral to safeguarding authorities or regulators.

#### **8. Support and Training**

Staff and volunteers using official accounts will receive guidance and support.

Questions about the use of social media should be directed to the OPAL Manager or the HR Committee.