

Beccles and District u3a Press and Media Policy

Scope – Press

The purpose of this policy is to set out guidance for dealing with the press.

Policy Statement

Beccles u3a is keen to cultivate good media relations and increase general awareness of its ongoing activities. The chair, executive committee, interest or activity groups, and the membership all have an important role to play in being u3a ambassadors. For this reason, a media and PR protocol outlines how we will promote ourselves and how any internal requests are to be handled. This helps the u3a to develop, strengthen and protect its reputation.

Beccles u3a wants to provide to the media accurate and relevant information and photographs about the range of activities and groups it offers. Our u3a also acknowledges that such tasks are done voluntarily and time constraints for volunteers may determine what can be achieved.

Guidelines for dealing with the media

- The chair or a designated executive committee member will read and approve any promotional material mentioning the u3a before it is released to the media
- Press releases and photographs for the media can be provided by our members or an external source. These materials will be checked for accuracy, content, style and tone by the chair or a designated executive committee member before being agreed for release to the media
- Advance planning with agreed time frames is essential so the chair can properly delegate u3a press work.
- Any photographs used in press releases that include images of u3a members/speakers must have the consent of the subjects prior to release.
- Copies of any u3a press releases, photographs and promotional materials are to be made available for inclusion on the Beccles u3a website
- Any press releases that feature quotes from guest speakers or external bodies will require their prior consent.

Handling Media requests and enquiries

- In the first instance, all media requests for information, research, interviews, case studies and photographic materials for Beccles u3a events, activities and groups go directly to the chair who will determine the response and direct who will provide the information. If the chair is unavailable, the media request will be dealt with by a designated executive committee member. The chair reserves the right to refer any publicity request to the executive committee, who will decide whether or not to proceed with a media release.
- Requests for media or PR help, either externally or within Beccles u3a itself, will be processed as quickly as possible. Each enquiry will be handled on a case by case basis.

- Beccles u3a accepts no liability for the quality or accuracy of the information given to the media, though it endeavours to provide it in good faith
- Beccles u3a reserves the right to refuse to engage with the media where it feels that such engagement may be perceived to harm its public image, go against its objectives, or compromise its activities or membership

Use of Social Media

Scope

The purpose of this policy, which, is to set out what this u3a expects when social media is used. Beccles u3a may use social media to promote its activities by posting photographs and short articles and encourages the responsible use of social media. A written policy is therefore required for all those involved on the acceptable use of social networking.

Policy Statement

Beccles District u3a recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics relevant to our activities using a wide variety of social media, including but not limited to Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

This policy aims to protect individuals involved and to encourage taking responsibility for what is written, and exercising good judgment and common sense.

Inappropriate use of social media can pose risks to our confidential information and reputation, and could jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations.

To minimise these risks, it is expected that any editor adheres to this policy.

The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using u3a IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members.

This policy links to all other policies therefore social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies such as equal opportunities, data protection etc.

It is important to remember that a member who posts is an ambassador for the u3a and that social media is never private.

This policy aims to:

- give clear guidelines on what can be said about the organisation
- comply with relevant legislation
- help administrators manage the social media effectively
- help draw a line between private lives and u3a business
- protect the u3a against liability for the actions of Editors
- be clear about sensitive issues such as monitoring and explain how problems with inappropriate use will be addressed.

Editors of our u3a social media must be committee members and are required to remove internet postings by others which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Editors should respond to constructive criticism and delete anything unconstructive in order to keep the content relevant and respectful.

Responsibility for implementing this policy

All users have the responsibility of ensuring that the standards expected are maintained. Any misuse of social media or questions regarding the content or application of this policy or any content which raises a safeguarding concern must be reported to the executive committee as soon as possible.

Guidelines for responsible use of social media

Postings must not include disparaging or defamatory statements about:

- Our u3a or any part of the National u3a network;
- u3a members past or present;
- Suppliers, vendors and other stakeholders;
- Any other individuals.

Care should be taken that posts are not misconstrued in a way that could damage our reputation, even indirectly.

Members are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media and should remember that what is published will be available to be read by anyone for a long time.

Consent must be obtained prior to posting images which may be used on social media, unless already covered elsewhere by permissions previously given to our u3a.

This u3a does not allow tagging of vulnerable adults or anyone under the age of 18.

It is very important to respect confidentiality at all times and protect confidential information and be mindful of Data Protection issues.

If content in social media is found that disparages or reflects poorly on the u3a or our stakeholders, it should be reported to the executive committee.

Social media is not the appropriate place to resolve issues, complaints or suggestions by members or non-members of the u3a, nor is it to be used for commercial purposes in any form.

The above Policy and Procedures were adopted by Beccles u3a on: 3 May 2023