

Friends of Wingecarribee (FOW)

Social Media Policy

Version 1.0

1. Purpose

Friends of Wingecarribee (FOW) uses social media to:

Inform and educate the community.

Promote community events, projects and initiatives.

Encourage respectful community discussion.

Advocate for issues that align with FOW's mission.

Celebrate positive achievements within the Southern Highlands.

Build an informed and engaged community.

Social media is an important communication tool and all content published by FOW should reflect the organisation's values of integrity, respect, transparency and community leadership.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

Committee members

Office bearers

Volunteers

Administrators of FOW social media platforms

Anyone authorised to publish content on behalf of Friends of Wingecarribee

Platforms include (but are not limited to):

Facebook

Instagram

LinkedIn

YouTube

X (Twitter)

Threads

Website blogs

Future social media platforms

3. Guiding Principles

Accurate: Information should be factually correct and sourced where appropriate.

Respectful: Treat everyone with courtesy regardless of differing opinions.

Community Focused: Content should contribute positively to the wellbeing of the Southern Highlands.

Transparent: Where opinions are expressed, they should be clearly identified as the views of FOW or attributed appropriately.

Constructive: FOW seeks solutions, not conflict.

4. Values

Independent
Community focused
Inclusive
Respectful
Evidence based
Professional
Honest
Positive

5. Published Content

Community news
Local planning issues
Environmental initiatives
Infrastructure updates
Government consultations
Community events
Educational information
Public meeting notices
Research
Fact sheets
Volunteer opportunities
Local success stories

6. Political Neutrality

Friends of Wingecarribee is an apolitical organisation.
FOW:

does not endorse political parties
does not campaign for candidates
does not promote political fundraising
does not publish partisan political material
However, FOW may:

comment on public policy

analyse council decisions
discuss planning matters
advocate for improved governance
support evidence-based public outcomes
seek accountability from decision makers
Issues—not politics—remain the focus.

7. Tone of Voice

Posts should be:

Professional
Friendly
Positive
Informative
Balanced
Respectful
Avoid:

sarcasm
personal attacks
inflammatory language
offensive language
ridicule
speculation
gossip

8. Approval Process

Routine posts may be approved by:

Communications Coordinator
President
Delegated Administrator

Posts involving:

legal matters
planning disputes
media issues
council criticism
government agencies
controversial topics
must be approved by the Executive Committee before publication wherever practicable.

9. Accuracy

Before posting, check facts, verify statistics, confirm dates and quotations, use reputable sources, and attribute information appropriately. Errors should be corrected promptly.

10. Images and Copyright

Use FOW-owned, licensed, permitted or public domain images. Obtain consent where appropriate and do not breach copyright.

11. Privacy

Do not publish private or confidential information or personal details without consent. Respect privacy legislation.

12. Comments

Abusive, defamatory, discriminatory, misleading, spam or trolling comments may be removed. Repeat offenders may be blocked.

13. Responding

Respond politely, provide facts, acknowledge differing views, avoid arguments and never engage emotionally.

14. Media

Only authorised spokespersons may speak on behalf of FOW. Refer enquiries to the President, Vice President or approved spokesperson.

15. Personal Accounts

Members may express personal views but not represent them as FOW positions. They may state: "The views expressed are my own and not necessarily those of Friends of Wingecarribee."

16. Crisis Communications

Only authorised administrators may publish updates during emergencies. Use verified information and prioritise public safety.

17. Record Keeping

Retain major announcements on the website where appropriate and archive significant governance and advocacy posts.

18. Breaches

Breaches may result in removal of posting privileges, Executive review or disciplinary action.

19. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required by legislative, governance or organisational changes.

Community Guidelines

Be respectful, stay on topic, debate ideas not people, avoid offensive language, respect privacy, do not advertise or post defamatory or misleading content.

Statement of Intent

Friends of Wingecarribee believes informed communities build stronger communities. Our social media presence exists to encourage respectful conversation, promote evidence-based discussion, and support initiatives that enhance the Southern Highlands. We are committed to maintaining a welcoming, factual and constructive online environment that reflects our mission of serving the community and protecting the future of our region.