

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Updated 1st April 2025

A guide for Trustees and Members on using social media to promote the work of Croydon Astronomical Society (CAS)

This policy will be reviewed annually and will be amended following consultation, where appropriate.

Date of last review: April 2025

Contents

Contents	1
Introduction	2
What is social media?	2
Setting out the social media policy.....	2
We encourage the use of social media. However, publication and commentary on social media have similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.	2
Point of contact for social media.....	2
Which social media channels do we use?	2
Guidelines	3
Using Croydon Astronomical Society's social media channels — appropriate conduct	3
Further guidelines	4
Libel	4
Copyright law.....	4
Discrimination and harassment.....	4
Protection and intervention	4
Under 18s and vulnerable people	5

Introduction

What is social media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests.

Why do we use social media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Croydon Astronomical Society's activities, engaging with the local community in and around the London Borough of Croydon, participating in relevant conversations and raising the society's profile.

Setting out the social media policy

We encourage the use of social media. However, publication and commentary on social media have similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Croydon Astronomical Society. It is important to protect the Society and its reputation and prevent any legal issues.

Point of contact for social media

Set out in the table in section 3 of the Guidelines are those responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our official social media channels.

If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to the relevant person or alternatively email chairman@croydonastro.org.uk and secretary@croydonastro.org.uk. No other person other than those set out in the table in section 3 of the Guidelines can post content on Croydon Astronomical Society's official channels.

Which social media channels do we use?

Croydon Astronomical Society uses the following official social media channels:

- **Facebook** www.facebook.com/croydonastronomicalsociety – Facebook is the primary method that the society uses to engage with the wider community. The account is used to provide details about the society's talks, the public opening of the observatory and special events (such as a solar viewing event or the Perseids meteor watch) are posted on the account. Additionally, information is posted about interesting upcoming astronomical events (such as an eclipse or occultation) and astronomical news (such as selected rocket launches) or talks by reputable astronomers.
 - The Society also operates a website which is mostly static and provides details of upcoming talks and public openings of the observatory.
 - Communication with current and immediately previous members is done using the regular "Members and Friends" e-mailed newsletter.
- **X (Twitter)** - @CroydonAS – This is used occasionally to advertise the Society's talks and special events. It also covers astronomical news.
- **Instagram** – The society has an account, but this is currently dormant

Additionally, Croydon Astronomical Society is associated with the unofficial **croydonastro Forum** which is hosted on Google Groups. The croydonastro Forum has been set up by members of the Society to allow current and previous members to discuss various aspects of astronomy and astrophotography. However, the Society itself is not a member of the Forum and does not post as such. Users of the Forum are required to opt in and be accepted by the Forum moderator. It should be noted that a few members of the Forum have never been a member of the Society.

Guidelines

Using Croydon Astronomical Society's social media channels — appropriate conduct

1. It is recognised that all trustees and members of the Croydon Astronomical Society are volunteers, and any social media activity or monitoring can only take place only when their time is available.
2. Discussions taking place on the unofficial croydonastro forum are monitored by the moderator who aims to step in and delete posts that do not conform to the Forum Etiquette.

Channel	Moderator
Forum	William Bottaci (Graham Cluer has some access rights)

All subscribers to the croydonastro forum are required to abide by the Forum Etiquette.
https://www.croydonastro.org.uk/files/ugd/667433_65aa951e799246b2b230faf09733b840.pdf

3. The following persons are responsible for managing Croydon Astronomical Society's official social media channels.

Channel	Responsibility
Facebook	Tony Roberts (Trustee) Graham Cluer (Trustee) Laura Quayle (Trustee) Stefan Blakemore (Trustee) Carolyn Raishbrook
X	Graham Cluer (Trustee) Laura Quayle (Trustee)
Instagram	Laura Quayle (Trustee)
Website	Tony Roberts (Trustee) Graham Cluer (Trustee)
Members' and Friends Newsletter	Stefan Blakemore (Trustee) Graham Cluer (Trustee) Colin Weightman (Trustee)

4. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for Croydon Astronomical Society.
5. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help and engage with them
6. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images.
7. Always pause and think before posting. That said, aim to reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate.
8. Don't post content about other members (past or present) including the trustees without their express permission. If you are sharing information about third party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from Croydon Astronomical Society. If using videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, those responsible must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.

9. Always check facts. you should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.

10. Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.

11. You should not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.

12. Members (including trustees) should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of Croydon Astronomical Society without the express consent and direction from Committee. By having official social media accounts in place, the Society can focus on building a strong following.

13. Croydon Astronomical Society is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We have every right to express views on policy, including the policies of parties, but we can't tell people how to vote.

14. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity. If a complaint is made on Croydon Astronomical Society's social media channels, this should be drawn to the attention of Committee by emailing chairman@croydonastro.org.uk and secretary@croydonastro.org.uk

Further guidelines

Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. You should not bring Croydon Astronomical Society into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright law

It is critical that all those responsible for the Society's social media abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

Discrimination and harassment

Those responsible for the Society's social media should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Croydon Astronomical society social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

Protection and intervention

The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For

more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook.

Under 18s and vulnerable people

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, those responsible for social media should ensure the online relationship with Croydon Astronomical Society follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship and, if appropriate, make them aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online.

Guidance for posting on Facebook

Posting as CAS

Five Committee members (Tony, Graham, Stefan, Laura and Carolyn) have the ability to create new posts on our Facebook page which is at (www.facebook.com/croydonastronomicalsociety). When they do so they are posting as “Croydon Astronomical Society” and the general public cannot, by default, see the name of the individual author.

As they are posting in the name of the Society the following additional guidance applies:

- Posts should be respectful and checked for grammar & spelling
- Please keep posts short and punchy. If that is not possible please put the important information at the top of the post.
- Please be careful that posts accurately reflect the views/policies of CAS. If you want to make a personal comment please post under your own username.
- Posts about upcoming talks will be OK if you are repeating information mentioned “Friends and Members” email or the speakers webpage.
- Posts will generally be OK if you are posting, say, about an observatory opening and your message has been agreed by those currently planning to staff a particular public opening.
- Posts will be acceptable if you are copying information from our website.
- Posts drawing attention to reputable astronomical websites will be OK (please provide the link rather than copying and pasting the article)
- Please don't promote individual organisations, equipment etc. Our Facebook page is a noticeboard for CAS, not a general astronomy discussion group. Please don't clog it up!
- Please sign off your posts with your name. This makes us appear more friendly, and it enables us to follow up replies.

- In the case of doubt, potential posts can be approved by the Chairman.

Posts from individual members (or committee members posting as individuals)

Anyone can post a reply or comment to a CAS post. We hope that the following guidance will be respected by all

- Please ensure that you do not imply that you are posting in an official CAS capacity if you are not. Note that it is very easy for a member of the public to read a comment and assume that it is official CAS policy.
- Please do not contradict a CAS post or add details that might confuse the public or have not been agreed as above.
- Please do not use Facebook as a discussion forum to debate CAS policy. If you have an idea please contact other relevant CAS members by email etc.

Note that the five members mentioned above have been appointed by the Committee as moderators of our Facebook page. Each of them as the authority to delete posts (whether by CAS or an individual) without reference to anyone else if they feel that the guidance above has not been followed.