

## Stonewater Social Media Policy

### 1.0 Policy Summary

- 1.1 At Stonewater, we understand social media is fast becoming the communications channel of choice for our employees and our customers.
- 1.2 We recognise that as a brand, Stonewater is frequently being discussed online, and we have to be committed to providing timely responses and guidance around how we use social media to approach this and be part of these discussions.
- 1.3 This policy aims to set out Stonewater's approach to Social Media, and empower our employees to use social media to enhance the customer's perceptions of Stonewater online.

### 2.0 Policy Objectives

- 2.1 To define how we embrace social media channels to build awareness of Stonewater and provide positive customer experience.
- 2.2 To ensure our colleagues feel empowered and able to use their own social media to share the Stonewater values; personally and professionally, giving rise to positive experiences and opportunities.
- 2.3 To outline how we use social media platforms to proactively engage with our audience and respond to our stakeholders.
- 2.4 To mitigate any risk factors that may arise through our social media platforms.
- 2.5 To provide clear internal and external customer responsibilities and standards.

### 3.0 Policy Details

#### 3.1 Responsibility for Company Social Media Pages

- 3.1.1 The overall accountability for guiding and co-ordinating Stonewater's social media activity rests with the Social Media Team, under the Customer Experience Directorate.
- 3.1.2 The Social Media Team have overall accountability for the content posted across our social media platforms. They will work with all business areas to identify messages for each of the channels. They will ensure that all platforms are regularly updated with relevant company news.
- 3.1.3 There will be some departments, such as HR, who have access to relevant social platforms as part of their role. In order to set up access to platforms correctly, colleagues must come through the Social Media Team, so they can provide full support with understanding the channel, campaigns and analytics.
- 3.1.4 New social media accounts in Stonewater's name must not be created unless approved by the Social Media Team.

3.1.5 Company social media accounts are protected by strong passwords that are changed annually and shared only with authorised users. A list of authorised users is kept for audit purposes by the Social Media Team and reviewed annually to coincide with password changes.

## **3.2 Use of Company Social Media Pages**

3.2.1 **Facebook** – Stonewater currently has Facebook Pages for Stonewater UK and Stonewater Homes. Our Facebook pages will be used to communicate customer-facing messages, host community groups, and add value to our audiences.

3.2.2 **Twitter** – Stonewater currently has Twitter pages for Stonewater UK and Stonewater Homes, as well as a dedicated Stonewater Customer Service Twitter feed. The Corporate Twitter feed is used to communicate B2B messaging and position Stonewater as a thought leader in housing.

3.2.3 **LinkedIn** – Stonewater currently has LinkedIn pages for Stonewater UK and Stonewater Homes. Like Twitter, LinkedIn is used to position Stonewater as a thought leader within the industry, to engage with like-minded professionals and share job opportunities.

3.2.4 **YouTube** – Stonewater currently has a YouTube page for Stonewater UK.

Social channels will be reviewed alongside their relevancy each year, with new channels added to the above list if relevant to our Stonewater audience.

## **3.3 Stonewater Tone Of Voice**

3.3.1 We will follow corporate tone of voice guidelines. Our tone of voice on customer related social media will be human, friendly, approachable and honest.

3.3.2 Customers must feel listened to and be responded to in one voice; this will improve the overall customer experience and satisfaction, as well as encourage customer engagement.

## **3.4 Social Media Community Management**

3.4.1 We will promote social media as the key method of customer contact after online self-service. We will promote Twitter as the key channel for customer service but will respond to any enquiry through Facebook and Twitter quickly, within our published service standards.

3.4.2 We will monitor social media response times and resolution rates to make sure that customers using this channel to contact Stonewater receive a positive customer experience.

3.4.3 All teams must support timely, effective social media responses.

3.4.4 We will have a balanced mix of posts including Stonewater stories, community activities, useful information, branded messages and industry news.

3.4.5 We want to encourage our customers to engage with us on-line and to provide us with honest feedback. Customers will be directed to our corporate social pages and our complaints process where appropriate. Stonewater understands that feedback will not always be positive but will not tolerate abuse, harassment or

defamation of our colleagues/contractors on any public platform.. Our Unacceptable Customer Conduct Policy provides a framework for dealing with unacceptable behaviour on social media.

- 3.4.6 We will encourage private messaging or calls to keep sensitive discussions/ conversations that involve customer information, away from public view. Once the situation is resolved, the resolution will be posted on the original query.

### 3.5 Use of Personal Social Media Pages

- 3.5.1 At Stonewater, we encourage our employees to actively promote positive Stonewater news stories across their own social media channels. Ultimately employees are responsible for the communications they put online and we are keen for our colleagues to have fun and promote the business and the Stonewater brand across social media platforms.

- 3.5.2 We ask that all employees remember the core Stonewater values when speaking on behalf of the business: **Ethical, Ambitious, Passionate, Agile, Commercial.**

- 3.5.3 All employees who use personal accounts and mention Stonewater online, should ensure they feel comfortable using social media platforms and understand the guidelines within this policy. Training on social media can be arranged from the social media team.

- 3.5.4 All employees should take into consideration who we are as a business when posting about us online, and remember what our role at Stonewater means in the social media community (to be a social media ambassador, and build the Stonewater brand in a positive way). **If employees are using personal accounts to post about Stonewater they should make it clear in their social media 'bio' that any opinion given is their own and not that of Stonewater. They should avoid any religious or political opinion and not use inappropriate language or make any comments which could be deemed as offensive and/or bring the company into disrepute.**

- 3.5.5 Where colleagues are using social media in a personal capacity without mentioning Stonewater they should always remember they are posting in a public domain and must not post any material which could cause offence to customers and colleagues and/or bring the company into disrepute

- 3.5.6 **(Employees should refer to the Stonewater Code of Contact and the Bullying and Victimisation Policy).**

- 3.5.7 It is not recommended that colleagues connect online with customers through social media platforms, with the exception of the customer Hubb. If employees are contacted on their personal social media account by a customer they should direct them to our corporate customer service channels. If contact continues it should be flagged with a line Manager and the Social Media Team.

- 3.5.8 If employees are in any doubt about content they are posting they should speak to the Social Media Team.

- 3.5.9 All colleagues should be mindful of the information they disclose on social media.

- 3.5.10 It is recommended that colleagues protect themselves by regularly updating their privacy settings on any social media profiles.

### **3.6 Confidentiality and copyright**

- 3.6.1 Users must not share or link to any content or information owned by the company that is considered confidential or commercially sensitive. This might include finances, details of customers, or information, or details about future strategy.
- 3.6.2 Colleagues must not share or link to data in any way that could breach the company's data protection policy.
- 3.6.3 Stonewater respects and operates within copyright laws and will not publish or share any copyrighted software, media or materials owned by third parties, unless permission has been obtained. This includes images, music, games or other software. If content published on another websites is used, users will look for the sharing buttons or functions within that website.

### **4.0 Key Outcomes**

- 4.1.1 Using social media to proactively promote the great work from Stonewater and Stonewater Homes will support our overall Stonewater vision to provide everyone with a place they can call home.
- 4.1.2 Using Business to Business (B2B) social media (LinkedIn and Twitter) will help position Stonewater as a thought leader within the industry, and attract new and emerging talent in the sector.
- 4.1.3 Engaging with current and potential residents using social media will support the overall Stonewater mission to provide exceptional customer experience and satisfaction rates.
- 4.1.4 By empowering our employees to share the great work produced by Stonewater, we should reach more people digitally than ever before, supporting our objectives to raise awareness of Stonewater in the UK.

### **5.0 Equality and Diversity**

- 5.1.1 This policy links to our latest equality and diversity guidelines.
- 5.1.2 The Social Media Team will ensure that no content published via any social media platform contravenes the organisation's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and that it complies with all relevant equality legislation.
- 5.1.3 Social media will be used in conjunction with more traditional communication tools (i.e.: printed literature, website content) and, where possible, act as another accessible format tool. Where the message is essential, Stonewater will ensure that it is communicated using appropriate methods applicable to our customers.

### **6.0 Technical Data**

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Risk Assessment                   | This policy includes measures to mitigate the risk that engaging with the social media environment will have a detrimental effect on the Stonewater brand and reputation.              |
| Value for Money                   | Postings to the social media platforms that Stonewater currently utilises have zero cost; therefore as a communication and profile building tool they offer excellent value for money. |
| Consultation                      | N/A  |
| Strategic Group Director Leads    | Sue Shirt  |
| Responsibility for Implementation | Social Media Manager   |
| Date of Issue                     | 03.09.19   |
| Date of Next Review               | September 2022   |
| Date agreed by Board              | -  |

## 7.0 Author & Version

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Author          | Rosie Newey   |
| Title           | Social Media Newey  |
| Version history | Version number 1 [Sarah Ford] – July 2016<br>Version number 2 (Proposal) [Sarah Ford] – June 2017<br>Version number 2.1 (amended and approved) [Sarah Ford] – July 2017   |
| Date            | May 2019  |
| Revision        | This document (Stonewater Social Media Policy - Version 3.0) supersedes and updates Version 2.1 which was issued in July 2017.<br><br>The revision has taken into considered the previous policies, and updated to bring the policy up to date with new Stonewater ways of working, including putting the customer at the heart of everything we do as a brand, and empowering our employees to use their own social media to promote Stonewater. |