

# Wey Valley Radio Volunteer Handbook

Version 2 – May 2026

## Welcome to the team!

Wey Valley Radio is a not-for-profit community radio station run by passionate volunteers for the benefit of Alton and the surrounding area.

This handbook is designed to help you get the most out of your time with us while ensuring we meet our vital legal and regulatory obligations.

As a small station, we do not have unlimited funds and resources. Any breach or fine could take us off air permanently, so it is really important you understand the rules and regulations.

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## Our Commitment to You

We aim to provide a professional and supportive environment. We promise to:

- **Value You:** Treat all volunteers with respect.
- **Support You:** Provide the training and information you need to succeed.
- **Listen:** Actively listen to your feedback, suggestions, and concerns.
- **Empower You:** Offer opportunities to learn new skills and progress within the station.

## What We Expect from You

To keep the station running smoothly, we ask that you:

- **Be Reliable:** Honour your commitments and arrive punctually for your shifts.
- **Communicate:** Give us reasonable notice if you cannot attend.
- **Respect Others:** Value your fellow volunteers, guests and members of the public.
- **Stay Informed:** Regularly check for station updates and attend training sessions.
- **Follow the Rules:** Familiarise yourself with the policies in this handbook.
- **Support:** Help us with events, fundraising and finding new volunteers
- **Represent:** Behave in a way that does not bring the station into disrepute

## Staying in touch

Our main communication channel for day-to-day station news and rota updates is currently WhatsApp. You will be added when you join.

## Annual Compliance Renewal

Once a year, you will be asked to complete a short online renewal form confirming you have re-read this handbook and the other station policies, and that you understand the regulations governing our broadcast licence. You will receive an automated reminder four weeks before your renewal is due, with follow-up reminders if needed.

Completing this annual renewal is a condition of continuing as a volunteer. If your renewal lapses, you will not be permitted to broadcast until it is completed.

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## Legal and Broadcasting Essentials

As an Ofcom-licensed station, Wey Valley Radio is responsible for ensuring that all volunteers understand and follow the Broadcasting Code and the regulations governing our licence. Maintaining a current signed agreement from every volunteer is how we demonstrate that responsibility — and it protects both you and the station.

### 1. The Ofcom Broadcasting Code

All presenters **must** read the relevant sections of the [Ofcom Broadcasting Code](#) before their first broadcast. Key principles include:

- Protecting under-18s.
- Ensuring news is accurate and impartial.
- Content should be fair, respectful and balanced
- Avoiding harmful or offensive material..

### 2. Zero-Tolerance for Swearing

Because young people may be listening at any time, we have a **strict no-swearing policy** with no exceptions. There is no such thing as a 'watershed'.

- **Pre-check everything:** Never play a track or clip without listening to it in full first.
- **Guests:** You are responsible for what your guests say; brief them in advance. If you feel a guest may be contentious in any way (eg a comedian or activist) you should pre-record the interview so it can be checked and edited before broadcast.

### 3. Libel and Contempt

- **Libel:** Do not broadcast anything that could unfairly damage someone's reputation. Even "joking" or saying "allegedly" is not a legal defence. A comment is still libellous if you are simply repeating it from another source (for example, a newspaper story).

- **Contempt of Court:** Never discuss material that could create prejudice to an active case (this starts when an arrest is made). Only report information directly from the police or courts, and never give personal views.
- **Golden Rule:** If in doubt, leave it out.

#### 4. Politics & Impartiality

- You **cannot** broadcast political content or interviews without prior written approval from a Director.
- Ideally all political material is pre-recorded so it can be checked by the Board.
- You must be fair and impartial.
- If you are a member of a political party you must tell us.
- During election periods (6 weeks prior), special rules apply and all content must be pre-approved by the Board.

If a slip-up happens, remove the item/person IMMEDIATELY, apologise on-air, and call or text a Board member right away so they can log the breach with Ofcom.

Presenters breaching this policy in any way may be suspended from broadcasting.

If you are heard broadcasting profanity on air and do not follow the above guidance, or do not answer the phone when called, the studio will be remotely disabled, you will be suspended from broadcasting immediately, and you may face instant dismissal.

#### How We Look After Your Data

When you join Wey Valley Radio, we collect personal information including contact details and, for safeguarding reasons, some sensitive information (health, criminal record). We hold this information in line with our Privacy Policy and on the basis of specific legal grounds explained there.

Sensitive information is deleted within 14 days of you leaving the station. Other contact details are deleted within 12 months. You have the right to access, correct, or request deletion of your data at any time — contact our Data Protection Lead, Julie Cottrell, at [info@weyvalleyradio.uk](mailto:info@weyvalleyradio.uk).

#### Leaving Wey Valley Radio

If you decide to leave the station, please let us know by completing our short Leaver's Form (available from a Board member) or by telling a Board member directly. This lets us update our records and begin the data retention process described in our Privacy Policy. We will be sorry to see you go and would always welcome feedback on your experience.

## Music and Programming

All presenters should:

- Introduce themselves at the start of their show
- Regularly remind listeners what is still to come
- Promote the next show

If you cannot do your show, it is YOUR responsibility to find cover. You should also let management know of the arrangements you have made.

If you have any minor technical issues or mistakes, apologise immediately and move on. For more serious issues, immediately contact one of the directors for help and guidance.

### Daytime Policy (7am–7pm)

Our daytime music is designed to attract the widest possible audience. Consistent sound and branding is important.

- **Format:** Daytime shows are strictly formatted; do not change logs or skip commercial breaks.
- **Copyright:** Only play music already in our system or from legitimate commercial sources. You must log any music played manually.

### Evening and specialist programmes

Presenters have more control of the music and content of the show. However you must still include:

- **News, weather and any sponsorship:** Opt in to the playout system at the top of the hour
- **Station ID:** We are required to identify the name of the station (Wey Valley Radio) at least once per hour, and ideally every 15 minutes or less.
- **Local references:** keep it local by mentioning something relevant to our area at least once an hour
- **Ad breaks:** Any adverts must be played at the scheduled time (generally there are not ad breaks in evening shows)

If you are standing in for a presenter, please make sure you are using similar content and music.

## **Performance and Conduct**

### **Professional Behaviour**

When representing the station, I will:

- Identify myself clearly as a Wey Valley Radio volunteer
- Maintain professional boundaries with interviewees and public
- Dress appropriately for public-facing activities
- Not use my station role for personal gain or advantage
- Follow agreed interview protocols and consent procedures
- Respect the personal boundaries and privacy of others

### **Public Events and External Activities**

When attending events or conducting interviews, I will:

- Wear station identification when provided
- Follow event-specific briefings and guidelines
- Obtain necessary permissions before recording
- Respect restricted areas and access limitations
- Not consume alcohol while on station business unless editorially relevant
- Maintain professional conduct throughout the activity

### **Safeguarding**

I understand that:

- The station sometimes works with young people and vulnerable adults
- I must complete safeguarding training if required
- I must report any safeguarding concerns immediately
- I must maintain appropriate boundaries at all times
- I will follow the station's safeguarding policies without exception

### **Online and Social Media Presence**

When using social media, I will:

- Maintain station impartiality on social media
- Express any personal views in a way that does not compromise the station's impartiality, bring it into disrepute or cause reputational damage
- Not share confidential station information
- Be respectful in online interaction
- Follow station social media guidelines
- Not create unofficial station-related accounts

## Disclosure Requirements

I agree to:

- Disclose to station management any current criminal charges or convictions
- Disclose to station management any professional misconduct proceedings
- Update the station about changes affecting my volunteer role
- Inform management of any conflicts of interest
- Report any incidents that might affect the station's reputation to station management

## Raising Serious Concerns

If you become aware of something seriously wrong at the station — financial misconduct, safeguarding failure, broadcast breach, abuse — you can raise it confidentially with any Board member. You will not be penalised for raising a genuine concern even if it turns out to be mistaken.

## Feedback

We want to help you improve! If management notices technical or professional issues (e.g., poor audio levels), they will contact you to offer constructive advice.

**Complaints:** Any complaints should be dealt with promptly and politely and must immediately be referred to a director.

**Serious Breaches:** Serious or repeated failures to follow this handbook—such as swearing on-air, bullying, or unauthorised political broadcasting—may lead to official warnings, suspension, or dismissal.

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## Studio Safety and Etiquette

- **Food/Drink:** No food in the studio (except for shows over 3 hours). Drinks must be in sealed containers and kept away from the desk.
- **No Smoking:** All premises are strictly no-smoking by law.
- **Faults:** Report any equipment issues or breakages immediately via text to the technical contact. Never speculate about faults on-air.
- **Cyber Security:** Do not connect unapproved devices (like USB sticks) to station computers.

When leaving the studio in automation, you must ensure the playout system is running, the studio playout fader is fully up, all other faders are fully down, and the desk meters show expected levels.

Please leave the studio as you would expect to find it.

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## **Advertising**

All advertising must have clear signalling and separation from programme content.

- Never broadcast unauthorised ads or sponsorship messages
- Never promote an event, business, service or item where you have a financial interest
- Never accept payment or gifts to play specific songs
- Never comment on air about any advertiser or ad

We are always on the lookout for new advertisers and sponsors. If you hear of anyone that might be interested, please let a director know and we can follow it up.

You are welcome to seek advertising or sponsorship for your show BUT you must get the written approval of a director, and all proceeds should go to the radio station.

## **More policy documents**

This handbook is designed to be read alongside our other policy documents, including:

- Wey Valley Radio Values
- Privacy Policy
- Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

These are currently available on request from a member of the Board. Once our new website is live, they will all be published there.

Please ensure you have read and understood them.

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## **Key Contacts**

- Data Protection Lead: Julie Cottrell — [info@weyvalleyradio.uk](mailto:info@weyvalleyradio.uk)
- Safeguarding Lead: Julie Cottrell — [info@weyvalleyradio.uk](mailto:info@weyvalleyradio.uk)
- Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Stewart Ireland
- Health and Safety Lead: Julie Cottrell
- For complaints or concerns: any Board member

## Useful resources

Ofcom Broadcasting Code

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/broadcast-standards/broadcast-code>

The UK Advertising Codes lay down rules for advertisers, agencies and media owners to follow

<https://www.asa.org.uk/codes-and-rulings/advertising-codes.html>

UK Copyright Law

[https://copyrightservice.co.uk/copyright/p01\\_uk\\_copyright\\_law](https://copyrightservice.co.uk/copyright/p01_uk_copyright_law)

BBC Editorial Guidelines

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/>

The Official Singles Chart

<https://www.officialcharts.com/charts/singles-chart/>

The Official Audio Streaming Chart

<https://www.officialcharts.com/charts/audio-streaming-chart/>

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## Ready to start?

If you have any questions, please reach out to a member of the Board.

**Future Revisions:** The current revision of this document is shown below. Presenters and volunteers may be notified of updates or changes to this document from time to time and will be regarded as having accepted those changes if they continue to present or volunteer at the station.

**Version 2.0 — Last reviewed: 22 May 2026**

**Next scheduled review: 15 March 2027**