



Bordeaux South Residents Association

Digital platforms policy and code of conduct

The BSRA makes various communication platforms* available to its members as a value added service. Access to these are contingent on adherence to the below policies. By using these services, you agree to be bound by the following code of conduct.

Access to these communication channels remains a benefit, and not a right.

A. General policy (all platforms)

1. **No** messages will be tolerated that **discriminate** or belittle on the basis of **race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or nationality** – on penalty of **immediate** removal from the platform in question
2. **No** messages will be tolerated that amount to **hate speech or incitement to violence**
3. **No** personal **insults or attacks against another member** of the group will be allowed
4. **No profanity or sexually explicit** images or language
5. Keep communications on topic and relevant to the group in question
6. **Do not repost** warnings, competitions or announcements **that you have not verified**; these invariably turn out to be hoaxes. If in doubt, Google it.
7. Do not give out personal details (including phone numbers) without the owner's consent. Instead, offer to put the owner in touch with the asker. This does not apply to business numbers but if in doubt, err on the side of caution.

B. WhatsApp Policy

In addition to the guidelines set out in section A, the following applies to all BSRA WhatsApp groups

1. Rules

These must be strictly adhered to as a condition of access to the WhatsApp groups created and administered by the BSRA. Failure to do so will result in a warning.

- a. Membership of the various BSRA WhatsApp groups are an added benefit for **contributing** Residents Association (RA) members.
- b. Any member of a contributing household may request to be added to any BSRA group (street security groups are limited to residents of that street)
- c. If you are unable to pay your levies, you must contact the BSRA committee to discuss your options. If your levies remain unpaid for a third month with no arrangement in place, you will be removed from all BSRA WhatsApp groups. You may request to be added again once regular levy payment resumes.
- d. Members who fail to adhere to the rules will **receive warnings via private** message. These are issued at the committee's discretion and are not open to discussion. After **two warnings**, a member **will be suspended for a week**.

After a **third warning**, the member will be **permanently removed**. This process does not apply to violations of rule A.1. above, which is grounds for immediate removal at the committee's discretion (after engaging with the offending party).

- e. You may direct complaints about any member of a WhatsApp group to a group admin or to the committee (committee@bsra.co.za) for investigation.
- f. The committee may, from time to time and at their discretion, relax the rules for membership to certain subsections of their platforms
- g. Non-urgent messages may only be sent during the following hours:
7am – 9pm
- h. Different WhatsApp groups serve different purposes and as such require different levels of strictness regarding on-topic posts

- i. **Chat Group**

Any discussion relevant to the suburb is allowed. General jokes, memes, videos etc are discouraged. The group is expected to self-monitor for relevance by calling out users who do not post in the spirit of the group.

- ii. **Fault Reporting; Fibre**

Please limit messages to the relevant topics; not intended for discussions

- iii. **Street Security Groups**

These are strictly for disseminating crucial security information, as well as important and utility updates. No discussion or off-topic posts

- iv. **Street Captains**

This group is purely for street captains to interact with the BSRA committee regarding the messages that get distributed via the street security groups.

- v. **Marketplace**

purpose - advertise small business in the area and sell second hand stuff

Group Purpose:

- listing items for sale/giveaway
- looking for items
- listing services
- looking for services
- providing and requesting recommendations for goods and services

- advertising special offers

Group Rules:

**please refer to the BSRA communication policy

- no foul language
- no inappropriate images or descriptions
- only legal goods and services
- be respectful to all
- no sale of live animals permitted
- no spam advertising

*The BSRA cannot be held liable for any transactions

- Fake news and misinformation will not be entertained and you will be asked to remove such posts. Failure to do so will result in a warning.

Particularly, fake news and misinformation about Covid-19, including reckless jokes, is strictly prohibited as per the government regulations gazetted on 18 March 2020:

Any person who publishes any statement, through any medium, including social media, with the intention to deceive any other person about: (a) Covid-19; (b) Covid-19 infection status of any person; or (c) any measure taken by the Government to address Covid-19, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, or both such fine and imprisonment.

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202003/regulations.pdf

2. Etiquette

These are good general guidelines. Non-compliance will result in a private message requesting adherence. Repeated violations may result in a warning.

- Do not reply to messages with simple reactions such as “OK” or “Thank you”; although polite, it creates noise in the group
- Post your entire thought in one message; do not send several consecutive messages for the same topic.

-
- c. If your message fails to apply to everyone in the group, send it privately to the intended person (e.g. once you have agreed to purchase something from someone else, the details should be discussed via private message)
 - d. When sharing news or articles, please limit these to topics directly relevant to the neighbourhood (e.g. power outages, CoJ issues).
 - e. Political posts are not appropriate
 - f. Religious posts should be limited to well wishes or celebrating special occasions; no propaganda, or criticism of a belief structure. Practical issues around faith celebrations should be raised with the committee; err on the side of neighbourly consideration, rather than antagonism.
 - g. The BSRA welcomes healthy debate and a variety of views and opinions; as long as these discussions remain civil, on topic and productive.

3. Advertising

- a. As a committee, we welcome residents to advertise their own business efforts, however we do not allow advertising of a third party service/s.

Exceptions are made regarding recommendations of service providers or suppliers that have been used personally by residents.
- b. The Chat Group may be used for advertising as laid out in this document. The other groups (e.g. Fault Reporting and street groups) may not be used for advertising.
- c. Residents may not engage in price gouging when advertising a product or service (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Price_gouging).
You will be asked to remove the offending post. Failure to do so or reposting of inflated prices will result in removal from the group/platform
- d. Any transactions that result from products or services advertised on any BSRA platform are strictly between the buyer and seller. The BSRA can neither intervene in nor be held accountable for such transactions.
- e. No advertisement on a BSRA platform should be construed as endorsement.

4. Street Captains

Street security groups are administered by volunteer street captains. Their responsibilities include:

- a. Distributing information to their group as received from the committee in the "Street Captains" group, when instructed to do so and when it is shared to the group by a committee member.
- b. Relaying information from their street with the committee via the "Street Captains" group
- c. Ensuring at least one committee member is an admin member of the group at all times
- d. Ensuring that all users of their group adhere to the code of conduct as set out in this document by either addressing the group or resident directly, or

-
- by escalating to the committee member admin for their group or the committee via the “Street Captains” group
- e. Adding and removing members as directed by the committee (and ONLY as directed by the committee) and helping to ensure that group members qualify under these guidelines
 - f. Street captains are discouraged from sharing sensational or personal information, even when in the context of a security issue (such as the details of a crime in the suburb when those details do not directly enable greater vigilance or awareness of security matters)

5. Committee Members

Committee members should at all times be aware that they are representing the BSRA and as such should

- a. not challenge posts made by other committee members in public without having initially engaged with the person privately.
- b. be beyond reproach in posting unsubstantiated news, articles or warnings by verifying such before posting

All decisions and proclamations that are not accepted existing policy, need to be discussed with all committee members ahead of a decision being made or communicated.

C. Amendments to This Policy

As new rules and policy changes are required, the committee members may effect the relevant changes immediately to this policy, provided that the updated version is clearly communicated through the necessary channels (being, at minimum, the BSRA website and Whatsapp groups)

* Platforms made available by the BSRA Committee:

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/bordeauxsouth>

Twitter account: https://twitter.com/BSRA_Buzz

Email: buzz@bsra.co.za

Various WhatsApp groups (BSRA Chat, Fault Reporting, Fibre, Individual street security groups)