



# Social Media Policy

This policy aims to support the Directors, Management Committee and its members in safely and effectively using social media to communicate with club members and the wider community. This social media club policy aims to protect the reputation of the club, Management Committee and members it serves. North Bristol RFC also supports the RFU guidance on social media. (Appendix 1)

## Background

North Bristol RFC has many routes to promote the club, its activities and its support for the community. Many of these routes are in digital media. This policy covers many basic principles of using social media but is not exhaustive. If you are uncertain about anything contact the Digital Manager before proceeding.

## Scope

This policy applies to all social media forums and accounts both existing at the time of its publication and that may emerge over time.

This policy applies to all club members, parents of juniors and anybody wishing to establish an account bearing any identification of, or alluding to association with North Bristol RFC.

Definitions and Abbreviations: -

- The Club

North Bristol RFC

- Social Media

Any computer-based platform where members can create and share content including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok, Linked In, Newsletter, Snap Chat, Club Website

- Management Committee

The Management Committee will approve the use of media routes **as part of their role of providing oversight of the day to day running of the club**. The Digital Manager will be responsible from managing the media routes and compliance.

- Regulations

Designated social media accounts

It is not permitted for a social media account to carry the official name or badge of the club or imply an association in any way with the club without the official approval of the Management Committee.

Social media accounts registered and approved by the Management Committee will become subject to these social media guidelines and uphold this policy at all times.

Any representative of the club wishing to establish a social media presence on behalf of the club must apply in writing to the Digital Manager, outlining the purpose of the social media channel, demonstrating the benefits to the club and how the practical aspects of capturing and sharing content over the channel will be managed, in addition to outlining how this policy will be upheld in relation to security and reputational risk.

The club reserves the right to decline any requests received on reasonable grounds including lack of resource to effectively manage and engage across the channel, the reputation risks or if the purpose outlined is contra to the general interests/ focus of the club as a whole.

The club can remove permission for a social media account to exist as an official account where the Management Committee feel that the rationale for the benefit to the club has dissolved, management of the account has become problematic or there has been a repeated breach of the social media policy.

#### Ownership of official social media accounts

All social media accounts established on behalf of the club remain under the ownership of the club at all times. Administration access to the accounts must be given up when requested by the club management.

Social media accounts established on behalf of the club will present a professional image/ shop window at all times with a description of the club and link to the official club web site where appropriate.

#### Administrators of accounts

Accounts will be managed by the Digital Manager and/or a delegate individual appointed by the Digital Manager.

Digital Manager and delegates of the club's official social media accounts must agree to sign up to this social media policy and conduct themselves in a way that is appropriate in upholding and building a positive image of the club at all times.

Digital Manager and delegates of the club's official social media accounts agree to use password protocols, and agree that responsibility for protecting this password and access to the account (e.g. logging out effectively of browsers) remains their responsibility at all times. Any breach of this protocol must be immediately communicated to the Management Committee and digital manager and steps taken to limit the impact.

Digital Manager and delegates of the club's official social media accounts will agree not to act on any conflicts of interest, and must not promote their own products or services across the official social media accounts of the club unless expressly agreed in advance by the Management Committee.

Digital Manager and delegates looking to endorse, promote or engage in a national campaign on behalf of official partners such as RFU or sponsors or unofficial partners such as community groups, must first seek approval from the Management Committee to mobilise the social media channel to this effect.

For the purpose of effective management and measurement, Digital Manager will agree when requested to do so, to use relevant social media management tools/ protocols as requested by the Management Committee. The Management Committee reserve the right to evolve these tools/ approaches in keeping with new trends and approaches to managing and being effective in social media delivery.

Digital Manager and delegates are encouraged to attend relevant training and workshops relevant to the delivery of social media on behalf of the club as deemed appropriate.

### Responsibility to Club Members

Digital Manager and delegates of the official social media accounts for the club must not by their actions jeopardise the privacy of any member associated with the club. Data gathered through social media channels should not be published without the consent of the membership. This includes allowing members the option of opting out of any social media directory produced.

Digital Manager and delegates agree not to spam or communicate with members of social media groups/ forums in a way that could be determined as being of detriment to the reputation of the club.

Digital Manager and delegates agree not to pursue public debates that could bring the club and/or the game of Rugby into disrepute more widely or proactively provoke members of the club to do the same.

Confidentiality must be upheld across the club social media channels at all times, no direct messages should be made public without the consent of the person responsible for the original post and content discussed within committee meetings may not be disclosed on social media unless agreed by those present.

### Social Media Content

The content posted across official social media accounts must be relevant, age appropriate and uphold the club's reputation at all times.

Digital Manager and delegates distributing content on behalf of the club will ensure that the appropriate agreements have been sought on any photographs or film footage uploaded and shared within social media environments across the official accounts.

Digital Manager and delegates of club official accounts must be aware that any content (photos and film) posted on social media passes on ownership of the material to the social media provider e.g. Facebook Therefore, caution must be extended in passing on rights over club material (of value) to a third party.

Digital Manager and delegates must make all best efforts to ensure privacy of players etc. especially when injuries etc. occur. Videos/photos of injuries should not appear on official sites without express consent of the individual.

Any content shared from online environments will link and/or credit the original source of the content.

### Safeguarding Children on Social Media

Children under the age of 13 are not permitted to establish a Facebook account. The nature of social media and cookie tracking in digital environments puts children under this age at considerable risk.

No official club social media channel or Digital Manager and delegates of the clubs official accounts will use social media to communicate or engage with children aged under 13. Please note that parental permission does not constitute permission to breach this element of the policy. For further information please see the CPSU guidelines for protecting children in digital environments.

A list of Digital Manager and delegates for each Social Media channel will be kept by the management team and updated accordingly.

The Management Committee reserves the right to update this policy.

## **Appendix 1**

### **RFU Guidance: Social media for clubs**

Social networking, such as Twitter, Facebook, internet blogs and other online sites, offers tremendous opportunities for rugby to communicate and engage with a growing audience as well as its existing members, supporters and players.

The RFU is keen to promote the safe and responsible use of social networking technology but also to make its members aware of the potential risks and to share best practice.

Participants should be aware that comments, which bring the game into disrepute, or are threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting, might lead to disciplinary action.

Comments that include a reference to a person's ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, faith, gender, sexual orientation or disability may attract a high disciplinary sanction.

Comments can also attract civil and criminal action. Nearly 5,000 offences involving Facebook and Twitter were reported to police in 2012 and 653 people charged.

### **General guidance**

These are public forums, so treat them as such

Individuals and organisations are strictly responsible for any posting on his/their account(s)

Re-posting or re-tweeting inappropriate content represents an endorsement of that content and can be actionable

Do not use abusive, derogatory, vulgar or sexual language

Do not criticise or imply bias in match officials

At all times, exercise discretion and respect for clubs, players, fans and the game's partners

Deleting or apologising publicly for an improper posting does not prevent disciplinary action being taken

Consider “protecting” Tweets and changing security/visibility of Facebook accounts

Clubs and Constituent Bodies

Clubs and Constituent Bodies (CBs) should be aware that they can be vicariously liable for material published by employees in the course of their employment, for example on an official website, Facebook site or Twitter feed, or published by employees outside work via a work email address or a work Twitter handle.

Clubs can also be liable for third party comments and postings made in their website forums or on their Facebook pages.

**We recommend that clubs and CBs:**

Clearly identify who is responsible for posting and maintaining social networking and internet sites

Set standards for content generated in line with the RFU’s Core Values and the guidelines above

Establish protocols for monitoring output, moderating content in online forums and removing offensive postings

Hold members to account for any breaches

**Safeguarding**

The RFU’s Safeguarding Policy advises against coaches having direct personal communication with children unless in exceptional circumstances and coaches and club officials should not communicate with children through social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, nor should they be “friends” with children or comment on their status.

The RFU works closely with the NSPCC’s Child Protection in Sport Unit, which provides comprehensive guidance and resources relating to this issue.

**Players and officials**

Individuals need to understand that they are personally responsible and liable for their comments and postings. At all times you should exercise discretion and be respectful of other players, teams, officials, organisations and brands. What you regard as “banter” could be regarded as embarrassing or hurtful by a wider audience and bring the game into disrepute.

**In short, follow the general guidelines above and:**

Don’t comment if you have any concerns about the consequences

Don’t link to unsuitable content

Don’t get into disputes with audience

Don't share or elicit personal detail

**But**

Do show your personality and be approachable

Do share your achievements

Do let people know what it is like to be a player/official

Do post regular comments to grow and engage with an audience