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Social Media Policy

For Context

The Club has a wide remit of responsibilities to all members, who range in age from 10-80, as required by law and PaddleUK safeguarding guidelines. The Club strives to ensure that everyone can enjoy all forms of paddlesport in a safe environment where they are protected from any form of poor practice, abuse, bullying, harassment, discrimination, grooming or neglect.

The Club provides an infrastructure in which to enjoy paddlesport, recreation, learning, meeting new people, in a fun, inclusive and safe environment. Membership of the club not only provides physical facilities, such as an accessible clubhouse with changing facilities, access to a variety of equipment to try out and gym, but also, importantly, all aspects required for safe paddling when out and about. For instance, all activities arranged by the club ensure that the necessary qualified coaches and experienced paddlers are on hand, for each type of paddling event, with risk assessments completed beforehand and all coaches/ Club Approved Paddlers (CAPs) are DBS checked, as required by law. When attending a club organised paddle, trip, activity, event, or competition, you are covered by the club's community guidelines (i.e. Codes of Conduct) and insurance. The Club is a registered charity with the objectives of providing safe paddlesport and recreation for all. The Club is run entirely by our volunteer members.

With respect to the use of social media platforms and applications as a form of communicating across the club

Aim

To minimise the risks associated with the use of social media that can impact the wellbeing of the Club's members and its reputation, so that all members can enjoy the benefits of social networking by applying the standards of conduct expected by the Club. This Policy applies to all participants attending ACC activities.

Purpose of Club's use of Social Media

To provide a means of promoting the Club and paddlesport and for communicating between members of the Club.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, social media includes the Club's website, Facebook page, YouTube channel, Instagram account, TeamApp and WhatsApp groups that are set up by the club.



General rule

T.H.I.N.K. before you post

- T - Is it True?
- H - Is it Helpful?
- I - Is it Inspiring?
- N - Is it Necessary?
- K - Is it Kind?

Rules:

1. Use common sense. Think about the impact your comments could have on others and aim to avoid causing upset to anyone. You should use your best judgement at all times; if you are uncertain if something is inappropriate or questionable then do not post it.
2. Mind your manners. Be respectful, kind and civil. You should not tolerate discrimination or hateful comments about anyone. Refrain from publishing comments about other clubs, paddlers, coaches or other waterway users, or any controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects.
3. No personal attacks or harassment. Expressing your opinion is fine but being rude in the way you express it or expressing discriminatory views is not. The Club strongly discourages attacks or threats against an individual or a group. Examples of an attack on or threat to a person or a group include (but are not limited to) any posting that:
 - a. Directly insults another person (for example, 'the previous poster is an idiot') – disagreeing with someone is fine but do not make it personal.
 - b. Harasses, degrades or intimidates an individual or group of individuals on the basis of religion, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age or disability.
 - c. Threatens, or could imply a threat of violence, or harm to any particular person or group (for example 'If you say anything like that again, I am going to find you and make you shut up').
 - d. Makes provocative comments that have no scientific or factual basis and are intended or are likely to aggravate others ('only stupid people fall in').
4. Respect copyrights and fair use. Always give people proper credit for their work. Make sure you have the right to use something before you publish, for example photographs taken by someone else.
5. Be aware of confidentiality. In your posts, only reference information that is publicly available. Do not disclose any information that is confidential whether it be your own



or someone else's without prior consent, for example a personal telephone number of another member.

Our membership system on JustGo ensures that all participants know that videos or photos may be taken during sessions and may also be used by the club for promotional purposes. Participants are instructed to inform the session leader at the beginning if they have specific wishes around videos or photos.

Photos / videos of junior members of the Club should not be "tagged" as it would allow them to be identified and then potentially traced. Photos / videos of senior members of the Club should only be "tagged" with the prior consent of the member concerned for the same reason.

Photography in the changing room is not permitted (see changing room policy)

6. The Club is responsible for reviewing what is posted on its social media and resolving any concerns raised with what has been posted.

However, if you suspect account hacking or find a blogger or any other online participant posting an inaccurate, untrue or negative comment about the Club or anyone associated with the Club, you should not respond but seek advice from the Club Welfare Officer.

7. Members may on occasion choose to invite fellow paddlers to self-organised paddles, in which case the post must clearly state that the activity is NOT a Club Approved paddle but a Peer Paddle. Official club events are covered by the club's insurance and benefit from appropriate paddle leaders and safeguarding protection. The Club is not responsible for unofficial events or Peer Paddles (see guidance below)
8. On occasion, it will be useful to set up other temporary online social media communication channels for specific club events (e.g. WhatsApp groups for specific trips for communication on the river). In this instance, the trip organiser needs to set up the temporary group and invite paddlers to join by sharing a link (not by adding paddlers directly to the channel). The channel should be deleted within a week after the end of the event.
9. Any activities attended, or communications made, between members via unofficial platforms or external groups are entirely the responsibility of the individual.

(Any social media platform other than the officially approved Addlestone Canoe Club media has no connection to Addlestone Canoe Club and cannot be governed by any Addlestone Canoe Club Rules, Risk Assessments or Safeguarding Measures.)



Guidance for Peer Paddles

The Club understands that some club members may choose to organise informal friendship paddles using their own WhatsApp or possibly other Apps to communicate between each other. We encourage you to take care and put in place the appropriate measures to safeguard the information of minors and any vulnerable individuals in any of these groups. If you have an U18 in your chat, please check that a parent has consented and is also present in the group and also to think about the physical safety of all paddlers that you invite along to any self-organised paddle.

Zero tolerance

The Club will not tolerate any posting of offensive messages or material on its social media outlets. Offending posts will be removed and the Club Welfare Officer will be asked to consider whether it is appropriate to discuss the issue with the person responsible for the post. Repeat instances of offending posts could lead to the individual responsible being removed from the group or, if warranted, facing disciplinary action in line with Club Rules.

Cyber bullying and Safeguarding

The Club takes seriously any allegation of online bullying between members. Any concerns raised will be investigated thoroughly and appropriate action taken to deter or sanction anyone found bullying. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, as is creating and maintaining the high standards of behaviour expected of people in Paddlesport.

Reporting

If you spot it, report it. Everyone is encouraged to report concerns of misuse or inappropriate use of the Club's social media outlets to a Club Welfare Officer or the Chair in the first instance.