



# LEIGH RAMBLERS F.C.

Belfairs Sports and Social Club, Eastwood Road North, Leigh on Sea, Essex. SS9 4LR



CHARTER STANDARD  
COMMUNITY CLUB

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### Policy overview and purpose

Social media is changing the way we communicate.

This policy has been developed to inform our community about using social media so people feel enabled to participate, whilst being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations. In particular, this policy provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of social media, while minimising potential risks and protecting those involved. This policy assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all online activities related to Leigh Ramblers Football Club (hereafter referred to as “the Club”).

This policy contains the Club’s guidelines for the community to engage in social media use. It also includes details of breaches of the policy. In circumstances where guidance about social media issues has not been given in this policy, we suggest you use common sense or seek out advice from the Club Committee.

### Underlying principles

This policy complements the Club’s core values:

- Assist in the development of grassroots football in the local community
- Provide a social environment for players, supporters and families
- Instilling values of sportsmanship, teamwork, honesty and community spirit
- Encourage wellbeing through participation in local sport
- Provide a fun atmosphere

### Coverage

This policy applies to all persons who are involved with the activities of the Club. This includes but is not limited to:

- members, including life members of the Club
- persons appointed or elected to the Club’s committees and sub-committees;
- support personnel including managers, physiotherapists and others;
- coaches and assistant coaches;
- players;
- spectators and family members



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## Scope

**SOCIAL MEDIA** refers to any online tools or functions that allow people to communicate and/or share content via the internet.

This social media policy applies to platforms including, but not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, etc.)
- Video and photo sharing websites or apps (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Flickr, Vine, etc.)
- Blogs and micro-blogging platforms (e.g. Tumblr, Wordpress, Blogger, etc.)
- Review sites (e.g. Yelp, etc.)
- Live broadcasting apps (e.g. Periscope, Meerkat, Facebook Live, etc.)
- Podcasting (e.g. iTunes, Stitcher, Sound cloud, etc.)
- Geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare, etc.)
- Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia, etc.)
- Instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc.)
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. Fortnite, Second life, Xbox Live, etc.)
- Online voting or polls
- Public and private online forums and discussion boards
- Any other online technologies that allow individual users to upload and share content.

This policy is applicable when using social media as:

1. An officially designated individual representing the Club on social media; and
2. If you are posting content on social media in relation to the Club that might affect the Club's services, competitions, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

**NOTE:** This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media where it is not related to or there is no reference to the Club or its services, competitions, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

### ***Using social media in an official capacity***

You must be authorised by our Club Secretary before engaging in social media as a representative of the Club.

As a part of the Club's community, you are an extension of the Club's brand. As such, the boundaries between when you are representing yourself and when you are representing the Club can often be blurred. This becomes even more of an issue as you increase your profile or position within the Club. Therefore it is important that you represent both yourself and the Club appropriately online at all times.



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## Guidelines

You must adhere to the following guidelines when using social media related to the Club or its competitions, teams, participants, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

### ***Use common sense***

Whenever you are unsure as to whether or not the content you wish to share is appropriate, seek advice from others before doing so or refrain from sharing the content to be on the safe side. When using social media, the lines between public and private, personal and professional, may be blurred. Remember, you are an ambassador for the Club.

### ***Protecting your privacy***

Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy.

When posting content online there is potential for that content to become publicly available through a variety of means, even if it was intended to be shared privately. Therefore, you should refrain from posting any content online that you would not be happy for anyone to see, even if you feel confident that a particular individual would never see it.

Where possible, privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to limit access. You should also be cautious about disclosing your personal details.

### ***Honesty***

Your honesty—or dishonesty—may be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. If you are unsure, check the source and the facts before uploading or posting anything. The Club recommends erring on the side of caution – if in doubt, do not post or upload.

Do not post anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. Be transparent and honest. Use your real name, be clear about who you are and identify any affiliations you have.

If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. If you make an endorsement or recommendation about something you are affiliated with, or have a close relationship with, you must disclose that affiliation.

The web is not anonymous. You should assume that all information posted online can be traced back to you. You are accountable for your actions both on and offline, including the information you post via your personal social media accounts.

### ***Use of disclaimers***

Wherever practical, include a prominent disclaimer stating who you work for or are affiliated with (e.g. member of the Club) and that anything you publish is your personal opinion and that you are not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble — it may not have legal effect.



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## ***Respect confidentiality and sensitivity***

When using social media, you must maintain the privacy of the Club's confidential information. This includes information that is not publically accessible, widely known, or not expected to be shared outside of the Club. Remember, if you are online, you are on the record—much of the content posted online is public and searchable.

Within the scope of your authorisation by the Club, it is perfectly acceptable to talk about the Club and have a dialogue with the community, but it is not okay to publish confidential information of the Club. Confidential information includes things such as details about League/County appeals, unreleased and unpublished details about the Club: e.g. team, coaching practices, managerial appointments and financial information.

When using social media you should be considerate to others and should not post information when you have been asked not to, or where consent has not been sought and given. You must also remove information about another person if that person asks you to do so.

Permission should always be sought if the use or publication of information is not incidental, but directly related to an individual. This is particularly relevant to publishing any information regarding minors. In such circumstances, parental or guardian consent is mandatory.

## ***Gaining permission when publishing a person's identifiable image***

You must obtain express permission from an individual to use a direct, clearly identifiable image of that person. You should also refrain from posting any information or photos of a sensitive nature. This could include accidents, incidents or controversial behaviour. In every instance, you need to have consent of the owner of copyright in the image.

## ***Complying with applicable laws***

Do not post or link to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including defamatory, vilifying or misleading and deceptive content.

## ***Abiding by copyright laws***

It is critical that you comply with the laws governing copyright in relation to material owned by others and the Club's own copyrights and brands if applicable.

You should never quote or use more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and you should always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

## ***Discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying***



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The public in general, and the Club's members, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. You must not post any material that is offensive, harassing, discriminatory, embarrassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate.

## ***Avoiding controversial issues***

Within the scope of your authorisation by the Club, if you see misrepresentations made about the Club in the media, you may point that out to the relevant authority in your League. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is based on fact and does not discredit or belittle that party.

## ***Dealing with mistakes***

If the Club makes an error while posting on social media, be up front about the mistake and address it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses the Club of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), address it promptly and appropriately and if necessary, seek legal advice.

## ***Conscientious behaviour and awareness of the consequences***

Keep in mind that what you write is your responsibility, and failure to abide by these guidelines could put your MEMBERSHIP at risk. You should always follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites in which you participate.

## **Policy breaches**

Breaches of this policy include but are not limited to:

- Using the Club's name, motto, crest and/or logo in a way that would result in a negative impact for the Club and/or its members.
- Posting or sharing any content that is abusive, harassing, threatening, demeaning, defamatory or libellous.
- Posting or sharing any content that includes insulting, obscene, offensive, provocative or hateful language.
- Posting or sharing any content, which if said in person during the playing of the game would result in a breach of the rules of the game.
- Posting or sharing any content that is a breach of any UK law.
- Posting or sharing any material to our social media channels that infringes the intellectual property rights of others.
- Posting or sharing material that brings, or risks bringing the Club, its affiliates, its sport, its officials, members or sponsors into disrepute. In this context, bringing a person or organisation into disrepute is



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to lower the reputation of that person or organisation in the eyes of the ordinary members of the public.

## ***Reporting a breach***

If you notice inappropriate or unlawful content online relating to the Club or any of its members, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, you should report the circumstances immediately to the Committee.

## ***Investigation***

Alleged breaches of this social media policy may be investigated by the Committee. The Club takes social media conduct seriously and where it is considered necessary, the Club may report a breach of this social media policy to police.

## ***Disciplinary process, consequences and appeals***

Depending on the circumstances breaches of this policy may be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure contained within the Club rules.

## ***Appeals***

Any person who is sanctioned under a disciplinary process for breach of this policy may have a right of appeal under the Club rules.

## ***Related policies***

- Club rules
- Code of Conduct