

**NORTH WALES SHEEP DOG SOCIETY**

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR MEMBERS (Sept. 2023)**

**Introduction**

North Wales Sheep Dog Society (‘The Society’) uses social media in its work and recognises that those who are involved in its work may also use social media either as part of their role or in their private lives.

A written policy is therefore required for members (incl. trustees) and any other stakeholders on the acceptable use of social networking.

The Societyencourages the responsible use of social media. The purpose of this policy is to set out what the Society expects from its members when using social media.

It is important to remember that all members are ambassadors for the charity and that social media is never private.

This policy is solely for members and aims to:

* give clear guidelines on what members can say about the organisation;
* comply with relevant legislation and protect members;
* help members draw a line between their private lives and their membership of the Society;
* protect the Society against possible liability for the actions of its members;
* be clear about sensitive issues such as monitoring and explain how problems with inappropriate use will be addressed.

**1.** **Policy statement**

1.1 North Wales Sheep Dog Society recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics relevant to the charity’s work using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, X, blogs etc. This policy aims to protect members networking on the Society’s media by encouraging you to take responsibility for what you write, exercise good judgment and common sense.

1.2 Inappropriate use of social media can pose risks to our confidential and proprietary information and reputation and can jeopardise the Society’s compliance with its legal obligations.

1.3 To minimise these risks and to ensure that our resources and communications systems are used only for appropriate business purposes, the Society therefore expects all members to adhere to this policy.

**2.** **Scope and purpose of the policy**

2.1 This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, YouTube, X, all other social networking sites and all other internet postings including blogs.

2.2 It applies to the use of the Society’s and the members personal social media. The policy applies regardless of how the social media is accessed.

2.3 If a member is found to be in breach of this policy the Society’ trustees will address the issues raised.

2.4 Members may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy.

2.5 This policy links to all other policies therefore social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies such as equal opportunities, data protection etc.

2.6 Any content which raises a safeguarding concern must be reported to the Secretary and Treasurer in line with the reporting procedures outlined in the Society’s Safeguarding Policy.

**3.** **Guidelines for responsible use of social media**

The following sections of the policy provide members with common sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.

3.1 The Society expects members you to help protect the Charity’s reputation. Members must therefore not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:

1. North Wales Sheep Dog Society;
2. The Society’s office holders or other members past or present;
3. Other affiliates and stakeholders.

3.2 Members should also avoid social communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the Society’s (Charity’s) reputation, even indirectly.

3.3 Members are personally responsible for what they communicate on social media. Remember that what you publish might be available to be read by many people including other members, future employers and social acquaintances for years to come. Always keep this in mind before you post content.

3.4 The Society does not permit tagging of vulnerable adults or anyone under the age of 18.

3.5 If you disclose your affiliation as a member of the Society, you must also state that your views do not represent those of the Society. For example, you could state, “the views in this posting do not represent the views of North Wales Sheep Dog Society”. You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the image you present to other members.

3.6 Members are responsible for the security settings of any social media sites they use and should ensure they are set to the appropriate level if they wish to limit who can see their information.

3.7 Members must remember to respect confidentiality at all times and protect confidential information. You should be mindful of Data Protection issues, if in doubt speak to the Secretary and Treasurer. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our work, details of current projects, future projects, financial information or information held on our supporters, staff or volunteers.

3.8 Avoid posting comments about sensitive Society related topics, such as our performance. Even if you make it clear that your views do not represent those of our Charity, your comments could still damage our reputation.

3.9 If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from making the communication until you have discussed it with the Secretary and Treasurer.

3.10 If any member sees content on social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the Society you should report it to the Secretary and Treasurer. All members are responsible for protecting the Society’s reputation.

3.11 Contact details of members are subject to Data Protection. Members are not permitted to access or store information on any other members that would breach Data Protection.

3.12 Members must not use the Society’s social media to circulate or share chain letters or other spam. Circulating, posting or sharing commercial, personal, religious or political solicitations, or promotion of outside organisations unrelated to the Society’s work is also prohibited.