

Online safety and social media policy

This policy has been developed to inform our club members and volunteers about using social media (*Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Tik Tok, Instagram and all other social networking sites and forums*) so people feel enabled to participate, while 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.

Managing online presence

Our online presence through our website or social media platforms will adhere to the following guidelines:

- All club social media accounts will be password-protected, and at least 2 members of the club will have access to each account and password
- The account will be monitored by at least two designated volunteers in order to provide transparency, who will have been appointed by the club committee
- The designated volunteers managing our online presence will seek advice from our designated welfare officer to advise on safeguarding requirements if required
- Designated volunteers will remove inappropriate posts by club members, explaining why, and informing anyone who may be affected
- The club will decline requests from children under 18 to join the club's social media accounts, where access to that platform is not public and requires approval
- We'll make sure all club members are aware of who manages our social media accounts and who to contact if they have any concerns about something that's happened online
- Identifying details such as a club members home address or telephone number shouldn't be posted on social media platforms
- Any posts or correspondence will be consistent with our aims and tone as a club

- Permission to use photographs and videos of club sessions and events on social media is given when completing our member application form. If a member or volunteer informs the relevant person that they do not wish to have photos or videos shared of them online, they will not be posted.

Online behaviours

The club codes of conduct state the expected behavioural standards of our members and volunteers, this includes behaviour on social media. Here are some things to consider before posting on social media:

- Pause and think about what you are saying and the impact it might have
- Be careful, respectful and positive. You are personally responsible for what you post. If in doubt, don't post it
- Think about your image – ‘what do I want people to think about me or my club?’
- Consider who you are interacting with
- Respect confidentiality within the team e.g. announcements, training sessions, race results
- Remember many different audiences may see your posts including Club members, potential members, children, member's relatives, and friends
- Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, and confidential information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and your privacy settings
- Don't post content that discriminates against individuals or groups on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic
- Don't write anything on social media channels that you wouldn't feel comfortable seeing in a newspaper or hearing on TV. Think before you post and consider ‘would I say this face to face with someone?’
- Don't speak negatively about other club members, competitors, officials or governing bodies. Never use slurs, personal insults or obscenity. Be professional and respectful
- Be in the right state of mind when you make a post. Don't post when you're angry, upset, or your judgement is impaired in any way. Be very careful what you say, do and post because once it's on a social media channel, it can go viral very quickly

- Don't engage in on-line disputes and don't allow family or friends to argue on your behalf

What we expect from our club volunteers

- Volunteers should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it
- Volunteers should seek the advice of the designated welfare officer if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media
- Worthing Striders is currently an adult-only club. Volunteers should not communicate with children via social media
- Volunteers should make sure any content posted on public personal accounts is accurate and appropriate as club members may 'follow' them on social media
- Emails or messages should maintain the club's tone and be written in a professional manner, e.g. in the same way you would communicate in a professional setting, avoiding kisses (X's) or using slang or inappropriate language
- Volunteers should not delete any messages or communications sent to or from club accounts
- Any concerns reported through social media should be dealt with in the same way as a face-to-face disclosure, according to our safeguarding procedure
- Club members must not engage in 'sexting' or send pictures to anyone that are obscene

What we expect of club members

- Members should be aware of this online safety and social media policy and the behaviours set out
- We expect members behaviour online to be consistent with the guidelines set out in the codes of conduct and anti bullying statement
- Members should take the necessary steps to protect themselves online

Policy breach

Club members who breach this policy (and other related policies) will face a warning in the first instance, persistent breaches will be dealt with through the club's grievance and disciplinary policy.

Any breaches of a safeguarding nature will be addressed through the clubs safeguarding policy and procedure and where appropriate will be reported to UK Athletics.

Whilst the club will try to moderate social media posts, if you do have any concerns or would like to make a complaint please contact the club welfare officer.

Related policies and procedures

- Club Constitution
- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Codes of Conduct
- Grievance and Disciplinary Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti Bullying Statement (inc. Cyber bullying)

Useful contacts

- Club lead welfare officer:
Ross Holmes / welfare@worthingstriders.co.uk
- UKA: 07920 532552 / safeguarding@uka.org.uk
- EA: welfare@englandathletics.org
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- The UK Safer Internet Centre <https://saferinternet.org.uk/>
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.antibullyingalliance.org