



Smethwick Athletic - Social Media Policy

(This document is reviewed/amended periodically to ensure that it accurately reflects the values of Smethwick Athletic.)

1. This policy is in place to minimise the risks to Smethwick Athletic (“the club”) through use of social media.
2. This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, X, Wikipedia), other social networking sites (such as WhatsApp), internet postings and blogs. It applies to use of social media for club purposes as well as personal use that may affect the club in any way.
3. This policy covers all officers, coaches, parents/carers, players and volunteers (our “members”).

Personnel responsible for implementing the policy

4. Club officers have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all members of the club understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below its requirements.
5. All members of the club are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the club officers.

Compliance with related policies and agreements

6. Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies. If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, you are prohibited from using social media to:

- breach our Electronic Information and Communications Systems Policy;
- breach our obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;
- breach any obligations contained in those policies relating to confidentiality;
- breach our Disciplinary Policy or procedures;
- harass or bully other staff in any way or breach our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy;
- unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties or breach our Equal Opportunities Policy;
- our Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague online); or
- breach any other laws or regulatory requirements.

7. Members should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the organisation and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.

8. Members who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or, if a volunteer, they may be asked to stop volunteering for us.

Prohibited use

9. You must avoid making any social media communications that could damage our club interests or reputation, even indirectly.

10. You must not use social media to defame or disparage us, our staff or any third party; to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties; to make false or misleading statements; or to impersonate colleagues or third parties.

11. You must not express opinions on our behalf via social media, unless expressly authorised to do so by your manager. You may be required to undergo training in order to obtain such authorisation.

12. You must not post comments about sensitive club-related topics, such as our performance, or do anything to jeopardise our trade secrets, confidential information and intellectual property. You must not include our logos or other trademarks in any social media posting or in your profile on any social media.

13. Any misuse of social media should be reported to a club officer.

Club use of social media

14. If your duties or volunteer role require you to speak on behalf of the club in a social media environment, you must still seek approval for such communication from the club secretary, who may require you to undergo training before you do so and impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to your activities.

15. Likewise, if you are contacted for comments about the organisation for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, direct the enquiry to the club secretary and do not respond without written approval.

16. The use of social media for club purposes is subject to the remainder of this policy.

Guidelines for responsible use of social media

17. You should make it clear in social media postings, or in your personal profile, that you are speaking on your own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal email address.

18. Be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that you are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see.

19. If you disclose your affiliation with us on your profile or in any social media postings, you must state that your views do not represent those of the club. You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the values and image of the club.

20. If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from posting it until you have discussed it with the club secretary.

21. If you see social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on us, you should contact the club secretary.

Monitoring

22. We reserve the right to monitor review, without further notice, officer, coach and volunteer activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate club purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your use of such resources and systems.

Breach of this policy

23. Breach of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal as a volunteer. Any member suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to cooperate with our investigation.

24. You may be required to remove any social media content that we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.