

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY – SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose of this document

This policy aims to provide members of Nantwich Choral society (hereafter “the Society”) with information concerning the use of social media and to help them get the best out of the tools available whilst maintaining a safe environment and protecting themselves and the Society.

The objectives of this policy are to

- Explain the Society's social media policy and what is expected of members of the Society (hereafter “members”) when acting in their capacity as members.
- Provide guidance on all aspects of social media use which may affect the Society and its members.
- Inform members on how to raise concerns about the misuse of social media.
- Comply with relevant legislation.

Background

The Society is committed to making the best use of all available technology to improve the way we work. This includes using all reasonable and cost-effective means to improve the way we communicate, reach out and interact with members and the public. Use of social media by and on behalf the Society is of considerable value to the Society's work. It is a method of digital marketing and communication; it is direct, personal and instant. It provides us with excellent means with which to disseminate our messages to, and gain feedback from members and the public.

‘Social media’ is the term commonly given to web-based tools which allow users to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests online. It involves the building of online communities or networks to encourage participation and engagement. To avoid issues which could result in reputational or legal issues and misuse/abuse, it is important that the Society manages any potential risks through a common-sense approach and framework as well as proactively monitoring the development of such applications.

New social media channels and platforms will emerge, but the underlying principles and expectations of this policy will be the same. The most important points for members to remember when using social and digital media on behalf of the Society are:

- Common sense: social media helps us work openly and connect with people. Don’t say anything on social media that you wouldn’t say to someone in person
- Apply the same standards online as are required offline when acting as a member of the Society.
- If in doubt, don’t post it. For example, if you feel you may offend someone.
- Accuracy: check the accuracy and sensitivity of what you are posting before pressing submit.
- Permanence: remember once something is posted online it’s very difficult to remove it completely.
- Relevance: when posting as a member of the Society on the Society’s public web page, don’t post about anything not directly related to the Society.

Context

Social media continues to evolve as platforms and technologies develop. For the purposes of this policy, social media refers to any web-based applications, platforms or systems that can be used to create, share and comment on content and participate in social networking.

This includes (but is not limited to) the following social media channels:

- Facebook
- X [Twitter]
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Snapchat
- WhatsApp
- YouTube
- TikTok

This policy applies to the use of all social media by any member or by anyone acting on behalf of the Society, when related to the Society's activities. It does not apply to members' private use of social media unless in connection with the Society's activities.

Status of this Policy

The Society views any activity committed by a member while using a social networking site that may be viewed as inflammatory, offensive, defamatory, discriminatory, harassment, bullying or victimisation towards another person, as a serious contravention of this policy and its commitment to equal opportunities. Members do not have to explicitly mention the Society or their association with the Society to be covered by this policy but may be covered where they are identifiable as Society members. The Society has no remit for the private social media activity of members not in connection with the Society. Breach of this policy may also constitute a breach of the UK GDPR or other legal duties.

This includes copyright for any images or logos posted on social media. Legal action is particularly likely where the breach involves posting inappropriate content such as confidential information or personal data, or abusive or other inappropriate comments. In extreme cases, members may be subject to criminal prosecution or a civil claim for damages.

Applicable Laws

Members should be mindful of the laws that might apply when using social media. This includes in particular the

- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, which govern the processing of personal data.
- Human Rights Act 1998, which provides a right to private and family life.
- Equality Act 2010, which protects individuals from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Other laws may apply depending on the particular use of social media, such as where the use constitutes defamation or a criminal offence.

Key Principles for Use of Social Media

These key principles apply to all Society members who make use of any form of social media in their capacity as Society members:

- You are an ambassador for the Society.
- Never post a comment, photo or video online that you would not be willing to share with people in real life in a face-to-face setting
- Your online behaviour not only reflects on you, but also on the Society, where the behaviour relates to the Society or identifies you as a Society member. While there is often a focus on the negative impact of social media on an organisation and its reputation, remember that you have the potential to act as a positive and respected brand ambassador for the Society
- Everything you post online, including photographs, could become public: even with the strictest privacy settings.

Once something is online, it has the potential to be copied and redistributed, and it is easy to lose control of it. Presume that everything you post online will be permanent and will be shared. This policy not only covers posts you make directly onto social media, but also your sharing, 'liking' or comments on others' posts on social media, as well as comments other people may make onto your own social media profiles.

You must refrain from any action or activity which may bring the Society into disrepute. This includes posting content on any social media (whether text, images, video or audio) that expresses defamatory, derogatory or offensive comments or attitudes (whether explicit or implied) towards other Society members, those participating in concerts (such as soloists or orchestra members) or members of the public.

Protect your own privacy

Think carefully about what kind of information you want to share and with whom, and adjust your privacy settings accordingly. For example, on Facebook you can adjust your privacy settings at group level to share different levels of information with different kinds of friends. Remember that the more your personal life is exposed through social media, the more likely it is that this could have a negative impact on you and your reputation.

Protect the privacy of others

Consider the privacy of other people when posting on social media. You must comply with the UK GDPR, which covers the use of personal data. This means that you should not post identifiable data, including names, pictures or videos of other people on social media without the consent of the person concerned. When taking pictures of people at events (either in person or 'screenshots' of virtual events or meetings) you need to inform everyone featured that an image is being taken, ask for their consent and be verbally explicit on how and where you'll use the picture or video.

Society Use of Social Media

The Society maintains its own presence on the following social media channels:

- Facebook
- X [Twitter]
- Instagram

Content deemed suitable for Society social media includes news, events and activities that are related to the Society (mainly, but not exclusively, around concerts).

Society members are welcome to comment on posts on the Society's social media (subject to the principles above) but only administrators of the Society's social media accounts should

respond to comments or queries by members of the public. This is to ensure accurate and appropriate information is provided. The Society's membership form includes a statement of consent for the Society to take, hold and use images of members for legitimate marketing and promotional opportunities.

Considerations

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults is everyone's responsibility. Society members using social media in their capacity as members must ensure the confidentiality of anyone identifiable is respected. Pictures or videos involving children and young people must not be taken without the express permission of a parent or other responsible adult.

Raising a Concern

Society members have a duty to challenge inappropriate comments or posts by other Society members by raising issues with a Committee member or directly via the Chairman or Secretary. If a member of the Society feels that they are the target of complaints or abuse on social media sites, they can remove someone from their friends or followers list and block them from interacting with them. Most sites will include mechanisms to report abusive activity and provide support for users who are subject to abuse by others. If a member of the Society has reason to believe that the activity is originating from another Society member, they should report this as above. Any grievance with the Society, should not be displayed or discussed on social media.

In the event of a concern or complaint being raised by a member, the issue shall be investigated by the officers of the society, in accordance with the NCS Complaints Policy. If the officers are not able to agree amongst themselves on an appropriate course of action, the chairman's decision shall be final.

End of Document

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