



BOWLSWALES

Social Media Policy

1. Introduction & Purpose

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. As a member based organisation, BowlsWales recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement and enrichment for our members, stakeholders and the wider public.

It is important that the reputation of BowlsWales, its Members, clubs and the sport generally is not tarnished by anyone using social media inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that might reference BowlsWales.

When someone clearly identifies their links with BowlsWales and/or discusses their involvement in the organisation in this type of forum, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately and in the ways that are consistent with BowlsWales stated/normal values and policies.

This policy aims to provide some guiding principles to follow when using social media, it does not apply to the personal use of social media platforms by BowlsWales members that makes no reference to BowlsWales or related sport issues.

BowlsWales recognises that employees are likely to use social media in a private capacity outside of work and they may also be required to use it in a business capacity as part of their role at Bowls Wales.

However, employees' use of social media in both a personal and business capacity can present risks to our confidential information and reputation and can jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations. To minimise these risks, and to ensure that our IT resources and communications systems are used appropriately, we expect employees to adhere to this policy. Please refer to appendix below.

2. Scope

This policy applies to BowlsWales Board Directors, employee's and sub-group members.

This policy covers all forms of social media including, but not limited to, activities such as:

- Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter or any other);
- Content sharing including any platform involving photo sharing and video sharing;
- Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons;
- Leaving product or service reviews on retailer sites or customer review sites;
- Taking part in online votes and polls;
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums or message boards; or

- Editing the organisation website page

The intent of this policy is to include anything posted online where information is shared that might affect members, stakeholders, sponsors or BowlsWales as an organisation and the reputation of the sport in general.

3. Definitions

Social media is a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other, or to share data in a public forum. This includes online social forums such as Twitter, Facebook, Linked-In, internet newsgroups, and chat rooms. Social media also covers blogs and video- and image-sharing websites such as YouTube and Flickr.

There are many more examples of social media than can be listed here and this is a constantly changing area. This policy refers to the examples listed, and any new social media which is developed in the future.

4. Personal Safety and Privacy

Employees need to be aware that the information they post on their personal social media profile can make them identifiable to service users, as well as people they know in a private capacity.

Employees should therefore consider this when setting up their online profile particularly in relation to; use of a photograph, providing details of their occupation, employer, and work location.

Employees should ensure that clients known to them through their work, *where there could be a conflict of interest*, are not linked to them through social media. BowlsWales considers it inappropriate to have service users as 'friends' through social media, especially where these people are vulnerable and there may be safeguarding issues.

Online sites such as Facebook are in the public domain, and personal profile details can be seen by anyone, even if users have their privacy settings on the highest level. Also if a user's profile is linked to other sites, any changes to their profile will be updated there too.

Employees who have set their privacy level to the maximum can have their privacy compromised by 'friends' who may not have set their security to the same standard.

5. Guiding Principles

The World Wide Web is not anonymous. BowlsWales Directors, sub-group members & employees should assume that everything they write can be traced back to them.

Due to the unique nature of sport, the boundaries between BowlsWales Directors, sub-group members and employee's profession, volunteer time and social life can often be blurred. It is therefore essential that everyone makes a clear distinction between what they do, think or say in their capacity as a member of BowlsWales as BowlsWales considers members of the organisation as its representatives and what they do, think or say as an individual.

When using the internet for professional or personal pursuits, all members must respect all stakeholders of BowlsWales, all members and clubs, BowlsWales employees and anybody else involved in our sport and follow the guidelines in place to ensure that sport's intellectual property or its relationships with sponsors and stakeholders is not compromised (see "*Branding and Intellectual Property*" below) or the organisation is brought into disrepute.

USAGE

For BowlsWales Directors, employees and subgroup members using social media, such use must not:

- contain, or link to, libellous, defamatory or harassing information;
- comment on, or publish information that is confidential in anyway;
- bring the organisation or the sport into disrepute; or
- otherwise be in breach of BowlsWales Code of Conduct's.

BRANDING AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Only the BowlsWales official social media and website(s) have the right to use any logo or trademarks belonging to the organisation. It is important that any logo or trademarks belonging to BowlsWales are not used in personal social media applications as doing so will be a breach of this policy.

6 Official BowlsWales blogs, social pages and online forums

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum for members, clubs, competitions or general BowlsWales business, care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person has given permission to create the page or forum.

Similarly, appropriate permissions must be obtained for the use of logos or images. Images of children may not be replicated on any site without the written permission of the child's parents and/or guardian. (Reference to Safeguarding from the BowlsWales Child Protection and/or Safeguarding Policies found on BowlsWales website)

For official BowlsWales blogs, social pages and online forums:

- posts must not contain, nor link to pornographic or indecent content;

- “pop up” hosted sites should not be used for online forum or social pages as the nature of “pop up” content cannot be controlled;
- members must not use BowlsWales online pages to promote personal projects; and
- all materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

CONSIDERATION TOWARDS OTHERS WHEN USING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Social networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users worldwide. BowlsWales Directors, employees and subgroup members must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos and comments in this way, especially when there may be an expectation that they will not appear publicly. In certain situations, BowlsWales Directors, employees and subgroup members could potentially break the law or inadvertently make BowlsWales liable for breach of copyright.

BowlsWales Directors, employees and subgroup members should be considerate to others and should not post information when they have been asked not to, or if formal consent has not been obtained. Information about another person posted without permission must always be removed if requested as soon as possible, ideally immediately.

Under no circumstance should offensive comments be made about BowlsWales, employees, Members, the NGB or our sport online.

7. Breach of Policy

Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to BowlsWales Chair or General Manager.

If detected, a breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action under the BowlsWales governing documents including its constitution/Articles, Disciplinary Regulations and other relevant policies.

CONSULTATION OR ADVICE

This policy has been developed to provide guidance for BowlsWales board, staff and Subgroup members taking part in social media activities.

This policy was adopted by BowlsWales on 30/04/2021 and will be reviewed at least annually or earlier if required.

Agreed by the Board	30/04/21
Communicated to Members	August 2021
Version Number	V1
Next review date	30/04/2022

APPENDIX

EMPLOYEE GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- Employees must be mindful that any online activities/comments made in a public domain, must be compatible with their position within BowlsWales, and safeguard themselves in a professional capacity.
- Protect your own privacy. To ensure that your social network account does not compromise your professional position, ensure that your privacy settings are set correctly.
- Comments made outside work, within the arena of social media, do not remain private and so can have an effect on or have work-related implications. Therefore, comments made through social media, which you may intend to be “private” may still be in contravention of the Harassment and Bullying Policy and/or the Disciplinary Policy. Once something is online, it can be copied and redistributed making it easy to lose control of. Presume everything you post online will be permanent and can be shared.
- Do not discuss work-related issues online, including conversations about service users, complaints, management or disparaging remarks about colleagues or Bowls Wales. Even when anonymised, these are likely to be inappropriate. In addition, doing this in the presence of others may be deemed as bullying and/or harassment.
- Do not under any circumstances accept friend requests from a person you believe could be a service user or may conflict with your employment.
- Be aware that other users may access your profile and if they find the information and/or images it contains offensive, make a complaint about you to BowlsWales as your employer.
- Ensure that any comments and/or images cannot be deemed defamatory, libelous or in breach of copyright legislation.
- When setting up your profile online consider whether it is appropriate and prudent for you to include a photograph, or provide occupation, employer or work location details.
- You can take action if you find yourself the target of complaints or abuse on social networking sites. Most sites will include mechanisms to report abusive activity and provide support for users who are subject to abuse by others.
- If you do find inappropriate references and/or images of you posted by a ‘friend’ online you should contact them and the site to have the material removed.
- If you are very concerned about someone else’s behaviour online, you should take steps to raise your concerns. If these are work related you should inform your manager.
- Employees should not access social media sites or leave these running in the background during working time, *for personal use*, on any devices within their control.

