## Social Media Guidance

**This guidance relates to all those participating as part of the Shropshire Cricket Community (‘Participants’). It is intended to cover and apply to:**

**Players (adult and junior)**

**Club Officials, employees and volunteers**

**Umpires**

**Scorers**

**Qualified Coaches**

**Affiliated Clubs**

**Affiliated Leagues and Officials**

**Representative Players and Officials**

**Spectators**

**Parents of junior players**

**SCB Officials, employees and volunteers**

**This Guidance will govern the use of social media by Participants and will apply irrespective of the terms of any other social media policies that may be in force.**

## We recognise that the internet provides a framework and unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions, exchange information and opinions and experiences on topics using a wide variety of social media. ‘Social media’ refers to a variety of online communications including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Tik Tok, You Tube chatrooms and forums, video sharing sites, blogs and wikis.

The purpose of this policy is to explain how all Participants should use social media and sets out the standards of behaviour expected of those people.

## General Policy for the Shropshire Cricket Community

## We want everyone involved and supporting cricket to be as close to the action as possible and be part of our vibrant cricket family. This can be done through a wide range of social media channels, some run by the ECB SCB, some by clubs, some by other members of the Shropshire Cricket community. Using social media is a brilliant communication tool for anybody that plays, watches, or has an interest in cricket. Most posts that are made are overwhelmingly constructive and positive and promote the sport of cricket.

As a cautionary note, the misuse of social media can have significant consequences, posts that are not appropriate or even unlawful or illegal must not be made. Insulting, offensive, obscene, injurious, or false content can be dangerous and harmful to people’s wellbeing and reputation as well as bringing Cricket and the Shropshire Cricket Community into disrepute.

**Participants using social media**

This applies regardless of whether:

- You are posting yourself or sharing someone else’s post.

- An individual is tagged in the post or not.

- The communication is by word, photograph, video, or any other form.

- The post is anonymous or not. If we can trace it back to you, we will act.

## Participants must not

* Create or share material that might be defamatory or incur liability for damaging the reputation of an individual or business/organisation.
* Post or share messages, status updates or links to material or content that is inappropriate including, gender specific comments, pornography, racial or religious slurs, information encouraging criminal activity, radicalisation or terrorism, gambling or the use of illegal substances.
* Our definition of inappropriate content or materials also covers any text, image or other media that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of age, sex, gender, religious or political belief, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or any other particular characteristic protected by law.
* Use social media for illegal or criminal activities or the encouragement or incitement of such activities by others.
* Send offensive or harassing social media to others, any form of bullying or trolling will not be tolerated.
* Post, send or share messages or material that could damage crickets’ reputation or otherwise bring the sport into disrepute.
* Deliberately upload or attach files that contain viruses, corrupted files or any other similar software or programmes that may damage or compromise the security of computers and networks.
* Commit any violation of trademarks, copyright or other registered intellectual property.

**Representing cricket on social media**.

Participants *may*: -

Respond to cricket-related enquiries and requests for help

Share content created by cricket bodies

Share insightful articles, videos, media and other content relevant to cricket.

Support cricket advertising, product launches and other initiatives.

Share information from relevant cricketing bodies, for example ECB/ICC.

Share humorous cricket related content, subject to the matters referred to above.

Participants *must:* -

Remember you are personally responsible for what you post on social media.

Keep all of your log in details, including passwords secure to prevent the misuse of your account by others.

Remember they are dealing with real people, be respectful and polite, patient and engaging, even if you disagree.

Be empathetic and think how would you feel if you were on the receiving end of a message or interaction.

Recognise that while social media activity is between them and an individual, the power of social media lies in the ability to share, always pause and think before you post. If a post illicits a strong negative emotion, it is usually wise to wait and reflect before immediately replying or sharing with others.

Do not share information not intended to be made public.

Stay on topic.

Do not use social media to make malicious, insulting, offensive, obscene, or false statements regarding other Participants.

Remember that social media posts are permanent and even if posts are deleted, they may have already been seen or captured by others.

Make it clear when you are expressing your own opinions, state that your views are not those any particular organisation or the wider cricket community.

Before posting consider:

* Would saying this be acceptable if I was attending a cricket match in person or speaking to someone in the street?
* Would I want other Participants, or close friends and family, to see this?
* Would a newspaper publish this? If the answer is no, it probably infringes libel or defamation law
* Am I 100% certain this is acceptable? If in doubt, don’t post.
* Before sharing or retweeting, would I write this myself and do I endorse it? If the answer is no, do not share it. By retweeting or sharing, you might as well be posting it yourself
* How would I feel if someone wrote this about me? If you would not like it, do not post it.

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**Whilst all Participants have a complete right to a private life and freedom of expression, they must however avoid making comments or sharing material on their personal social media which is likely to harm the reputation, or bring into disrepute cricket generally, the Shropshire Cricket Community and /or its Participants** .

**Breach of this Guidance.**

We operate a ZERO TOLERANCE approach to breaches of this policy.

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action to be taken by ECB or SCB, as well as any other league, Club or representative organisation that incorporates it into their own rules and policies.

Individuals may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action against Participants.

If we have evidence that anyone has acted improperly on social media regarding a cricket related matter in Shropshire, including towards any other Participant, then on a positive finding by the SCB disciplinary action may be taken and you risk any or all the following sanctions (these are not exhaustive).

* An indefinite ban from all grounds, venues, buildings, and events connected with Shropshire Cricket including the Shropshire County Cricket League (“SCCL”) other participatory leagues, and Shropshire County Cricket Club (‘’ SCCC’’)
* Legal proceedings under the Malicious Communications Act 2003.
* Civil action under defamation law.
* Punishment, including possible playing and participation bans, deemed appropriate by the disciplinary committee(s) of the SCCL or other member organisations of Shropshire Cricket.
* Sanctions imposed by the SCB/SCCL disciplinary committee on the club with which you are registered as a member or player.

Any breaches will be investigated and determined as a disciplinary issue in line with, and adhering to, the ECB’s GENERAL CONDUCT REGULATIONS FOR RECREATIONAL CRICKET (2023) or such later iterations of these regulations.

**Report a Breach**

If you have witnessed a breach of this General guidance and wish to make a complaint, email and set out the alleged breach in writing, if possible. If there are any difficulties with reporting to the designated individual above (for example the complaint is against them, someone closely associated with them or their Club/organisation) then please speak to #### so that they can assist.