

# **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

## **A social media guide to promote the work of CF10 Arms Park Rugby Trust**

### Introduction

#### **What is social media?**

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

#### **Why do we use social media?**

Social media is essential to the success of communicating CF10's work. It is important to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of our work. However, it should be noted that social media is not a substitute for face-to-face contact.

#### **Why do we need a social media policy?**

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to rugby. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all volunteers, and applies to content posted in the name of CF10.

#### **CF10 aims in using social media**

- To increase the profile of CF10
- To promote CF10 activities and policies
- To increase followers and interaction
- To comment on critical issues affecting Cardiff rugby
- To help drive membership recruitment.

We must be seen to represent and reflect the views of members and the community which we serve under our constitution.

#### **Point of contact for social media**

Our Communications Group is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to the Chair. No other staff member can post content on CF10's official channels without the permission of the Chair.

#### **Discrimination and harassment**

Members should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official CF10 social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

# Guidelines

## Using CF10's social media channels — appropriate conduct

1. Only those authorised to do so by the Chair will have access to social media accounts.
2. A rota of weekly users will be drawn up by the Chair and circulated to the Communications Group.
3. The Communications Group should support the person on duty by making suggestions on potential content.
4. Make sure that all social media content is clear, easy to read, has a purpose and a benefit for CF10, and accurately reflects its position.
5. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help and engage with them
6. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images.
7. Always pause and think before posting. If questioned on TV/radio about a post could you justify it? Do not use inappropriate language or imagery. If someone is unsure about whether a post is appropriate or unsure of how to respond they should seek advice from Chair or Secretary
8. If any Board member outside of the Communications Group wishes to contribute content for social media they should speak to the person on duty about this.
9. CF10 shouldn't post content about its members or supporters without their permission. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, we must ensure we have the consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media.
10. Always check facts. You should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.
11. Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.
12. We should refrain from offering personal opinions via CF10's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'.
13. It is vital that CF10 does not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others, to gather materials. For example, a video of a stunt.
14. We should not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.
15. Members should not set up other social media channels on behalf of CF10. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, the Communications Group can ensure consistency and focus on building a strong following. The Board would seek to have non-official accounts deleted.
16. CF10 is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We have every right to express views on policy, including the policies of parties. But we can't tell people how to vote.
17. If a complaint is made on CF10s social media channels, the person on duty should seek advice from the Chair or Secretary before responding. Sometimes, people confuse complaints with

grievances. They may not like a CF10 policy in which case it is not a complaint. Any complaint about an individual will follow the Standing Order for Membership and Conduct available on the website.

18. If any Board member becomes aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on CF10's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Chair immediately.

19. Social media can be enjoyable, frustrating, annoying, offensive and hateful. Individuals on duty must use their own judgement to decide whether to engage with certain individuals or not.

- Blocking. If an individual is offensive, abusive or uses foul or insulting language then we do not, and should not, engage with such an individual. It is absolutely right that the person is blocked. Trolls or bullies should also be blocked as should someone spamming us with questionable links.
- Mute. If a person is simply persistent and has little to contribute except the same argument in their responses then blocking may be too extreme. It may be more appropriate initially to mute that person.
- Unfollow. Sometimes we may have followed someone simply because they followed us. It may be appropriate in circumstances such as the above to Unfollow a person if we are currently following them. This send a message that we are not particularly interested in what they have to say. This should be avoided with possible CF10 members. Their status can be checked with the Membership Secretary.

20. The following techniques have been suggested as ways to increase engagement:

- Seeking out and following all identifiable Cardiff Blues/RFC players and supporters on Twitter
- Increasing the number of tweets that feature pictures (preferably these being high quality and in focus)
- Producing well-written, longer tweets
- Increasing tweets with polls
- Increasing tweets containing media (video clips of old games, videos from museum, brief interviews with CF10 board, fans on the terrace, RFC video reports, members with a public profile etc.)
- Being proactive in raising issues and being able to react to breaking news quickly
- Developing a series of themed tweets to critical issues (e.g. regional mergers; PRB).

### **Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct**

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. CF10 Board members are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with CF10's values and policies, both online and in real life.

Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive CF10. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of CF10.

We encourage Board members to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support CF10 and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage members to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the Chair who will respond as appropriate.

## **Further guidelines**

### **Libel**

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether staff are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring CF10 into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

**Copyright law**

It is critical that all Communications group members abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

**Confidentiality**

Any communications that members make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that CF10 is not ready to disclose yet.

Members should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official CF10 social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content