

HASTINGS RUNNERS

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social Media continues to grow in popularity and can provide running clubs and individuals with a wide range of benefits. It allows people to connect to the world instantly, and enables clubs to disseminate information widely at virtually no cost. The following guidelines are designed to provide helpful, practical advice to individuals within sport which can help keep you safe online.

- Set Yourself Up Securely before posting anything online. Each website, app or device will require slightly different configuration to set it up correctly so for guidance on how to set up specific apps, website or devices as safely as possible please visit www.internetmatters.org
- Think carefully about who you connect with online – remember that once you connect, send a message or add someone as a friend or follower they can see everything you post. Would you really want this person to have full access to the details of your life?
- Never give out your password, PIN or login details online or face to face. These things should be private to you and shared with nobody. You should also ensure that you log out after use and don't leave your social media accounts open on a shared device as other people could post in your name.
- Coaches and volunteers should not be 'friends' with junior athletes online. Private chat functions are often unmoderated, so can also leave adults open to accusation of improper use. If you need to communicate with your athletes outside of coaching sessions do so by group text message, phone calls to parents/guardians or via a post on a closed club or governing body page rather than via your personal profile.
- Check your privacy settings regularly, not just when you set up a new account. Most social media platforms default privacy settings to 'public' several times a year so you should check regularly to ensure that your accounts remain private.

- Don't add friends online that you do not know or haven't met face to face.
- Turn off Bluetooth and location services on your devices when not in use, as these can be used by others to view your private information or trace your movements. Similarly do not 'check in' on social media – by checking in regularly you are potentially telling the world that your home is empty and ready to burgle; or what your regular movements are so that people can target you when alone.
- Remember that what you post online can be easily misinterpreted. When things are typed instead of said face to face, it is often difficult to know the true meaning of the words and people can easily take offence to a post that was shared without intending to upset. This is especially true when online abbreviations, hashtags or emojis are used in place of words. So before you post, consider how someone else may read your post.
- Never post or share messages, images or videos which are abusive, discriminatory or sexually explicit – all three of these things are illegal and you could find yourself in trouble with Police.
- Think carefully about what other people's posts you like or share online. Once you like or share a post you become associated with it even if you were not the original author, so think first about whether this is something you would want to be connected with.
- Remember - there is no such thing as privacy online; so think very carefully before posting. Just about everything you say online could eventually be read by anyone, including your grandmother, the children you coach or the editors of tomorrow morning's tabloids.
- As a role model within your sport, by all means use social media to celebrate your and other runners' achievements. But don't comment negatively on others' professional performance, be they athletes, officials or coaches. When you post online, make sure your facts are accurate and don't swear or engage in insulting or prejudicial behaviour.

- If you are receiving upsetting messages or posts, the best response is often no response. Tempting as it is to reply, this can escalate the situation. Instead you can step away from your phone or computer and make your club or governing body aware of the messages and ask for their advice. Block and report anyone who sends abusive text messages to you, and if you receive indecent images or sexually explicit messages contact your club/governing body Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer and/or Police on 101.
- The purpose of the Hastings Runners Facebook page is to enable members or followers of HR to communicate, make enquires, ask for help with an event or celebrate achievements of its members. This is a public group.
- UK Athletics' policy regarding Social Media states that all athletics clubs are responsible for vetting their social media and ensuring that users are of the appropriate age (over 13) and that its content could not be misconstrued as offensive.
- Parents AND junior athletes MUST give their written consent to their photograph, name or data being placed on social media/Facebook.
- Caution must also be exercised by Club Coaches and officials in communications between themselves and anyone under 18 (Children's Act – under-18s legally defined as children), in order to avoid potential miscommunication. Best practice guidance is for coaches to contact under-18s through their parent/guardian.
- The Hastings Runners Facebook page is managed by the following administrators: Jane Hughes, Matt Edmonds, Jo Edwards, Andy Lee and Simon Fry. Their email addresses are:
jane.hughes@btinternet.com
mattman9976@hotmail.com
jo-edwards2011@hotmail.co.uk
kelseypad@yahoo.co.uk
fryzers@hotmail.com

- The role of the administrators is to vet the contents of messages or photographs to ensure that it is appropriate. If deemed to be inappropriate, then club members **MUST** refer their concerns to the administrators. Administrators have authority to delete other people's posts or comments. They can also ban users of the HR Facebook page.
- All HR Facebook users are responsible for reporting misuse and/or inappropriate content to the club's administrators.
- HR Facebook users must avoid using critical language or actions, such as sarcasm, which could undermine an athlete's self esteem.