



Minchinhampton Golf Club

Social Media Policy

Introduction

Minchinhampton Golf Club (MGC) acknowledges social media is a frequently used method of communication. This Policy sets out how the Club will ensure appropriate good practice guidance is in place for employees, Members and visitors.

For the purpose of this Policy, social media is an interactive online media that allows users to communicate instantly with each other or share data in a public forum. It includes social and business networking websites such as Facebook, Myspace, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. Social media also covers video and image sharing websites such as YouTube, Tik Tok and Flickr, as well as writing or commenting on a blog (whether it is your own or the blog of another person), taking part in discussions on web forums or message boards or even taking part in online polls. This is a constantly changing area with new websites being launched on a regular basis and therefore this list is not exhaustive. The absence of, or lack of, explicit reference to a specific website or service does not limit the extent of the application of this policy.

Purpose

While acknowledging the right of freedom of expression, the Club has an obligation to protect the reputation of employees, Members, and any other users of the Club, as well as the Club as a whole.

This Policy aims to ensure that MGC is not exposed to legal and governance risks through the use of social media and that its reputation is not adversely affected. It also aims to encourage good practice by ensuring Members, employees, Club Officials, and any individual representing MGC understands the guidelines and terms of use of social media sites so as not to breach our policy or offend other Members, employees, visitors, suppliers, associates or freelancers when using social media.

Responsibilities

MGC expects employees and Members to behave in a manner that does not cause any reputational concern and reserves the right to take appropriate action if individuals publish content that does not adhere to this Policy.

MGC employees and Members are reminded that they are expected to operate within both the law and the Club Policy framework in their interactions with social media, just as much as in all other aspects of their working life.

There is also a separate section concerning the use of personal/unofficial channels.

Procedures

MGC'S Official Social Media Channels

Anyone using the Club's official social media channels should:

- use social media where it offers real value to Members, customers, colleagues or clients
- only offer advice, support or comment on topics that are within their area of expertise or responsibility as a Club employee
- be aware of the varied nature of their potential readership – which may include potential, current or past Members, colleagues or business partners
- be transparent – make sure that the official channel used is obviously official, and that readers/correspondents are in no doubt that the author of the content is an employee or Member of the Club
- keep work and personal/official social media accounts and profiles separate
- manage login and account information responsibly. Whilst there will need to be different models for different sites and teams, share team account information where appropriate, and keep individual account information private

Personal and Unofficial Channels:

The Club has no reason to be interested in unofficial/personal social media activity.

However, comments made by MGC employees or Club Officers concerning Club activities or Club business using their unofficial/personal social media channels may be considered subject to the guidelines above for official channels, particularly if:

- it is clearly identified as being made by an employee or Member of MGC in the conversation, channel title or their profile information
- any claims are made to be speaking in a professional capacity or on behalf of the Club

In general, on unofficial/personal channels:

- the Club's name, logos or branding elements should not be used in the name, avatar/picture, or profile information of your channel

- if there is a wish to make it known that the person is a Club employee or Member, where appropriate, a disclaimer should be used, such as ‘the views contained here are my personal views and do not represent the views of Minchinhampton Golf Club’

Employees and Members should avoid publishing material that:

- is liable to cause offence, including photographic material or abusive language
- could be described as harassment or bullying
- could be considered defamatory
- breaches copyright
- discriminates on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political or religious belief
- reveals information which is confidential to the Club or which is not in the public domain. Clarity should be sought from the General Manager if uncertain
- reveals personal information about a Club Member, a MGC employee, a client or customer (data, contact details or photographs) without their permission
- damages the reputation of the Club – the General Manager should be consulted if unsure whether content is appropriate

Employees should also:

- refrain from using social media whilst on work time or on equipment provided by the Club unless it is work related as authorised by their line manager or consistent with this policy.

Any breaches of this policy which are brought to the attention of the Club, will be referred to the General Manager who will investigate in line with MGC’s Disciplinary Policy.

Monitoring

The use of social media will be monitored by the General Manager. Any communications issued on behalf of the Club need to be signed off by the Management team.

Where appropriate, the membership would be approached to consider the social media channels being used – particularly Junior Members – to assess the effectiveness of the communications, whether the messages are being received, and whether there are preferred channels available to increase engagement.

Any concerns identified – social media not being used effectively; messages being issued that are incorrect, potentially damaging the reputation of the Club etc – will be brought to the attention of the Club’s General Manager, the content thoroughly checked through and removed from the relevant site/channel immediately, until any amendments required are made.

Complaints & Disciplinary

The Club will follow the procedures of England Golf, adopting detailed procedures in sympathy with Club circumstances at the time of any complaint. Please see England Golf regulations for detailed guidance.

To ensure consistent application of every disciplinary issue, from any Section of the Club or the membership, any complaint must be in writing and placed before the General Manager in the first instance. A record will be kept for each written instance reported.

The General Manager acts as the Club Compliance Department and will investigate the complaint either to resolve matters or to refer it to the Vice Chairman of the Board for further consideration. See MGC's Disciplinary Policy for more details.

Version Control:

Version	Risk Committee review date	Board endorsement date	Changes
V1		June 2017	
V2.0	12/01/2022		Annual Review
V2.0		31/01/2022	Board Approved – no changes
V2.1	Aug 2023	Sept 2023	Annual Review
V3.0			Published Oct 2023