



Social Media and Digital Communication Policy

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Part 1 – Social Media Guidance

Policy Statement

Fitmums and Friends reserves the right to amend this policy at any time. The most recent version published by the charity shall supersede any previous versions.

Fitmums and Friends is a registered charity that delivers a range of physical activity, health and wellbeing programmes, alongside a network of clubs whose national governing body is England Athletics. This policy applies across all areas of the organisation and is intended to ensure that social media and online communications are used safely, responsibly and in a way that reflects the charity's values.

If any member, participant, volunteer, employee, trustee, parent, carer or supporter has concerns regarding conduct on Fitmums and Friends social media channels, or by individuals connected with Fitmums and Friends activities, they should contact the relevant lead of the session they attend or the Overarching Welfare Lead.

The Overarching Welfare Lead, working with other appropriate officers, staff or trustees, will determine what action is appropriate. Depending on the circumstances, Fitmums and Friends may:

- Request the removal of comments, posts or content
- Restrict or remove access to Fitmums and Friends online channels
- Report users to social media providers
- Initiate internal disciplinary procedures
- Refer concerns to England Athletics, UK Athletics, safeguarding agencies or other external bodies where appropriate
- Report criminal activity to the police

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the appropriate use of social media and other digital communications.

For the purposes of this policy, social media includes but is not limited to:

- Blogs, vlogs and podcasts
- Social networking platforms
- Discussion forums and message boards
- Content-sharing platforms for photographs, videos and audio
- Messaging applications where content is shared with groups
- Any online platform that allows user-generated content or interaction

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals involved with Fitmums and Friends, including members, participants, volunteers, employees, contractors and parents, carers and supporters involved in charity activities.

This policy applies to all Fitmums and Friends activities, including but not limited to:

- Clubs (whose governing body is England Athletics)
- Junior activities
- Activities via programmes such as: Menopause, Bereavement, SocialEYES, Dragon Boat Racing
- Nordic Walking
- Cycling activities
- Events, challenges and fundraising activities

Governance

Fitmums and Friends operates as:

1. A registered charity delivering physical activity, health and wellbeing programmes; and
2. An organisation supporting local clubs governed through England Athletics and UK Athletics rules.

Participants involved in affiliated athletics activities may also be subject to England Athletics and UK Athletics rules, policies and codes of conduct.

Participants involved in activities not governed by England Athletics remain subject to Fitmums and Friends policies, procedures and behavioural expectations.

Codes of Conduct

All individuals involved with Fitmums and Friends are expected to behave respectfully, safely and responsibly, both in person and online.

Those participating in athletics activities may also be subject to relevant England Athletics and UK Athletics Codes of Conduct, including those applicable to:

- Athletes
- Coaches
- Officials
- Team Managers
- Parents and Carers

Online behaviour is considered part of these expectations and may be subject to disciplinary action where appropriate.

Relevant policies and codes of conduct are available on the Fitmums and Friends website.

<https://fitmums.org.uk/uploads/031671f2-495a-8893-2a1e-c2615fc79fa2.pdf>

Social Media

Fitmums and Friends recognises that social media can be a valuable tool to:

- Build relationships with members, participants and communities
- Promote activities, events and services
- Celebrate achievements and success stories
- Raise awareness of the charity's work
- Share health and wellbeing information
- Support fundraising activities
- Respond to enquiries

The primary sources of such communication are the club's social media accounts at:

- Facebook
 - Main page (<https://www.facebook.com/fitmumsnetwork/>)
 - Club pages (one for each active club plus Cycle Squad and Nordic Walking)
 - Juniors page (<https://www.facebook.com/fitmumsjuniors/>)
 - Challenges page (<https://www.facebook.com/FitmumsChallenges>)
 - Together in Grief (<https://www.facebook.com/togetheringrief>)
- Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/fitmumsandfriends/>)
- LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/fitmums-and-friends>)
- YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnH_PJF3vPwz44HXy_xHM-Q)

Fitmums and Friends maintains a range of social media channels covering the charity as a whole but also each local club, junior activities, challenges/events, programme-specific activities, fundraising and community engagement.

New social media channels representing Fitmums and Friends may only be established with approval from the Communications Lead or delegated representative. The charity's social media presence complements the Fitmums and Friends website.

Guidance and policies for each individual platform can be found at:

- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/policies>
- Instagram
[https://help.instagram.com/325135857663734/?helpref=hc_fnav&bc\[0\]=Instagram%20Help&bc\[1\]=Privacy%20and%20Safety%20Center](https://help.instagram.com/325135857663734/?helpref=hc_fnav&bc[0]=Instagram%20Help&bc[1]=Privacy%20and%20Safety%20Center)
- LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/legal/professional-community-policies?trk=hc-hp-support>
- YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/about/policies/#community-guidelines>

Personal Conduct

Fitmums and Friends respects the right of individuals to maintain personal social media accounts and participate in online discussions.

However, everyone connected with the charity has a responsibility to protect:

- The reputation of Fitmums and Friends
- The welfare of participants and members
- Confidential information
- The charity's values and objectives

Individuals holding positions of responsibility, including trustees, club coordinators, coaches, instructors, leaders and staff, should make clear when expressing personal opinions online that these views are their own.

The following statement is recommended:

"The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Fitmums and Friends."

Those in positions of responsibility should avoid making public comments on matters where they may be perceived to be speaking on behalf of the charity unless authorised to do so.

Standards of Behaviour

Communications made in a personal capacity must not:

a. Bring Fitmums and Friends into disrepute

This includes:

- Defamatory statements
- False allegations
- Offensive content
- Sharing inappropriate images
- Supporting or endorsing discriminatory or abusive content

b. Breach Confidentiality

This includes:

- Sharing personal information about participants, members, volunteers or staff
- Sharing confidential organisational information
- Disclosing safeguarding concerns or investigations

c. Breach Copyright

This includes:

- Using images without permission
- Using copyrighted materials without authorisation
- Failing to acknowledge sources where required

d. Constitute Bullying, Harassment or Discrimination

This includes:

- Offensive or derogatory comments
- Personal attacks
- Cyberbullying
- Harassment
- Hate speech
- Discrimination based on age, disability, race, nationality, religion, belief, sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, or sexual orientation

No comment should be made that:

- Exposes a person to hatred, ridicule or contempt
- Causes them to be shunned or avoided
- Damages their reputation
- Undermines their professional standing

All use of social media platforms must comply with the terms and conditions of those platforms.

e. Personal Websites, Blogs and Podcasts

Individuals may operate personal websites, blogs, podcasts or other digital channels.

However:

- The Fitmums and Friends name, branding and logos must not be used without permission.
- Content must not imply endorsement by the charity unless authorised.
- Confidential information must not be disclosed.
- Individuals discussing Fitmums and Friends should make clear that opinions expressed are personal.

Contact with Children and Young People

Adults must not use personal messaging functions on social media platforms to communicate privately with children or young people under the age of 18 participating in Fitmums and Friends activities.

Where communication is necessary, approved communication channels and safeguarding procedures must be followed.

Adults should ensure that all public online interactions with children and young people remain appropriate and consistent with safeguarding expectations.

Security and Identity Protection

Individuals should be aware that social media is a public environment and should not assume content will remain private.

Users are encouraged to:

- Use strong passwords
- Enable two-factor authentication where available
- Review privacy settings regularly
- Avoid sharing personal information unnecessarily

Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to social media use should be reported to the Communications Lead or Overarching Welfare Officer.

Concerns may include:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Inappropriate contact with children or young people
- Safeguarding concerns
- Reputational damage
- Breaches of this policy

Concerns relating specifically to athletics activities may also be referred to England Athletics or UK Athletics in accordance with their procedures.

If criminal activity is suspected, this should be reported to the police.

Disciplinary Action

Breaches of this policy may result in:

- Removal of content
- Restriction from social media channels
- Suspension from activities or programmes
- Removal from volunteer roles
- Termination of programme participation
- Termination of club membership
- Referral to England Athletics or UK Athletics where applicable
- Referral to statutory authorities

The severity of any action will depend on the nature of the breach.

Part 2 – Social Media Content Sharing

Fitmums and Friends regularly receives requests to share content from external organisations and individuals. The charity will determine whether content aligns with its values, charitable objectives and audience interests.

1. Commercial Organisations

Commercial content may be shared where:

- It provides a benefit or discount to Fitmums and Friends members or participants
- It supports the charity's objectives
- It has relevance to the Fitmums and Friends community

The charity reserves the right to request a charitable donation in exchange for promotional activity.

Commercial advertising may be refused where it conflicts with the charity's values, objectives or partnerships.

2. Physical Activity and Sporting Events

Fitmums and Friends may share information about athletics, running, walking, cycling, paddle-sport, wellbeing events and community participation activities.

Priority will be given to:

- Events organised by partner organisations including but not limited to Curlys, Dove House, Tape2Tape, CRUK.
- Events that support participation and inclusion
- Events that are popular with members and participants
- Events where Fitmums and Friends is represented or involved

3. Community Events

Community events may be promoted where they:

- Support health and wellbeing
- Benefit local communities
- Align with the charity's values and objectives

Promotion may occur through central or local channels as appropriate.

Part 3 – Use of Images and AI-Generated Content

Policy Statement

Fitmums and Friends is committed to ensuring that all visual communications reflect honesty, dignity, transparency and authenticity.

To maintain public trust and confidence, the charity prohibits the use of AI-generated images that falsely represent people, activities, programmes or outcomes.

This policy applies across:

- All local clubs
- Charity programmes
- Fundraising campaigns
- Websites
- Social media
- Marketing materials
- Publications
- Presentations
- Internal communications

Approved Images

Images used by the charity must be:

- Genuine photographs
- Taken by staff, volunteers, members, participants or commissioned photographers
- Representative of actual activities and events
- Used with appropriate consent

Prohibited Uses

AI-generated images must not be used to depict:

- Participants
- Members
- Beneficiaries
- Volunteers
- Communities
- Staff
- Events
- Outcomes that did not occur
- Programmes
- Activities

Images must never create a misleading impression of the charity's work or impact.

Ethical Principles

This policy exists to:

- Protect public trust
- Uphold honesty and transparency
- Respect the dignity of participants and communities
- Prevent misleading representations
- Ensure funders and supporters can trust published content

Limited Exceptions

In exceptional circumstances, AI-generated images may be used only where:

- The image is clearly illustrative or conceptual
- It does not depict real people or real events
- It is clearly identified as AI-generated
- Written approval has been obtained from the Communications Lead or delegated representative

AI-generated images must never be used in:

- Fundraising appeals
- Impact reporting
- Beneficiary or participant storytelling
- Case studies
- Safeguarding-related communications

Responsibilities

Communications Team

Responsible for ensuring compliance across communications and marketing activities.

Staff, Volunteers and Trustees

Responsible for using only approved and appropriately licensed images and respecting participant consent preferences.

Leadership Team

Responsible for oversight, governance and approval of any exceptional use cases.

Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Removal of content
- Corrective action
- Additional training
- Disciplinary procedures where appropriate

Detail of Policy Reviews

[illegible]

