



## Social Media Policy

Gosport Borough Hockey Club (GBHC) is committed to the principles of equality in sport as outlined by the England Hockey Board (EHB). GBHC aims to ensure that all people within the hockey family, irrespective of their age, gender, ability, race, religion or belief, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, social status or sexual orientation, have a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in hockey at all levels and in all roles.

GBHC will ensure that there will be open access to all those who wish to participate in any aspect of hockey activities and that they are treated fairly, equally and with respect.

To embed these principles within GBHC, the Club has incorporated the advice from EHB and issued a Social Media Policy for their members.

Acceptance of this Policy is a requirement and condition of an individual's membership.

Breach of the Social Media Policy may lead to disciplinary action by the Club.

### Social Media Guidance

GBHC actively uses social media to promote the Club and its activities to its members, and building relationships with people and communities.

A positive social media environment will help promote the sport, raise its profile and engage with various hockey enthusiasts. It is extremely important to the Club as it will help Club by:

- Promoting club activities and events e.g. open days, taster sessions, training times, matches, competitions, and social occasions.
- Provide club news and updates e.g. match reports, team news, successes/achievements, and events
- Communicate with the media to raise awareness and build profile e.g. provide interviews with players, coaches and club members
- Attract and secure new sponsors or sources of funding to clubs, players or coaches by raising the profile of these partnerships
- Communicate with club members and other hockey clubs
- Post photos and video content from matches and club events
- Provide updates of rule changes / implementation

Conversely, there are as many challenges and potential pitfalls of using social media as there are opportunities. This can be very damaging if the content is viewed negatively.

You may also think that a post, tweet, video and photo may be visible to a limited number of selected people, but often the content on social media that people believe to be visible to only a limited number of selected 'followers' still ends up in other public domains.

There have been a number of high profile examples in a sporting context where social media has been misused, including posting content or comments that are considered inappropriate,

inflammatory, abusive, indecent or offensive; publishing or posting confidential information; posting content or comments that bring the 'game into disrepute' under rules and regulations and leads to disciplinary action.

In light of the opportunities, and the potential pitfalls, of social media, the Club has incorporated a list of 'do's and don'ts'. Ultimately, the most practical advice is 'be sensible about what you post'.

The following list has been compiled from social media guidelines used by other sporting organisations, including those recently circulated by the British Olympic Association in advance of London 2012.

### **Dos**

- Be authentic, natural, personable and insightful.
- Use tasteful humour when appropriate.
- Do engage with other players / Club members.
- Do pause and think about what you are saying. Engage your brain before you type and think about the impact of what you say.
- Do be careful, respectful and positive. You are personally responsible for what you post. If in doubt, don't post it.
- Do think about your image – 'what do I want people to think about me or my club?'
- Do consider who you are interacting with – you will likely come into contact online with under 18s. Familiarise yourself with safeguarding regulations in relation to engaging with under 18s.
- Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, and confidential information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully.
- Be aware of imposters.

### **Don'ts**

- Don't post content that discriminates against individuals or groups on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- Don't write anything on social media channels that you wouldn't feel comfortable seeing in a newspaper or hearing on TV. Everything you write is treated as a direct quote from you i.e. 'Don't tweet what you wouldn't say to your mum/gran'
- Don't speak negatively about team mates, club members, competitors, officials or governing bodies. Never use slurs, personal insults or obscenity. Be respectful.
- Don't engage in on-line disputes and don't allow family or friends to argue on your behalf.
- Don't post pictures or statements that are not in keeping with the conduct and ethics of the Club

If any Club Member or other person connected to the Club either directly or indirectly feels that any social media posting on GBHC forums falls below the standards set by the Club, they are encouraged to bring this to the notice of the Committee.