**Battersea Society**

**Social Media Policy**

1. **Purpose**

Participation in social media is a key mechanism for building engagement with our members and the wider community. This policy seeks to minimise any risks to the Society through use of social media. It aims to encourage trustees and committee members to use social media in a positive and influential way, whilst recognising their responsibility to preserve the Society’s reputation, to be respectful to others, and to adhere to data and privacy obligations. It provides information on the appropriate use of social media when working for or representing the Society, or when directly or indirectly referencing it.

1. **Scope**

Social media refers to any online tool which encourages participation and exchanges.  This includes blogs, discussion forums, and instant messaging. The policy applies to the use of the Society’s social media accounts, and also to blog entries on the Society’s website. It also applies to personal social media accounts which can identify the owner as being a trustee or committee member. We recognise that any personal social media account which can identify a person as being associated with the Society has the potential to harm our reputation.

1. **Principles**
2. Social networking is an important way of connecting with our members and the wider community.
3. Individuals are personally responsible for what they communicate on or through social media. and they must adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in this policy.
4. This policy does not intend to limit freedom of speech. But when interacting with people via social media, we must respect their views and experiences, and treat them with the same respect and understanding as anyone we meet in person. Use of social media must not infringe on the rights, dignity or privacy of any of our members or the wider public.

**4. Responsibilities**

Trustees and committee members must:

* ensure that any use of social media conforms with this and other relevant policies;
* gain permission before creating an account using the Society’s name and logo;
* regularly monitor, update and manage the content they have posted;
* ensure that posts made do not threaten, harass or bully anyone;
* report any incidents or concerns to the Social Media Officer (currently Mark Gitsham).

1. **Advice and Reporting**

You must seek the permission of our Social Media Officer, who is responsible for the day-to-day management of our social media channels, before you post any content on them. No new accounts, groups or pages should be set up without his/her approval. If you are unsure about whether something you propose to do might breach this policy, you should seek advice from the Social Media Officer.

1. **Guidelines for the responsible use of social media**
2. Trustees and committee members who have personal social media accounts must be aware of their association with the Society. If they refer to the Society, they must make clear that they are speaking in a personal capacity.  They should not declare, imply or indicate that any content or views are representative of those of the Society.
3. ‘Liking’, ‘sharing’, ‘retweeting’ or any other activity that could be seen to endorse social media content that breaches this or any other of the Society’s policies may be regarded in the same way as if the individual had posted the content.
4. The Society does not have any affiliation with or links to political parties; and trustees and committee members must take care to sustain our party-political neutrality. Those who are politically active must make a clear distinction between their personal political identity and that of the Society, and avoid potential conflicts of interest.
5. Care should be taken to avoid language which may be deemed as offensive to others, including:

* anything that is or could be construed as bullying, harassment, or discriminatory;
* untrue or misleading statements;
* inappropriate pictures or videos;
* liking, sharing or retweeting any content that includes the above.

1. Content should not be posted without the permission of the person that created it or who owns the copyright. Advice on copyright can be found on many university websites, including UCL’s (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/learning-teaching-support/ucl-copyright-advice/copyright-depth/avoiding-copyright-infringement>). Similarly, images of another person should not be posted without seeking their consent.
2. The Society’s accounts should not be used to promote or endorse products or services other than those provided by the Society.
3. Social media should not be used to gather personal and sensitive data, and/or to share information about people, in line with our data protection and privacy policies.
4. **Abusive behaviour**

We will not tolerate, engage, or respond to abusive communications or attacks on our work or on our trustees, committee members or members at large relating to any of the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race, religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Any such abuse should be reported immediately to the Social Media Officer immediately. He/she will provide advice and support and take prompt action, reporting to the Board as appropriate.

1. **Monitoring**

We shall monitor our social media accounts and remove any content deemed to be in breach of this policy. We will also monitor references to the Society online and will act where necessary to protect our reputation.

1. **Breach of this policy**

Any content on social media that breaches this policy should be reported to the Social Media Officer. Individuals may be asked to remove content from either an official account and/or from a personal account if we find that it breaches this or any other internal policies.

*April 2024*