

# HAMPSHIRE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



### **Introduction:**

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, X [formerly Twitter], LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube and BlueSky.

This policy is intended for all Members of Hampshire Genealogical Society (HGS); this includes Trustees, Post-holders, Group Organisers and all Volunteers. Before engaging in social media activity, you must read this policy, which contains guidance that will help you adhere to our standards. It is a comprehensive guide for use of HGS's social media and for Members interacting with it in either a personal capacity or as a representative of the Society.

### **Our Statement:**

In today's world, social media is essential to the success of communicating HGS's activities and events. It is important for some HGS Volunteers to participate in social media to engage with our Members and wider audience to raise the profile of the Society's work. This policy applies to all social media platforms used on behalf of HGS by HGS authorised representatives.

HGS currently uses:

- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/HGSfamilyhistory/>
- BlueSky [hgs1@bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/hgs1@bsky.social)

### **Our Expectations:**

It is expected that all HGS Members using social media will endeavour to make positive and helpful comments regarding the Society. Participation in social media on behalf of HGS is not a right, but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. Failure to comply with this policy could expose HGS to reputational damage as well as putting Volunteers and Members at risk.

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### **Social media helps us to:**

- Promote our events and meetings,
- Share our news and updates with our members,
- Engage in conversations with our followers,
- Celebrate our successes,
- Advertise job and volunteering opportunities,
- Increase and maintain our membership,
- Build an online supportive community,
- Raise our public profile and strengthen our reputation.

### **Why do we need a social media policy?**

Social media is a fast-moving online world and, whilst it brings our Society to a wide audience, it can also present risks. We expect that all Volunteers using social media represent and reflect HGS in the best way possible. It is also important to mitigate risks (such as reputational or legal issues) associated with the use of social media to protect our Members, Volunteers, interests and reputation.

While we encourage the use of social media to support our communications strategy or plans, we have important standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe and adhere to. The difference between a personal and professional opinion can also be blurred on social media, particularly if discussing issues relating to HGS's activities. Publication and commentary on social media carry similar obligations, and are subject to the same laws, as other kinds of publication and commentary in the public domain.

### **How it works:**

- The HGS Vice Chairman is currently nominated as the HGS Social Media Administrator, is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of Facebook, and has full access to the account. The position is supported by the HGS Secretary.
- The Administrator for BlueSky is currently our Bookstall Manager who uses it to promote HGS when visiting shows and events. The position is also supported by the HGS Secretary.
- HGS Members, Volunteers, Group Organisers and Trustees who have questions about any aspect of Facebook or BlueSky, should speak to the relevant HGS Administrators.
- HGS Members, Volunteers, Group Organisers and Trustees can request posts and notifications to be published on HGS official social media channels on their behalf.
- No other HGS Member, Volunteer, Group Organiser or Trustee is permitted to post content on HGS's social media platforms without the permission of the HGS Social Media Administrators.
- The Administrators of HGS's social media platforms report regularly to the Communications Committee and thence to the Executive Committee.
- The Administrators reserve the right to block and/or remove anyone found to be in breach of HGS expectations [See Pg.1].

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**Administrators of HGS social media platforms must agree:**

- not to insult, harass, bully or intimidate individuals or organisations,
- to respond to others' opinions respectfully and professionally,
- not to do anything that breaches the terms of their voluntary role,
- to acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly,
- to disclose conflicts of interest where able,
- not to knowingly post inaccurate information,
- to link to online references and original source materials directly,
- to honour copyright rules stating that anything which is used must show where it was obtained from with the correct source citation or 'Creative Commons License',
- to be considerate, kind and fair,
- to always be mindful that their activity on social media does no harm to HGS or to others,
- to champion HGS, its services and its benefits of membership,
- to answer questions as swiftly as possible, preferably within hours, in order to help and engage with users and followers,
- to uphold best practices for channel security with secure passwords that regularly change, and
- never to give out the Facebook password.

Because of the nature of social media, this policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, about once a year. It will be amended as necessary, following consultations with Trustees and Post-holders, taking into consideration any comments or concerns raised by any HGS Member.

	<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Approved and signed on behalf of the Trustees by:</b>
<b>Signed:</b>	<i>Kay E. Lovell</i>	<i>Anthony Sinclair</i>
<b>Print Name:</b>	KAY E. LOVELL	ANTHONY SINCLAIR
<b>Position:</b>	Vice Chairman	Chairman
<b>Date:</b>	27th March 2025	1st April 2025