



Firwood Waterloo Rugby Club

Social Media Policy

The rise in social media has improved communications between individuals and allows Firwood Waterloo a free opportunity to reach many hundreds of people and raise our profile. Firwood Waterloo members have already set up a number of social media accounts and the club is already starting to reap the benefits of an increased profile, especially for the teams and sections that would normally not get coverage in newspapers.

Social media also has its pitfalls and as a club we need to be mindful of the negative impact an awry comment on Facebook or Twitter can have on the reputation of Firwood Waterloo and all its members.

To help prevent the club from becoming the latest social media horror story it has put together a policy, some guidelines on use and helpful hints and tips for the uninitiated.

Social Media Policy

Official accounts

- Social media includes all paid for or free online and smart phone applications used to communicate between one or more individuals or organisations. Examples are, but the policy is not limited to; Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram.
- Firwood Waterloo supports, and encourages, each section and/or team setting up and running their own social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube channels.
- The social media policy applies to official social media accounts that teams, sections or individuals have set-up to promote their activities under the banner of Firwood Waterloo or shortened to Waterloo. They are classed as official Firwood Waterloo accounts and must adhere to the social media policy.
- All official Firwood Waterloo accounts must adhere to the social media policy to help prevent the club and its members being brought into disrepute and the safeguard of its members – especially the mini and junior section.
- Official social media accounts are to be used primarily to promote the activities of Firwood Waterloo's teams, sections, individual players/members or the club.

- Social media accounts cannot be used to promote the section's, team's or individual political, religious or commercial interests (other than official sponsors). This does not include fundraising for the club or registered charities.
- Social media accounts can be used, within reason, to promote the work of the club's, section's or team's official sponsors.
- Where possible the manager of the social media account should not be the section or team sponsor. However if this is unavoidable they must ensure they adopt a measured approach to promoting the work of their business.
- The social media accounts should not be used to voice any negative opinions the section, team or individuals may have about Firwood Waterloo as a club or any of its members, sections or teams. There are better and more productive forums for raising such issues.
- Social media accounts should be interactive and sections and teams can promote the activities of other social media users as long as it falls within the requirements of the social media policy.

Setting up an official account

- Permission does not need to be sought to set up an official social media account however the account administrator must:
 - Ensure there are no duplicate accounts, this will maximise followers and avoid confusion
 - Share the account name and password with the club's social media coordinators (Raychel Strefford will keep secure records at the club and can be contacted on 0151 924 4552 or events@waterloorugby.com)
 - Agree to follow Firwood Waterloo's social media policy

Admin

- Sections, teams and individuals are responsible for the day to day administration of the social media account they set up.
- The section or team 'own' the social media accounts in their name rather than any one individual.
- The accounts for age groups should be passed down to the incoming team at the end of the season and the social media accounts for adult teams or sections should be tracked or managed within their committees.

- Firwood Waterloo's social media coordinators will not interfere or act as administrators for the social media accounts that have been set up. They will only step in if the social media policy has been breached and/or to help transfer the administration of the accounts at the end of the season. Again, as the coordinators may change from time to time, if you need help contact Raychel Strefford in the first instance.

Safe guarding

- The account holders should explain their use of social media to the members and/or parents within their section and teams. Copies of this policy are available in the office.
- The account holders must be mindful of an individual's wishes, or their parents' wishes if under 18, before placing photos on of them on open social media networks.
- The account holders must be mindful of an individual's wishes, or their parents' wishes if under 18, before mentioning them on open social media networks.
- The account holder must not publish comments or incriminating photographs of an individual or club member that would compromise their integrity within their community. This point is not to prevent the 'fun' photographs from a social night out but for those incidents that should 'stay on tour'.

June 2019

Date for review June 2022

Hints and tips

- Think about what you want social media to help you achieve? Publicity, new members or keeping current members informed and involved. If for publicity you will need open networks, if for keeping members informed you will need closed networks (like private groups on Facebook). You can have a combination of the two.
- Keep the club website <https://firwoodwaterloofc.rfu.club/> updated and use it as the main webpage to link your news to, it will help keep your social media sights lean and drive people to the club's website. It is a good idea to have the same people administering both your web and social media presences.
- For twitter keep it clean and lean, you are more likely to have it retweeted and people interact.
- Social media is all about interaction, so set up a number of administrators for the social media accounts, it helps spread the work load and generate more tweets or updates on Facebook pages.
- Do not use official Firwood Waterloo social media accounts while intoxicated – you may think you're the funniest thing since a comedy night at the club but invariably it just does not make sense.
- Ask other rugby clubs, friends, family and Firwood Waterloo social media accounts to retweet (RT) your messages or like your Facebook page etc, it will help you build followers.
- On twitter watch out how the hash tags can end up reading, if you need an example google Susan Boyle's Album Party. It may get lots of retweets but not for the right reason.

Useful links and apps

- There are useful smart phone applications such as bitly that help shorten the email link for Twitter.
- There are now smart phone applications that can edit videos to make them a lot shorter – same principle as twitter clean and lean.
- If you want to see how far your tweet went or how many people you are reaching via Facebook, there are some useful webpage like Tweetreach and a Facebook page app for smart phones.