# Sunderland Strollers

## Online Safety and Social Media Policy

### Introduction

1. Social media is one of the ways Sunderland Strollers Running Club (the "**Club**") communicates with its Members. It keeps Members involved and helps to foster an inclusive and supportive community. This policy relates to how the Club and its Members use and interact with social media and the behaviours expected of Members when using those platforms.

### How we use Social Media

2. The Club currently uses Facebook and Instagram platforms. This includes both closed groups and public accounts. The kind of information we will share includes but is not limited to:

    - Promoting the Club (marketing purposes);
    - Information about training sessions;
    - Information about events, both run by the Club and run by external organisations; and
    - Other Club-related news and announcements.

3. The Club Instagram account is @sunderland_strollers. This is a public account for promoting the Club and its events.

4. The Club Facebook page is called Sunderland Strollers Running Club and can be found here. Again, this is a public account for promoting the Club and its events.

5. Closed Facebook groups include:

    - A closed Facebook group for Members;
    - A closed beginners Facebook group (created fresh each year for a new cohort of beginners);
    - A closed beginners group leaders Facebook group (created fresh each year);
    - A closed and private group for the Club Committee used for organisation and voting purposes; and
    - Various other closed groups designed to facilitate events or volunteering.

6. The Club also uses an app called Spond for alerting Members to events and allowing Members to respond to indicate which events they will be attending. The access code is **LVRAN**. The Club also uses Spond for the beginners group commencing in January each year. Whilst technically not a social media platform, it is a platform where Members can interact with each other.

### Managing current and new Facebook groups

7. There are also a number of other Facebook groups set up by Members for specific events. The Social Media Officer will keep a record of these groups and the admins who run and monitor them.

8. The Social Media Officer should be made aware of any new groups or pages created using the Sunderland Strollers name or logo or for events run by the Club, for example The Pier to Pier or Urban Ultra.

9. The Social Media Officer (or other equivalent Club Committee Member) reserves the right to request the closure of any group which is not in use and not currently being managed. They may also request the closure of any groups that are being mis-used or which was created without consultation with the Social Media Officer.

## Admins and monitoring

10. The Club operates social media under a devolved responsibility model. This means that the Social Media Officer will not have sight of every single post and comment on each group. The Club has a number of volunteer admins who operate under the guidance of the Social Media Officer.

11. Each Facebook group should have at least two admins who run and monitor the groups in line with this policy and England Athletics' ("**EA**") Senior Athlete's Code of Conduct (the "**Code of Conduct**"). Admins are there to ensure that the correct people have access to the group (and to approve new Members) and that information and comments shared are appropriate for that particular group.

12. The Club is run by volunteers and as such, Facebook and Instagram channels are not monitored 24/7 and the Club expects a certain level of self-regulation when using these channels.

13. Admins will use their own discretion to determine whether posts on the Club's social media channels breach this policy and, if in doubt, will refer the matter to the Club Committee. The Club reserves the right to hide or delete comments made on its channels, as well as block users who persistently go against these guidelines or require that user's posts to be subject to prior approval before going live.

14. As part of the Club Constitution and in line with the Club's Grievance and Disciplinary Policy the Secretary or Committee Members, as appropriate, will decide on the requirement for any further action in the event of any breach.

15. The Club will offer alternative ways of contacting it outside of social media (please see useful contacts below and the Club's website).

16. If you have questions, need support, or guidance regarding social media use the admins, Social Media Officer or equivalent Club Committee Member will endeavour to assist.

## Online behaviour and interactions

17. We want the Club's social media channels to reflect the values we uphold as an organisation and the expectations set out in the Code of Conduct as signed by all Members.

18. In the main, the Club would simply ask its Members to use their common sense before posting and/or commenting. Most, importantly the Club wants all of its Members to enjoy interacting with the Club, whether that is online or in person.

19. To make this possible, we ask that you follow the guidelines below when interacting on the Club's social media channels:

- Be respectful of others and their opinions at all times. We are all different and have different experiences, and we are all adults;
- Stay on topic. Your comments should be related to the topics on our social channels;
- Do not post content unless it belongs to you, or you have the proper permission from its rightful owner. This includes photos and videos;
- Do not post content which is dishonest, untrue, unkind or misleading;
- If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, make this clear;

- Do not discriminate or promote discrimination based on race, sex, religion, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or other protected characteristics;
- Do not make personal attacks (either directly or indirectly) in your comments;
- Don't speak negatively about the Club, other Members, competitors, officials or governing bodies. Be professional and respectful;
- Don't engage in on-line disputes and don't allow family or friends to argue on your behalf;
- Do not post content that could be seen to be defamatory, libellous, obscene, inflammatory, offensive, harassing, abusive, hateful, harmful, threatening, profane or personally abusive to the Club itself or any of its Members;
- Do not post adverts or promote commercial products or services; the only exception is in response to a request for a specific recommendation from another Member;
- Members are permitted to occasionally offer second-hand items for sale; where permitted this can include race entries;
- Do not breach any of the terms of the social media platforms themselves; and
- Ensure you are aware of and follow the England Athletics Code of Conduct.

## Related links to policies and guidelines

England Athletics Codes of Conduct
Sunderland Strollers Club Constitution

## Useful contacts

Social Media Officer – Jenna Maynard
Secretary – Liz Coley secretary@sunderlandstrollers.co.uk
Welfare Officer – Sarah Lake welfare@sunderlandstrollers.co.uk
England Athletics Welfare: welfare@englandathletics.org

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| This policy was first created: | DATE: July 2025 | By: SJ Gorman / Sarah Lake |
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| This revised policy was amended: | DATE: 31 August 2026 | By: Secretary |
| This policy was signed off: | DATE: 7 September 2026 | By: Committee |