Social Media Policy

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by employees, users and members of St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Sheffield companies (hereinafter called "St Andrew's URC").

For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including blogs, wikis and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

St Andrew's URC employees, users and members are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. St Andrew's URC employees, users and members are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as St Andrew's URC employees, users or members (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment, worship or other activities in a personal blog or post on topics unrelated to St Andrew's URC).

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that St Andrew's URC employees, users and members must otherwise follow.

Setting up Social Media

Assistance in setting up social media accounts and their settings can be obtained from St Andrew's URC's Social Media team.

Social media identities, logon IDs and user names may not use St Andrew's URC's name without prior approval from the Management Team.

Confidentiality

By its very nature, St Andrew's URC, its employees, users and members are privy to a wide variety of personal details and information. It is acceptable to talk about your work or other activities and to have a dialogue with the community, but it is unacceptable to publish any confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our current work and finances, individuals' details such as addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses, and any and all other private and personal information.

Protect your own privacy

Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the St Andrew's URC website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see.

Be Honest

Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are, and identify that you work for St Andrew's URC. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty – or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. But also be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

Respect copyright laws

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others, including written or performed material. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such

work to the original author or source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

Respect your audience, St Andrew's URC, and your colleagues

The public in general, and St Andrew's URC's employees, users and members, reflect diverse ethnic and spiritual backgrounds, beliefs, traditions, values, traditions and opinions. Do not say anything contradictory or in conflict with the St Andrew's URC website. Be respectful. This includes both the legally defined protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Gender, Gender Reassignment, Race, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Religion or Belief, and Sexual Orientation, and also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory such as politics and civil society. Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of St Andrew's URC.

Protect St Andrew's URC user groups

User groups should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify a user group or member of a user group without permission. It is acceptable to discuss general details about kinds of projects and to use non-identifying pseudonyms (e.g. "a member", "a guest") as long as the information provided does not make it easy for someone to identify the group or individual.

Controversial Issues

If you see misrepresentations made about St Andrew's URC in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure that what you say is factual and does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments. Online browls may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end. Do not try to settle scores or goad anyone into inflammatory debates.

Be the first to respond to your own mistakes

If you make an error, be honest about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as copyrighted material or a defamatory comment), deal with it quickly; it is often better to remove it immediately rather than face the possibility of legal action.

Think About Consequences

For example, consider what might happen if a St Andrew's URC employee, user or member is in a meeting or conversation, and someone else produces a hard-copy of something you have posted of your blog and says "This person at St Andrew's URC says that this Church treats people badly." Saying "There is room for improvement" or – better still – suggesting improvements is fine. Saying "St Andrew's URC treats people badly" is not. Using your blog to insult or embarrass St Andrew's URC employees, users or members is dangerous and ill-advised.

Disclaimers

Wherever practical, you must use a disclaimer saying that while you work for, use or are a member of St Andrew's URC, anything you publish is your personal opinion, and not necessarily the opinions of St Andrew's URC.

The Social Media team can provide you with applicable disclaimer language and assist with determining where and how to use it.

Enforcement

Policy violations will be subject to action, at the discretion of the Management Team and Elders.

This policy is reviewed annually.