

Horse Rangers Association Social & Digital Media Policy

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Why this policy exists

Social media and digital communications can bring significant benefits to the Horse Rangers Association (HRA). In particular to organise our activities, raise awareness of the charity and our events, and build relationships with current and potential Members and Volunteers. It can also help form friendships among our service users which we positively encourage.

We recognise the value of this to help us meet our charitable aims and we want to support everyone involved with HRA to use digital and social media in appropriate, inclusive and creative ways. HRA is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults and we are all ambassadors for HRA and any social media activity that we engage in reflects on our charity.

This policy explains how employees, adult members, volunteers and young members can use social media safely and effectively. It sets out how to behave appropriately when using HRA social media accounts and how to minimise the risks of offending people. It also explains the rules about using personal social media accounts in relation to HRA activities.

This policy should be read alongside other key policies outlined below.

You'll find a list of useful terms and phrases relating to social media at the end of this document. *These words will be in italics throughout the policy.*

Who is covered by the policy

This policy applies to all Trustees, paid staff, members and volunteers and their families.

For the purpose of this policy "Members" are defined as all adults and young people who belong to a HRA squadron, and "Volunteers" are defined as all RDA instructors and HRA volunteers.

Digital and social media this policy covers

Sites and services include (but are not limited to):

- Popular social networks like **Facebook** and **Twitter**
- Photographic social networks like **Pinterest**, **Instagram** and **Flickr**
- Video social network sites like **You Tube**
- Professional social network sites like **LinkedIn**
- Blog and discussion sites
- Email communications

- SMS text and instant message services such as **WhatsApp, Snapchat and Facebook Messenger**

See Appendix A for a list of current HRA email and social media accounts to be used for HRA matters.

What happens in the event of a breach of the policy

Any breaches must be reported to the Development Manager/Director who will decide on appropriate action. Serious or repeated breaches of the policy may result in a member being asked to leave the organisation.

Responsibilities

Everyone who operates and contributes to a HRA social media account or who uses their personal social media accounts in relation to HRA activities has some responsibility for implementing this policy.

However, these people have key responsibilities:

- The **Director** and **Development Manager** are ultimately responsible for ensuring that HRA trustees, staff, volunteers and service users are given guidance on how to use digital and social media safely in line with the charity's aims. This covers training, awareness raising and support.
- The **Squadron Commandants** are responsible for ensuring that HRA and its members use social media safely, appropriately and in line with the charity's objectives.
- **The Director** is responsible for providing HRA digital and social media platforms and tools. They are also responsible for monitoring HRA social media channels for any inappropriate use.

Reporting lines for any abuse of digital or social media

- Complaints of misuse will be dealt with by the Director
- Any complaint about staff or volunteer misuse must be referred to the Director
- Any concerns or complaints about service-user misuse must be referred to the Director

Digital and social media use for trustees, paid staff, adult members and volunteers

This part of the social media policy covers all use of digital and social media accounts owned and run by or on behalf of HRA.

1. Purpose of HRA using digital and social media

HRA's digital communications and social media accounts may be used for many different purposes. In general, trustees, paid staff, members or volunteers should only share information,

post updates, messages or otherwise use these accounts when that use is clearly in line with HRA overall objectives.

For instance you may use the HRA digital and social media accounts to:

- Respond to enquiries about HRA and requests for information
- Share articles, images and video content created by HRA
- Share articles, video, media and other content relevant to HRA but created by others
- Share HRA activity and event information with HRA service users

Digital and social media is a powerful tool that can change quickly. Any ideas on new ways to use it to positively impact HRA work are encouraged and must be put to the Director before implementing.

HRA will only use communications through digital and social media for appropriate aged members. HRA does not encourage the under-age use of social media. For Young Members under 13 years old we will communicate with them via their parent or guardian.

2. Authorised users

- Only people who have been authorised to use the organisation's email and social networking accounts may do so.
- Squadron commandants are authorised to use their respective Squadron Facebook pages and email accounts.
- Authorisation is provided by the Director
- Allowing only designated people to use these accounts ensures that HRA's communications are consistent, cohesive and appropriate.

3. Creating digital and social media accounts

- New social media and email accounts in the organisation's name must not be created unless approved by the Director
- If there is a case to be made for opening a new account, profile or Facebook page, staff and volunteers should raise this with the Director

4. Inappropriate content and uses

HRA digital and social media accounts must not be used to share or spread inappropriate content, or to take part in any activities that could bring HRA into disrepute.

When sharing interesting images, videos, articles or piece of content, staff and volunteers should always review the content thoroughly and should not post a link based solely on the headline.

Further guidelines on appropriate use can be found below.

5. Basic Principles

Trustees, paid staff and volunteers in a position of trust must keep a professional distance online, just as they would in the offline world. However, technology can increase the potential for messages to be taken out of context, misinterpreted or forwarded to others.

Following these simple rules helps avoid the most common pitfalls:

- Only use official email accounts, pages, profiles, groups and sites to share information relating to HRA
- Remember you are in a position of trust
- Remember that some sites have an age restriction
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face to face
- If unsure, don't post it
- Be thoughtful and polite
- Don't post derogatory or malicious comments or use inappropriate language
- Be prepared for content to be permanent and shared
- Set the right expectations with service users
- Handle complex queries via other channels such as email or telephone

6. Communicating with children & young people online

Because of the activities and structure of HRA, this aspect of digital and social media use is particularly important.

These simple rules will help keep communication between young people and adults, by whatever digital method, within clear and explicit professional boundaries. You can also refer to the HRA Child Protection Policy for guidance on communication and interaction with children and young people.

- Any trustees, staff or volunteers with permitted unsupervised access to service-users through social networking sites must be DBS checked.
- Don't engage in one-to-one conversations with young people via chat facilities or instant messaging.
- Keep all conversations on a HRA Facebook page, group or event wall where they can be seen by other users.
- Keep content and conversations on HRA Facebook pages appropriate for the young people within the group.
- Don't use your personal social networking account to communicate with young members under the age of 18.
- Avoid possible misinterpretations by being clear and avoiding sarcasm.
- Don't exchange personal information such as your home address or phone number
- Avoid sending text messages to members under 18.
- All communications with Rangers under the age of 13 should be done through their parents or guardians, not directly.
- If a child or young person asks to make contact with you outside of public social media pages, ask them to get a parent or guardian to make contact through an official HRA phone number or email address.

7. Specific protective guidelines for trustees, paid staff, adult members and volunteers

a. Email, Texts & Instant Messaging

- When sending emails to groups of services users, use the blind copy (BCC) facility to avoid sharing email addresses.
- Staff and volunteers may only use the HRA email accounts to contact members and volunteers.
- The Director and Office Administrator must have access to all HRA email accounts
- Staff, members and volunteers must not reveal personal details of themselves or others in emails and text communication
- Texting is not the preferred method of communication with anyone under 18.

b. Publishing photos

Whenever the HRA name or logo is featured in a picture or video, think carefully about how the charity could be perceived.

Photos of service users

- Do not publish a picture of a child or young adult under the age of 18 without the parent or guardian's permission and understanding and agreement on how the photo will be used
- The office holds photo permissions for children and only the office should release a picture of an under 18. If a commandant wants to post a picture they should contact the office to check we hold photo permission for the young person.
- If you take a photograph of a child or young adult, make sure that they are appropriately dressed, it is at a public event and involves several Rangers
- Make sure you know that an adult has given permission for their picture to be published
- HRA does not encourage you to use your personal mobile phone or camera to take photos or video, especially when taking photographs of children and young people. If you have access to an HRA camera, please use it.
- Further guidance can be found in the HRA Volunteer Child Protection Policy
- When images/videos are posted of service users(members?), no names should be mentioned and no-one should be tagged. Tagging of service users(members?) in photos or videos will remain the responsibility of the individuals themselves.
- When taking and posting images or videos of Rangers in uniform, make sure that:
 - The uniform is correct and correctly worn
 - If "on parade" the uniform and boots are clean and smart
 - They are wearing hard hats when appropriate with the chin strap properly done up
 - Body protectors are correctly fitted and worn if required
 - Rangers are not being photographed in any activity which would bring HRA into disrepute

Photos of horses

- When taking and posting images or videos of horses make sure that:
 - They are properly and correctly tacked up
 - That they are correctly identified in any accompanying text
 - They are not in a position or situation where they could be perceived to be in pain
 - That the horse, and their rider, are not in a position which could be interpreted as dangerous
 - Horses are not being photographed in any activity which would bring HRA into disrepute, either by content or interpretation.

c. Copyright

HRA respects and operates within copyright laws. Users may not use social media to:

- Publish or share any copyrighted software, media or materials owned by third parties, unless permitted by that third party.
- Share links to illegal copies of music, films, games or other software

If you use photos taken by someone else then ensure you credit the images to comply with copyright laws. The same practice applies to any other content that has not been created originally by HRA.

HRA intellectual property right and copyright must be asserted when publishing online.

d. Security & data protection

Staff and volunteers should be aware of the security and data protection issues that can arise from using social networks.

Maintain confidentiality

- Don't share or link to any content or information owned by HRA that could be considered confidential.
- Don't share or link to any content or information owned by another organisation that could be considered confidential.
- Don't share or link to data in any way that could breach data protection principles.
- You must not provide personal details about trustees, staff, volunteers or service-users (members?)

Avoid social scams

- Be watchful for *phishing attempts* where scammers may use deception to obtain information relating to either HRA or our service users.
- Never reveal sensitive details through social media channels.
- Avoid clicking links in posts, updates and direct messages that look suspicious. In particular, look out for links in generic or vague direct messages.

e. Moderation

- Squadron commandants, the Director and the Development Manager have responsibility for moderating their respective squadron digital and social media accounts.
- The Director has responsibility for the general HRA accounts?

- HRA will delete any of the following:
 - Violent, obscene, profane, hateful or racist posts, links or images
 - Comments that threaten or defame any person or organisation
 - Comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity
 - Multiple successive off-topic posts by a single user

f. Monitoring

- IT and internet resources are the property of HRA and are provided for legitimate HRA use. This includes computers, smartphones and internet connections.
- HRA may reserve the right to monitor use of its systems and resources and incoming and outgoing mail (and other electronic material) for legitimate purposes. This includes the right to monitor how social networks are used and accessed through these resources.
- Any such examinations or monitoring will only be carried out by authorised staff
- All data relating to social networks written, sent or received through HRA computer systems and internet connections is part of official HRA records.
- HRA can be legally compelled to show that information to law enforcement agencies or other parties.

g. Safeguarding & Reporting

You must ensure you have clear understanding on whom to contact if you have any concerns about service-users safety online. Use the same chain of authority and advice as used in the HRA Safeguarding Policy.

h. Passwords & Security

- Authorised staff and volunteers must keep HRA account and password details in a safe place.
- Passwords must be changed every two months to keep them secure.
- The Director must have overall access to all email accounts and social media sites for when they are on leave, absent or no longer working HRA.
- When staff or volunteers no longer work with HRA, passwords must be changed.
- The Director/Office Manager/Commandants must ensure all accounts and equipment used for communicating are secure.

8. Compliance with other HRA policies

Compliance with other HRA policies will also help ensure we all use social media responsibly. These include:

- Safeguarding & Protecting Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Whistle-blowing policy
- Data Protection Policy?
- Confidentiality?

- Personal use of social media

All of the Horse Rangers are individuals with their own opinions, tastes and view which they are obviously free to express.

HRA also recognises that Rangers' personal social media accounts can generate a number of benefits. For instance:

- Staff and volunteers can make industry contacts that may be useful in their jobs
- Employees and volunteers can discover content to help them learn and develop in their role
- By posting about HRA, they can help to build the profile of HRA online

This part of the policy covers the use of personal digital and social media accounts that are not linked to HRA activities.

Basic principles

- Commandants are recommended to have separate social media accounts for HRA.
- Be careful to check which account you are logged into before posting anything online.
- Assume that service users will look for you online. Ensure that any personal accounts do not include anything that may reflect badly on the reputation of HRA.
- Do not accept friend requests from HRA young members under 18 years old.

Privacy settings

- We recommend you think carefully about who has access to your personal social media profiles.
- Choose carefully what information you share and who you share it with.
- If you use your personal Facebook profile to interact with HRA Squadron Facebook pages, we request that you review your privacy settings. The content you share with friends in a personal capacity might not be appropriate for young members who are connected with the Squadron Facebook page.
- Members must ensure that have selected adequate privacy settings on social media accounts to ensure anyone they haven't accepted as a friend cannot see their posts, or those of their friends. On Facebook in particular HRA encourages members and volunteers to set privacy settings to share future posts with Friends only and limit past posts to Friends only. These options can be found in your privacy settings and tools.

Acceptable use

- Staff, members and volunteers may use their personal social media accounts for work-related purposes but must ensure this is for a specific reason (e.g. research)
- Social media should not affect the ability and responsibility of HRA staff, members and volunteers to perform their duties
- Use of social media accounts for non-HRA purposes is restricted to non-work times, such as breaks and during lunch
- Staff, members and volunteers may not use email or social media for unofficial or inappropriate purposes including:

- Any messages that could constitute bullying, harassment or have any other detrimental impact including deliberately provocative communications
- Online gambling
- Accessing or transmitting pornography
- Posting confidential information about HRA, or HRA staff, members and volunteers
- Contact with extremist groups or political parties
- HRA will use internet filters on office computers used by volunteers
- The use of digital and social media using HRA equipment and internet connections to access and/or distribute any kind of offensive material or inappropriate sites will lead to disciplinary action.

Talking about HRA

Everyone should feel free to talk about their association with HRA and the activities and events they are involved in. Here are a few recommendations to post appropriately about HRA:

- You should ensure it is clear that your social media account does not represent HRA views or opinions.
- If you are posting content that is related to HRA activities, you may wish to include a disclaimer in your social media profile such as: “The views expressed are my own and do not reflect the views of the Horse Rangers Association.”
- You should not discuss confidential or sensitive HRA information.
- You should not criticise other Rangers who you ride with or the horses.
- You should never air grievances with other Rangers or staff on your social media profile. Please use the correct and official channels for these purposes. You can refer to the HRA Complaints Procedure, Anti-bullying policy or Whistle Blowing policy for guidance.
- In the very rare event that a legal process is underway, it is highly inadvisable to discuss the details through social media as it may well prejudice the outcome or create further evidence for one side or the other.
- Employ a common-sense approach when using adult humour or colourful language and ensure that it is appropriate for your audience. Remember that this may be shared with a wider audience and Squadron Facebook groups which include young people.

Digital and social media safety for Young Members and parents

Most children and young people assume they are safe when using the internet because they are in their own home. They will usually assume that the person they are chatting with is who they say they are and have harmless intentions. Most of the time, this is true.

Young people accessing social and digital media need to understand the online environment so that they can learn to stay safe themselves. This is even more important now that the internet is available on smartphones.

This part of the policy provides guidance for the children, young and vulnerable adult service users and their families when using digital and social media. Not only when interacting with HRA but to keep them safe in any online environment.

This guidance is included in our introduction handbook to all HRA service users and is explained on a regular basis to HRA service users.

Basic Principles

- Only use the official HRA social media accounts and Squadron Facebook pages to talk to Adult Members about HRA activities and related content.
- Do not make friend requests to HRA Officers, Adult Members of volunteers over the age of 18 (??_)
- Be polite and respectful to HRA members
- Behave as you would face to face with other HRA members

Tips to be safe online

- Never give out personal information to online friends. This includes an instant messaging ID, email address, mobile number, school name and any pictures of you, your family and friends.
- If something is published online, anyone can access it, change it or share it with others. Keep your social network profiles private by checking your privacy settings.
- Use webcams with caution and only with family and friends who you already know in the real world as images can be copied, changed and shared.
- Do not post inappropriate images of yourself online.
- Remember that online friends are just that and if they are not know to you in the real world, offline, they may be lying about who they are.
- Never meet up with a person you have met online unless you take a trusted adult with you.
- Think before opening files from people you do not know in the real world. They may contain a virus or inappropriate images/film and should be deleted.
- Learn how to block someone online and report them to the website involved. (See resources below)
- Report abusive users to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) if you feel uncomfortable or threatened. Save the www.clickceop.net website to your favourites so that you can report any suspicious behaviour straight away.
- Online location tools, such as Facebook Places, should not be used by under 18s or if you are in a location alone.

Reporting under age use of social media

IF HRA is made aware of under-age members using social media accounts, we will contact the parents/guardian of the under-age user in the first instance to inform you and ask you and your child to close the social media account/s down.

If this is not done within 10 days then HRA will contact the social media platform to close down the account/s in question.

We also encourage you to speak to your child about safer internet age and using social media responsibly. We have listed a number of useful resources below that provide advice and guidance to young people and parents.

Information and advice

Advice for Parents

BBC Webwise - Parenting online: controls, locks and chat
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/0/25917527>

Internet Matters - Internet Matters is a not-for-profit organisation working with online safety experts to bring you all the information you need to keep your children safe online.
<http://www.internetmatters.org/>

Parenting for a Digital Future - This blog explores the task of parenting for a digital future – both here in the UK and internationally.
<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/parenting4digitalfuture/>

O2 / NSPCC Net-Aware – Your guide to the social networks your kids use
<http://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

Think U Know – Protecting your children from abuse online
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents>

Young Minds - Information to help keep your child safe online, especially for parents and carers, with lots of links to organisations who can assist.
http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/worried_about_your_child/internet_mobile

Get Safe Online - <https://www.getsafeonline.org/safeguarding-children/10-to-12/>

Safer Internet <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/parents-and-carers/parents-guide-to-technology>

O2/NSPCC helpline - 0808 800 5002

Online helpline manned by a team of staff especially trained to provide advice for both parents and young people around e safety.

Resources for social media applications

TWITTER

Reporting abusive behaviour <https://support.twitter.com/articles/20169998>

Privacy report form <https://support.twitter.com/forms/privacy>

Safety Centre for Families & Teens: <https://about.twitter.com/safety/families>

FACEBOOK

Safety <https://www.facebook.com/safety/>

Bullying <https://www.facebook.com/help/420576171311103/>

Report abuse: <https://www.facebook.com/help/1417189725200547/>

Tools for educator: <https://www.facebook.com/help/441374602560317/>

PINTEREST

Report <https://help.pinterest.com/en/articles/report-something-pinterest#Web>

Cyberbullying <https://help.pinterest.com/en/articles/harassment-and-cyberbullying>

YOUTUBE

Policy & Safety <https://www.youtube.com/yt/policyandsafety/policy.html>

Report abuse: <https://www.youtube.com/reportabuse>

Teen safety: https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802244?hl=en&ref_topic=2803240

Flagging content: <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802027>

INSTAGRAM

Privacy statement <https://help.instagram.com/155833707900388>

Guide to account settings <https://help.instagram.com/284802804971822>

Reporting under age users <https://help.instagram.com/290666591035380>

Tips for parents https://help.instagram.com/154475974694511/?ref=hc_fnav

SNAPCHAT

Safety & abuse <https://support.snapchat.com/ca/abuse>

Report an issue <https://support.snapchat.com/co/other-abuse>

WHATSAPP

Protecting the privacy of young children is especially important. For that reason, WhatsApp does not knowingly collect or maintain Personally Identifiable Information or non-personally-identifiable information on the WhatsApp Site or WhatsApp Service from persons under 16 years of age, and no part of the WhatsApp Service is directed to or intended to be used by persons under 16. If you are under 16 years of age, then please do not use the WhatsApp Service or access the WhatsApp Site at any time or in any manner. If WhatsApp learns that Personally Identifiable Information of persons under 16 years of age has been collected on the WhatsApp Site or WhatsApp Service, then WhatsApp may deactivate the account and/or make the status submissions inaccessible. And always, think of the children!

Terms and phrases you may come across