LINCOLNSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Social Media Policy

Introduction

Lincolnshire Family History Society (LFHS) recognises that the use of social media is now an everyday part of life and is deeply aware of the benefits that its correct use may have, particularly in keeping the public informed and raising the profile of the Society amongst a wider audience.

This policy outlines LFHS's commitment to the use of social media whilst protecting the interests of the Society itself, its members and the wider family history community.

Social media is broadly defined as any website or application that enables users to create and share content or participate in social networking.

For the purpose of this policy, all references to social media include the following:

- Blogs
- Facebook
- Threads
- Instagram
- Bluesky
- X (previously Twitter)
- YouTube
- What's App
- Discussions groups and forums

The definition of social media covered by this policy also includes any similar services available now or in the future.

Application

This policy applies to all use of social media by any trustee or member of the Society.

Responsibility

Day to day responsibility on behalf of the Society lies with the Publicity Officer who will post routine announcements regarding meetings, Society events or other family history related content.

Access to the Society's social media accounts is granted to the Publicity Officer and the Chairman. It may also be given to another Officer of the Society.

Each trustee or member should be aware of this policy in relation to their individual personal use of social media and take care that any personal views posted will not be misunderstood or misconstrued as being the view of the Society.

Social Media – Benefits

Social media offers several potential benefits to LFHS and its members, including:

- Ease of communication
- Increased exposure to a wider audience
- Additional revenue streams (generally via promotions of events/sales)
- Promotion of activities that LFHS is involved with directly or indirectly

Social Media – Risks

Everyone must be aware that any information posted onto the internet (which includes social media) where others have access is available for public viewing. It is often forgotten that anything said to one person might be seen by a great many others. Once posted, it is not then possible to say it was not meant, or that it was a private comment, and not intended for onward distribution or publication.

Other potential risks may include but are not limited to:

- cyber bullying;
- exposure to inappropriate and/or illegal content;
- theft or misuse of personal information;
- defamation;
- criminal activities;
- misuse of copyright law.

Duty of Protection

When using social media, the LFHS expects all those covered by this policy to adhere to the following.

- You must not post information or make comments that could bring the Society into disrepute, or which are derogatory or disrespectful in any way to LFHS or anyone associated with it.
- Comments should not be speculative or have an actual or likely negative impact on LFHS's reputation, its associated organisations, members or clients or be intended to do the same or be posted without proper regard to the potential for harm.
- You shall not post any pictures or statements that may cause embarrassment or distress to anyone.

Examples of unacceptable comments or postings are creating, accessing or circulating any material that:

- could potentially result in an operational or reputational risk to LFHS or anyone associated with the same;
- contains profanity, obscenities, derogatory or abusive remarks;
- could be viewed as containing discriminatory material whether on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, nationality, religion or belief, pregnancy or gender re-assignment;
- contains images of a sexual nature;
- could be construed as libellous by the person about whom the comment is made difficult to define;
- may have the effect of creating an intimidating or hostile environment for others;

- could lead to allegations of bullying or harassment;
- discloses confidential information or information.

Where any offending material has been posted and this is brought to the attention of the Society, steps will be taken to have the material removed. In this respect, power to take relevant action is devolved to the Chairman and Vice-Chair who shall act jointly in such cases.

In all cases, any views expressed are not necessarily those of the Society but must at all times take note of the wording and clauses in this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by LFHS Executive Committee annually in the executive meeting held before the AGM or when significant changes are made to legislation or new guidance issued by the Charity Commission or the Family History Federation, either or both of them.

This policy was adopted by the Executive Committee at a committee meeting held on 24 July 2025.

Signed: *N D Bower*

Neal D Bower, LFHS Chairman

Date: 24 July 2025 Review Date: May 2026

Reviewed by the Executive Committee 27 July 2026

Signed: *Colin Ashworth* (Chairman) Next Review Date: May 2027

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee at its first meeting following the Annual General Meeting. The Executive Committee may review and amend this policy at any time if changes in legislation, Charity Commission guidance, best practice, or the Society's circumstances make this necessary. The date of the most recent review will be recorded in the Committee minutes.