

### Policy Overview and Purpose

Social media has changed the way we communicate.

This policy has been developed to inform our community about using social media so people feel enabled to participate, while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations. In particular, this policy provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of social media, while minimising potential risks and protecting those involved.

This policy assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all online activities related to the Ballarat Highlands Bowls Region (BHBR). It contains guidelines for the BHBR community members to engage in social media use. It also includes details of breaches of the policy.

### Coverage:

This policy applies to all persons who are involved with the activities of the BHBR and its member clubs, whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity and including:

- members, including Life Members of the BHBR and its member clubs
- persons appointed or elected to BHBR boards, committees and sub-committees;
- employees of the BHBR and its member clubs
- members of the BHBR Executive;
- support personnel, including Team Managers and selectors;
- coaches and assistant coaches;
- bowlers;
- referees, umpires and other officials;
- member associations;
- all BHBR affiliated clubs;
- Spectators and family members

### Scope:

**Social media** refers to any online tools or functions that allow people to communicate and/or share content via the internet.

This social media policy applies to platforms including, but not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, Yammer, etc)
- Video and photo sharing websites or apps (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Flickr, Vine, etc)

- Blogs and micro-blogging platforms (e.g. Tumblr, Wordpress, Blogger, etc)
- Review sites (e.g. Yelp, Urban Spoon, etc)
- Live broadcasting apps (e.g. Periscope, Meerkat, Facebook Mentions, etc)
- Podcasting (e.g. iTunes, Stitcher, Sound cloud, etc)
- Geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare, etc)
- Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia, etc)
- Instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc)
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second life, Xbox Live, etc)
- Websites
- Online voting or polls
- Public and private online forums and discussion boards
- Any other online technologies that allow individual users to upload and share content.

This policy is applicable when using social media as:

- an officially designated individual representing the BHBR on social media; and
- if you are posting content on social media in relation to BHBR and its member clubs that might affect BHBR's business, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

NOTE: This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media where it is not related to or there is no reference to BHBR. However, any misuse by you of social media in a manner that does not directly refer to the BHBR may still be regulated by other policies, rules or regulations of BHBR.

### Using Social Media in an Official Capacity:

You must be authorised by the BHBR Board before engaging in social media as a representative of the BHBR.

As such, the boundaries between when you are representing yourself and when you are representing the BHBR can often be blurred. This becomes even more of an issue as you increase your profile or position within the BHBR. Therefore it is important that you represent both yourself and the BHBR appropriately online at all times.

### **Guidelines:**

You must adhere to the following guidelines when using social media related to the BHBR or its business, products, competitions, teams, participants, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

#### ***Use common sense***

Whenever you are unsure as to whether or not the content you wish to share is appropriate, seek advice from others before doing so or refrain from sharing the content to be on the safe side.

When using social media, the lines between public and private, personal and professional, may be blurred, so please remember that you will be viewed as an ambassador for the BHBR.

#### ***Protecting your privacy***

Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy.

When posting content online there is potential for that content to become publicly available through a variety of means, even if it was intended to be shared privately. Therefore, you should refrain from posting any content online that you would not be happy for anyone to see, even if you feel confident that a particular individual would never see it.

Where possible, privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to limit access. You should also be cautious about disclosing your personal details.

#### ***Honesty***

Your honesty - or dishonesty - may be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. **If you are unsure, check the source and the facts before uploading or posting anything.** BHBR recommends erring on the side of caution – if in doubt, do not post or upload.

Do not post anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. Be transparent and honest. Use your real name, be clear about who you are and identify any affiliations you have.

If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. If you make an endorsement or recommendation about something you are affiliated with, or have a close relationship with, you must disclose that affiliation.

The web is not anonymous. You should assume that all information posted online can be traced back to you. You are accountable for your actions both on and offline, including the information you post via your personal social media accounts.

#### ***Use of disclaimers***

Wherever practical, include a prominent disclaimer stating who you work for or are affiliated with (e.g. member of the BHBR) and that anything you publish is your personal opinion and that you are not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble – it may not have any legal effect.

#### ***Reasonable use***

If you are an employee of the BHBR, you must ensure that your personal use of social media does not interfere with your work commitments or productivity.

#### ***Respect confidentiality and sensitivity***

When using social media, you must maintain the privacy of the BHBR's confidential information. This includes information that is not publicly accessible, widely known, or not expected to be shared outside of the BHBR.

Remember, if you are online, you are on the record—content posted online is public and searchable.

Within the scope of your authorisation by the BHBR, it is perfectly acceptable to talk about the BHBR and have a dialogue with the community, but it is not okay to publish confidential information of the BHBR.

Confidential information includes things such as details about litigation, unreleased product information and unpublished details about members' individual contact or personal details, financial information, teams or coaching practices.

When using social media you should be considerate to others and should not post information when you have been asked not to, or where consent has not been sought and given. You must also remove information about another person if that person asks you to do so.

Permission should always be sought if the use or publication of information is not incidental, but directly related to an individual. This is particularly relevant to publishing any information regarding minors. In such circumstances, parental or guardian consent is mandatory.

### ***Gaining permission when publishing a person's identifiable image***

You must obtain express permission from an individual to use a direct, clearly identifiable image of that person.

You should also refrain from posting any information or photos of a sensitive nature. This could include accidents, incidents or controversial behaviour.

In every instance, you need to have consent of the owner of copyright in the image.

### ***Complying with applicable laws***

Do not post or link to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including defamatory, vilifying or misleading and deceptive content.

### ***Abiding by copyright laws***

It is critical that you comply with the laws governing copyright in relation to material owned by others and the BHBR's own copyrights and brands, including Bowls Victoria and Bowls Australia brands.

You should never quote or use more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

### ***Discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying***

The public in general, and the BHBR's members and employees, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view.

You must not post any material that is offensive, harassing, discriminatory, embarrassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate.

When using social media you are also bound by the BHBR's Values and Member Protection policies.

### ***Avoiding controversial issues***

Within the scope of your authorisation by BHBR, if you see misrepresentations made about the BHBR, you may point that out to a member of the BHBR Board. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is based on fact and does not discredit or belittle that party.

### ***Dealing with mistakes***

If you make an error while posting on social media, be up front about the mistake and address 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 their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), address it promptly and appropriately and if necessary, seek legal advice.

### ***Conscientious behaviour and awareness of the consequences***

Keep in mind that what you write is your responsibility, and failure to abide by these guidelines could put your BHBR and club membership at risk.

### ***Branding and intellectual property of BHBR***

You must not use any of the BHBR's intellectual property or imagery on your personal social media without prior approval from the BHBR Board.

BHBR's intellectual property includes but is not limited to:

- trademarks
- logos
- slogans
- imagery which has been posted on any BHBR official social media sites or website.

You must not create either an official or unofficial BHBR presence using the organisation's trademarks or name without prior approval from BHBR Board.

You must not imply that you are authorised to speak on behalf of the BHBR unless you have been given official authorisation to do so by the BHBR Board.

## **Policy Breaches**

Breaches of this policy include but are not limited to:

- Using BHBR's name, motto, crest and/or logo in a way that would result in a negative impact for the organisation, clubs and/or its members.
- Posting or sharing any content that is abusive, harassing, threatening, demeaning, defamatory or libellous.
- Posting or sharing any content that includes insulting, obscene, offensive, provocative or hateful language.
- Posting or sharing any content, which if said in person during the playing of the game would result in a breach of the rules of the game.
- Posting or sharing any content in breach of BHBR's Member Protection policy.

- Posting or sharing any content that is a breach of any state or Commonwealth law.
- Posting or sharing any material to our social media channels that infringes the intellectual property rights of others.
- Posting or sharing material that brings, or risks bringing the BHBR, its affiliates, its sport, its officials, members or sponsors into disrepute. In this context, bringing a person or organisation into disrepute is to lower the reputation of that person or organisation in the eyes of the ordinary members of the public.

### **Reporting a breach**

If you notice inappropriate or unlawful content online relating to the BHBR or any of its members, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, you should report the circumstances immediately to the BHBR Board, by contacting either:

Chairman: Ian Guymer           0413 712 511  
[iguymmer@bigpond.com](mailto:iguymmer@bigpond.com)

Vice-Chair: Lyn Bryce           0438 343 770  
[lynette.bryce@bigpond.com](mailto:lynette.bryce@bigpond.com)

Secretary: Wayne Morgan      0419 595 610  
[bhbrsec@gmail.com](mailto:bhbrsec@gmail.com)

### **Investigation**

Alleged breaches of this social media policy may be investigated according to the BHBR Member Protection policies

Where it is considered necessary, the BHBR Board may report a breach of this social media policy to police.

### **Disciplinary process, consequences and appeals**

Depending on the circumstances breaches of this policy may be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure contained in the BHBR's Member Protection Policy.

Employees of the BHBR who breach this policy may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment in accordance with the BHBR Member Protection Policy or any other relevant policy.

### **Appeals**

Any person who is sanctioned under a disciplinary process for breach of this policy may have a right of appeal as per the BHBR Member Protection policy.

### **Related policies**

- Code of Conduct
- Member Protection Policy
- Child Protection Policy

Other legal considerations that may be applicable include but are not limited to:

- Defamation
- Intellectual property laws, including copyright and trademark laws, privacy, confidentiality and information security laws
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Advertising standards
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Information Privacy Act 2000*
- Equal opportunity laws