MAYBRIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH	
Policy Name: **Social Media Policy**	**Maybridge Community Church**
Author: Phil Coram	**Version: 1.00**
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Introduction
Social media refers to any web-based tools and applications enabling users to create, share content (text, images, video), and network. Platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, X, and Instagram facilitate information exchange, opinion sharing, and networking.

Purpose of Social Media Usage
Social media is crucial for effectively communicating the work of Maybridge Community Church (MCC). Engaging in social media allows staff to connect with the audience, join relevant conversations, and elevate the church's visibility.

Need for Social Media Policy
The boundary between personal and professional opinions blurs on social media, especially concerning MCC's affairs. While endorsing social media use, adherence to specified standards is imperative. This policy delineates these standards, akin to those of public publications or commentary.

Policy Coverage
This policy applies to all staff, partners, trustees, and elders, encompassing content posted via both MCC and personal devices. Staff must acquaint themselves with this policy before engaging in work-related social media activity.

Social Media Usage Guidelines

1. Administration of Social Media Channels
The Communications Leader oversees MCC's social media channels, granting access only to authorised personnel designated by the Operations Director. Social media channels are monitored during office hours, with responses provided as appropriate.

2. Representation of Maybridge Community Church
Staff must reflect MCC values and adhere to the established tone of voice in all social media postings.
Content shared should serve MCC's interests, accurately portraying its stance.

3. Interaction with Audience
Provide value to the audience by addressing queries and engaging with them.
Maintain content quality by ensuring accuracy, clarity, and professionalism.
Respond promptly to comments, exercising discretion in engagements. If in
doubt about how to respond ask a senior member of staff, elder, trustee, or
safeguarding lead, as appropriate.

4. Content Contribution
Staff seeking to contribute social media content must coordinate with the
Communications Leader.

5. Consent
It would be impractical to obtain explicit consent before posting images of
people who attend MCC and would delay and limit the ability to show actual
community involvement on social media. It would stop the MCC posts being used
effectively. As church services, along with many other MCC events, are public, so
street photography laws apply and no consent is required. However, the
Communications Leader will obtain detail from the Children and Families Worker
of parental consent before featuring under 18 year olds in social media posts.

6. Compliance with Policies and Laws
Verify facts before sharing; refrain from disseminating inaccurate information.
Abstain from expressing personal opinions through MCC's official social media
channels.
Avoid endorsing risky or unlawful behaviour for content creation.

7. Crisis Management
Promptly report any potential crisis situations on social media to the Operations
Director or designated authorities.

Use of Personal Social Media

1. Personal Conduct
Staff must distinguish personal opinions from representations of MCC.
Any affiliation with MCC on personal platforms should be transparently disclosed.

2. Engagement with High-Profile Individuals
Refrain from soliciting support for MCC from personal social media accounts.
Report any relevant information regarding high-profile individuals to the Senior
Minister.

3. Media Contact
Direct any press enquiries related to MCC's social media content to the
Operations Director.

Further Guidelines

1. Legal Compliance
Adhere to laws regarding libel, copyright, confidentiality, discrimination, and
harassment.
Abide by regulations governing political neutrality and campaigning activities.

2. Recruitment Process
Respect candidates' privacy; refrain from routine monitoring of their social media activities during recruitment.

3. Protection and Intervention
Report any concerns about potential harm to individuals on social media to the Safeguarding Team.

4. Under 18s and Vulnerable People
Exercise caution when interacting with young or vulnerable individuals online, ensuring adherence to safeguarding protocols.

Responsibilities and Enforcement

All individuals are accountable for complying with this policy. Breaches may result in disciplinary action, in accordance with MCC's Disciplinary Procedure. Staff unsure of policy compliance should seek guidance from the Operations Director.

Public Interest Disclosure
Should a staff member release information via MCC's social media channels deemed in the public interest, the Whistleblowing Policy may be invoked per the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.