

Supporter Social Media Policy



Introduction

Social media is a vital tool for Carlisle United to engage with fans, share news, and build community.

Our platforms also provide fans with the opportunity to engage with one another; to debate, discuss, share opinions and revel in the shared joy that football brings.

We greatly welcome discussion, debate and opinion on our channels that is responsible and respectful. Nonetheless, we recognise that social media can be a place where interaction is not respectful. We are all too aware that social media platforms can, and have, been used to post and amplify hate, abuse and discrimination.

Carlisle United are clear that there can be no place in our game, nor our society, for racism, antisemitism, homophobia, sexism or any form of discrimination. We must create a social media environment where hateful and discriminatory actions are deemed as serious online, as they would be in person.

This Social Media Policy ("Policy") for Carlisle United fans therefore provides guidance on engaging with the club, its players, staff and other fans on social media, and sets out the action we will take, and the action we ask you as fans to take, to ensure that all supporters have a positive experience when engaging with our social media platforms.

This Policy exists to safeguard the reputation of Carlisle United Football Club and protect the wellbeing of our fans, staff, players, and the wider community.

Carlisle United want to ensure equality and inclusion across all aspects of club operations, including social media. We are also committed to fighting against racism and all other forms of discrimination.

We understand that criticism is part of the game, and we do not strive to silence critics. Fans are entitled to an opinion.

We urge fans to consider the impact that their engagement could have on players, club staff, and other fans. We want to foster a positive environment, where fans feel safe engaging with the club and other supporters.

Social media fan code of conduct

The club's commitment on its social media channels is to:

- Promote participation where everyone feels welcome to visit whether they are our own supporters or supporters of other clubs or staff
- Confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership race, nationality, ethnicity (race), religion or belief, ability or disability, pregnancy and maternity and to encourage equal opportunities. These are 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010
- Ensure respect is shown for our opponents, the match officials, opposition fans
- Ensure our own staff, players, stewards and office, directors and owners are treated with respect and are free from personal abuse, threats or violence free from disruptive behaviour, including foul, offensive, insulting or abusive language or obscene comments, racial, religious, homophobic or discriminatory abuse causing distress



Unacceptable Behaviour

Carlisle United will consider any of the following actions in posts on our channels as a breach of its Code of Conduct. Please refer to Appendix 1 for definitions

1. *Acting as a bully towards fellow fans*
2. *Use of offensive, abusive, hateful, inflammatory language*
3. *Provoking others into displaying emotional responses*
4. *Manipulating others' perception – fake, false, misleading, discriminatory posts*
5. *Personal attacks – abusive, hurtful, derogatory statements*

Reposting or sharing content that is considered to meet the above criteria will also be considered as a breach of this Policy.

While we encourage respectful behaviour in all online football-related engagement, Carlisle United is not responsible for content posted on unaffiliated third-party pages, accounts, or fan forums.

What we will do

We believe social media operator platforms must do more to tackle unacceptable, hateful, abusive and discriminatory behaviour on their platforms. As a club, we are committed to acting and playing our part.

We will consider acting against individuals or groups who produce or disseminate social media posts that contravene this Policy and Social Media Fan Code of Conduct or other club policies (such as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies).

We will not tolerate discriminatory online abuse of fellow fans, our players, coaches, staff or their family members.

Club staff and players are advised not to engage in debates, arguments, or direct responses to abusive or inflammatory online content.

Moderation

Due to the large volume of content, across multiple platforms, it isn't possible for the club to spot and act on every single piece of content that may go against this Policy.

The club will deal with each incident as follows:

- Step 1: Report received
- Step 2: Initial review by club's Communication team lead & EDI Officer and action
- Step 3: Internal escalation to CEO for serious or ambiguous cases and action
- Step 4: Possible external action (Police, Kick It Out, legal)

The club will follow the detailed procedures in its Complaints Policy for undertaking the reviews and actions.

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The decision on whether to take action will remain at the club's sole discretion. Any decision not to act, whether that be on content that has been reported/identified, or content that has been missed, does not constitute an endorsement of said content.

We will take club-initiated action or examine complaints received on a case by case basis, and will investigate if we believe the posts or content:

1. Contravene the club's Social Media Fan Code of Conduct or other club policies
2. Bring the club into disrepute.
3. Target our players, coaches, staff, board of directors, owners and/or family members.
4. Incite hate or cause hostility with other fans or participants

Actions we would then take could involve:

- Deleting discriminatory posts on social media platforms, where possible
- Warning as to future behaviour
- Temporary block the individuals or groups from following our social media accounts
- Permanent block
- Reporting the individuals or groups to the social media platform
- Reporting the individuals or groups to the Police if we have grounds to believe a crime has been committed
- Working with the Police and authorities to support prosecutions
- Legal action by the club

The club will also adopt a three strikes rule where any three sanctions lead to a permanent block across all club platforms.

This Policy applies exclusively to Club-controlled digital spaces however, the club also reserves the right to apply these and other sanctions as detailed under the CUFC Supporter Sanction Policy including access to its services, tickets, hospitality, events, or memberships for individuals who breach this Policy, whether on club-owned platforms or third-party social media channels.

The Club also additionally reserves the right to pursue legal action against any individual or group whose online behaviour constitutes defamation, harassment, or incitement, and to seek compensation for damages caused to the Club's reputation or operations.

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What you can do

Block users and report incidents to social media platforms

We strongly advise that should you receive or witness hateful, discriminatory and/or abusive comments or content online, you report this to the relevant social media platform. Each platform has its own reporting mechanism, and we have listed these below for ease of use:

- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/help/181495968648557/>
- X - <https://help.x.com/en/safety-and-security#sensitive-content>
- Instagram - <https://help.instagram.com/contact/383679321740945>
- YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/intl/en-GB/about/policies/#reporting-and-enforcement>
- TikTok - <https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc/report-a-problem>

Report incidents to the Club

Any incident should be logged internally and escalated through the club's Media and Communications Officer for formal review.

If you wish to report online concerns please can contact us using our social channels, or email - enquiries@carlisleunited.co.uk

When contacting us, please share details of the content and screenshots of the relevant social media posts where possible.

Report crimes to the Police

You should report incidents directly to the Police if you have been a victim of a crime or you feel a crime has been committed through social media.

Report incidents to Kick it Out

Incidents can also be reported to Kick it Out, English football's equality and inclusion organisation, via this online form: <https://www.kickitout.org/forms/online-reporting-form>

Advice for parents

Parents should be aware of the use of social media by children who may be particularly susceptible to harmful content online and we recommend that parents appropriately supervise this usage.

The NSPCC provides useful resources on keeping children safe online: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

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Review

This Policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the Club changes in nature and size and new requirements emerge.

To ensure this, the Policy, and the way it is implemented, will be reassessed and amended on an ongoing basis and reviewed annual basis will be as follows:

- Social Media issues will be considered as agenda items and discussed at the:
 - 1921 board meetings
 - CEO updates to CUSG meetings
- The Policy will be reassessed and amended on an ongoing basis by the CEO in consultation with CUSG fan groups
- The 1921 Board will:
 - conduct an annual review of the Policy as part of the annual review
 - publish the Policy on its website

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Next review	By 30 June 2026	1921 Board
Signed		Nigel Clibbens Chief Executive

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Appendix 1

Key Definitions- General Guidance

Abusive

treating someone badly or cruelly

Bullying

the behaviour of a person who hurts or frightens someone smaller or less powerful, often forcing that person to do something they do not want to do

Derogatory

showing strong disapproval and not showing respect

Discriminatory

treating a person or group differently from and usually worse than other people

Emotional

having and expressing strong feelings

Fake

not real, but made to look or seem real

False

Not accurate or untrue

Hurtful

causing emotional pain

Hateful

filled with or causing strong dislike

Inflammatory

intended or likely to cause anger or hate

Manipulate

to control something or someone to your advantage, often unfairly or dishonestly

Misleading

causing someone to believe something that is not true

Offensive

if you cause offence or give offence to someone, you say or do something rude which upsets or embarrasses them

Provoking

making someone feel annoyed, sometimes intentionally

Perception

a belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem