GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY GOLF PARTNERSHIP SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all players, volunteers of the Gloucestershire County Golf Partnership (GCGP) and to those contracted to the GCGP on either a permanent or temporary basis

This policy forms part of the player, volunteer and contractor agreement between the GCGP and the players, volunteers and contractors and is a condition of that agreement that players, volunteers and contractors will abide by the rules and policies made by the GCGP from time to time.

This policy links to all other policies whether produced by England Golf or GCGP, therefore social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies such as equal opportunities, data protection etc.

The GCGP has agreed to abide by all Governance policies produced by England Golf in its Constitution, including disciplinary, equality, equity, diversity, transport, data protection etc

PURPOSE

This policy aims to ensure that the player, volunteer and contractor and GCGP is not exposed to legal and governance risks through the use of social media and that their reputation is not adversely affected.

This policy applies to the use of social media for playing, volunteering and personal purposes, whether whilst a player, volunteer, contractor or otherwise.

The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using the GCGP's IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to players, volunteers or contractors.

It aims to ensure that players, volunteers and contractors are protected whilst using social media and feel empowered to contribute to collaborative online activity when it supports the activities within the GCGP.

This policy is solely for players & volunteers of the GCGP and aims to:

• Give clear guidelines on what they can say about the GCGP;

• Comply with relevant legislation and protect all players, volunteers and contractors;

• Help those who oversee players, volunteers or contractors manage performance effectively;

• Help them draw a line between their private lives and their playing, volunteering, employment or contracting;

• Protect the GCGP against liability for the actions of players, volunteers or contractors;

• Be clear about sensitive issues such as monitoring and explain how problems with inappropriate use will be addressed.

SOCIAL MEDIA DEFINITION

Social media is an interactive online media that allows users to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. It includes social and business networking websites such as Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, whatsapp, snapchat, Twitter (X), LinkedIn and ‘CoachNow’ (previously known as Edufii). Social media also covers video and image sharing websites such as YouTube and Flickr, as well as writing or commenting on a blog (whether it is your own or the blog of another person), taking part in discussions on web forums or message boards or even taking part in online polls. This is a constantly changing area with new websites being launched on a regular basis and therefore this list is not exhaustive. This policy applies in relation to any social media that players, volunteers and contractors may use.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Gloucestershire County Golf Partnership uses social media in its work and recognises that those who play, volunteer or who are contracted and are involved in its work may also use social media either as part of their role or in their private lives. The GCGP encourages the use of social media.

The purpose of this policy is to set out what the GCGP expects from our players & volunteers when using social media. It is important to remember that we are all ambassadors and that social media is never private.

The GCGP recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics relevant to our activities using a wide variety of social media. This policy aims to protect individuals who play or volunteer with us in any role and to encourage you to take responsibility for what you write, exercise good judgement and common sense. Inappropriate use of social media can pose risks to our confidential and proprietary information and reputation, and can jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations.

To minimise these risks, to avoid loss of work time and to ensure that our IT resources and communications systems are used only for appropriate purposes, we expect players, volunteers and contractors to adhere to this policy. The lines between public and private communications can become blurred, so players, volunteers and contractors should assume that everything written is permanent and can be viewed by anyone at anytime. Also assume that everything can be traced back to a player, volunteer, employee, the GCGP and its clients, customers, contractors, sponsors and suppliers.

Any content which raises a safeguarding concern must be reported to the County Welfare Officer in line with the reporting procedures, outlined in the GCGP’s/England Golf's Safeguarding Policy.

PLAYERS, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES

The following sections of the policy provide players, volunteers and contractors with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.

• Players, volunteers and contractors should use the same safeguards as they would with any other type of communication about the GCGP that is in the public domain.

• Avoid social communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage our reputation, even indirectly.

• Players, volunteers and contractors are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media (as part of their role or on personal sites). Remember what you publish might be available to be read by the masses (including the GCGP/England Golf), colleagues, other players, volunteers, future employers, contractors and social acquaintances for a long time. Keep this in mind before you post content.

• There is no obligation for players/volunteers/contractors to link their personal social media to any GCGP social media.

• Players, volunteers, contractors are not permitted to set up social media accounts for any purposes for the GCGP unless properly authorised by the GCGP through the GCGP Chairman.

• Players, volunteers and contractors are responsible for the security settings of any social media sites they use and should take appropriate steps to protect themselves from identity theft, for example by placing their privacy settings at a high level and restricting the amount of personal information they give out, e.g. date and place of birth. This type of information may form the basis of security questions and/or passwords on other websites, such as online banking.

• Should a player, volunteer or contractor notice any inaccurate information about the GCGP online, they should report this to the Chairman in the first instance. Players/Volunteers/Contractors should not;

• Other than in relation to the GCGP’s own social media activities or other than where expressly permitted by the GCGP on business networking websites such as LinkedIn, write recommendations about previous or current players/volunteers/contractors and they must also ensure that any personal views expressed are clearly stated to be theirs alone and do not represent those of the GCGP.

• Conduct themselves in a way that is potentially detrimental to the GCGP or brings the GCGP or its employees, clients, customers, contractors or suppliers into disrepute, for example by posting images or video clips that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate website content.

• Allow their interaction on these websites or blogs to damage working or playing relationships with or between players, volunteers, employees and clients, customers, contractors, sponsors or suppliers of the GCGP for example by criticising or arguing with such persons.

• Include personal information or data about the GCGP’s players, volunteers, employees, clients, customers, contractors, sponsors or suppliers without their express consent (you may still be liable even if employees, clients, customers, contractors, sponsors or suppliers are not expressly named in the websites or blogs as long as the GCGP reasonably believes that they are identifiable) – this could constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act 1998 which is a criminal offence. (The General Data Protection Regulations will come into force in 2018).

• Make any derogatory, offensive, discriminatory, untrue, negative, critical or defamatory comments about the GCGP, its employees, clubs and members, clients, customers, contractors, sponsors or suppliers (a player or volunteer may still be liable even if employees, clubs & members, clients, customers, contractors or suppliers are not expressly named in the websites or blogs as long as the GCGP reasonably believes that they are identifiable).

• Make any comments about the GCGP's employees, or volunteers that could constitute unlawful discrimination, harassment, or cyber-bullying contrary to the Equality Act 2010 and its amendments, or post any images or video clips that are discriminatory or which may constitute unlawful harassment or cyber-bullying. Players, volunteers or contractors can be personally liable for their actions under the legislation.

• Disclose any confidential, proprietary or sensitive information belonging to the GCGP, its employees, clients, customers, contractors, sponsors, or suppliers or any information which could be used by one or more of the GCGP’s competitors.

• Breach copyright or any other proprietary interest belonging to the GCGP, for example using someone else’s images or written consent without permission or failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce particular work – if you wish to post images, photographs or videos of their work, colleagues or clients, customers, contractors, sponsors or suppliers on their online profile, you should first obtain the other party’s permission to do so.

MONITORING

The GCGP may monitor a player, volunteer of contractor’s social media activity it has approved. The purposes for such monitoring are to:

• Protect the reputation of the GCGP, stakeholders, suppliers and sponsors.

• Ensure players/volunteers/contractors conduct themselves in a manner that does not affect the security of any of its systems and its effective operation.

• Make sure there is no breach of confidentiality.

POLICY ENFORCEMENT

Breaching the terms set out within this policy could result in players/volunteers/contractors being required to remove offending content and the player/volunteer/contractors responsible being subject to an investigation (dependant on circumstances and the breach), which may result in removal from the GCGP, team, volunteer or contracting group.

FURTHER GUIDANCE Please contact the GCGP Chairman.

REVIEW This policy will be subject to regular review and amendment and will follow changes made by The GCGP or England Golf.

November 2023