



**WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Social networking sites, the internet and email can enhance communication, faith sharing and deepen relationships, but they need to be used with care in a way that reflects our beliefs and values. The following guidelines apply principles of healthy boundaries and safe church to the virtual world of digital networking and communication and are intended to raise awareness of issues.

Our practice is informed by the Methodist Church's Connexional Social Media Policies which contain advice for office holders, parents, children and all church members and can be viewed at:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/guidance-for-churches/digital-communication-guidance-for-churches/social-media/social-media-guidelines/>

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/17148/children-and-youth-social-media-guidance-060520.pdf>

[https://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf\\_social\\_media\\_guidelines\\_part2\\_0710.pdf](https://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf_social_media_guidelines_part2_0710.pdf)

and the Harrow & Hillingdon Circuit Safeguarding Policy.

**1. Harrow & Hillingdon Methodist Circuit Website**

- (i) The website will be used to provide information for those both in the Circuit and those outside, promote events, share news and show something of our faith as Methodists.
- (ii) Anything posted on the website should be in line with the doctrine of the Methodist Church. All attempts should be made to ensure that any links to external websites are appropriate.
- (iii) The Circuit Webmaster and the Circuit Admin Team will have access to edit the website.

**2. Harrow & Hillingdon Methodist Circuit Facebook Page**

- (i) The Circuit Facebook Page will be used to:
  - promote public activities organised in the name of the Circuit and the churches (or relevant to the circuit and the churches), as well as District, Regional and Connexional events.
  - Share news about recent events in the circuit (e.g. Circuit Services), and where relevant news about the community
  - Share prayers for churches and situations across the circuit, as well as national and global events.
  - Advertise job vacancies within the circuit, churches and community.
- (ii) Anything posted on the Facebook page should be in line with the doctrine of the Methodist Church. All attempts should be made to ensure that any links to external websites are appropriate.
- (iii) The Circuit Admin Team will have access to the Facebook page in order to update details post and reply to comments.

**3. Harrow & Hillingdon Circuit WhatsApp Groups**

- (i) Acknowledging that not all people have the necessary equipment or the desire to be part of this, WhatsApp is occasionally used for group communications by members of the Circuit Leadership Team and lay employees where a communication requires a quicker response or notification than can be guaranteed by email.

- (ii) Anything posted on the WhatsApp group should be in line with the doctrine of the Methodist Church. All attempts should be made to ensure that any photos or links to external websites are appropriate.
- (iii) The member(s) with Admin rights to the group should take responsibility for ensuring that posts are appropriate and comply with the Methodist Church guidance.

#### **4. Consent for use of Photographs, Video and Audio Recordings**

- (i) Adults present at Circuit events may be photographed and filmed/recorded, and the pictures or recordings used on the website/Facebook page/printed publicity unless they express a wish for this not to happen. These individuals in photos will not be identified by name without their express permission.
- (ii) An annual consent form will be obtained from parents/carers giving/denying permission for children to be photographed, filmed and recorded (Appendix 3). Photographs/recordings of children used on the website/Facebook page will not identify the children by name without gaining further consent of both parent and child.
- (iii) Images or recordings of Children (those under 18) will only be used with the consent their parent/guardian. Children must not be identifiable by name in any images/recordings unless further written consent is provided by the child and their parent/guardian.
- (iv) Model consent forms for Young People (13 and Over) and for Parents and Carers can be downloaded for use from the Methodist Church website <https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/policies-procedures-posters-and-leaflets/forms/> or obtained from the Circuit Office.
- (v) All consent forms will be held in line with the Privacy Policy agreed by the Circuit Meeting (<https://www.t MCP.org.uk/about/data-protection/managing-trustees-privacy-notice>).

This policy which is to be reviewed annually was agreed by the Circuit Meeting on **13<sup>th</sup> September 2023**.



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