



TREOIRLÍNTE AGUS BEARTAIS NA MEÁN SÓISIALTA COMHALTAS  
*COMHALTAS SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES AND POLICY*

# 01

## OUR VISION



Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann is a cultural movement concerned with the promotion and preservation of the music, dance and language of Ireland. As the world grows more complex, it seems to us more important than ever that we take a strong stand in maintaining a living folk tradition.

Our vision should be strong when informing all our communications, including social media.

# Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (or just Comhaltas) uses social media as an integral part of

## our organisational work

We recognise that those who are involved in its work are invited to also use social media as part of their role or in their private lives. A written policy is an essential requirement for all members and volunteers on the acceptable and effective use of social networking in the organisation.

Comhaltas encourages responsible use of social media. The purpose of this policy is to plainly set out what we expect from Comhaltas members and volunteers whilst using social media. We must remember that we stand as ambassadors for Comhaltas and that social media is never private and that the internet is forever. If you post something on behalf of Comhaltas, we cannot take it back, so please post material which upholds Comhaltas reputation.





## THIS POLICY IS FOR COMHALTAS VOLUNTEERS AIMING TO:

- Give clear guidelines on what we can say about the organisation
- Comply with relevant legislation and protect the volunteers
- Help branches and PRO's manage performance effectively
- Help volunteers draw a line between their private lives and their position within Comhaltas
- Protect Comhaltas against liability for the actions of volunteers
- Be strong about sensitive issues such as monitoring and explain how problems with inappropriate use will be addressed

# *INTRODUCTION*

- When members share their opinions online, it may reflect positive or negative attitudes on Comhaltas
- Individuals or organisations externally from Comhaltas may use digital and social media in order to challenge Comhaltas' rules, regulations and reputation.
- Matters in Comhaltas are widely discussed through Social Media channels and it is important that the association uses the same platforms to promote Comhaltas policies.

Comhaltas' online engagement has a much broader outreach than just Facebook and Twitter, utilising Instagram as a visual aid to reach to a younger demographic, along with the use of blogs and other developing social and digital media platforms. These social media policies and guidelines will enable our Volunteers to understand and develop a positive and responsible online presence to enrich the experience and enjoyment for everyone's advantage.

Comhaltas moving forward with social media recognise that it is an exciting venture and something Comhaltas and its members and volunteers should believe in

# Policy Statement

## 1.1 Comhaltas identifies that the internet provides unique opportunities

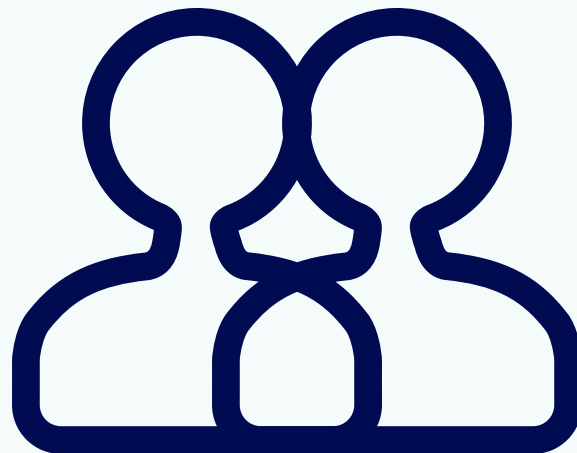
to participate in interactive discussions and freedom of information on particular topics relevant to our work whilst using a vast variety of social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and blogs. This policy aims to protect individuals volunteering with us in any role and encourage you to take responsibility for what you write, exercise good judgement and common sense

**1.2** Any inappropriate use of social media has huge risk potential to our confidential and proprietary information and reputation, or it may jeopardise our compliance with legal obligations.



## 2. WHO IS COVERED BY THIS POLICY?

2.1 THIS POLICY COVERS THE MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS OF  
COMHALTAS





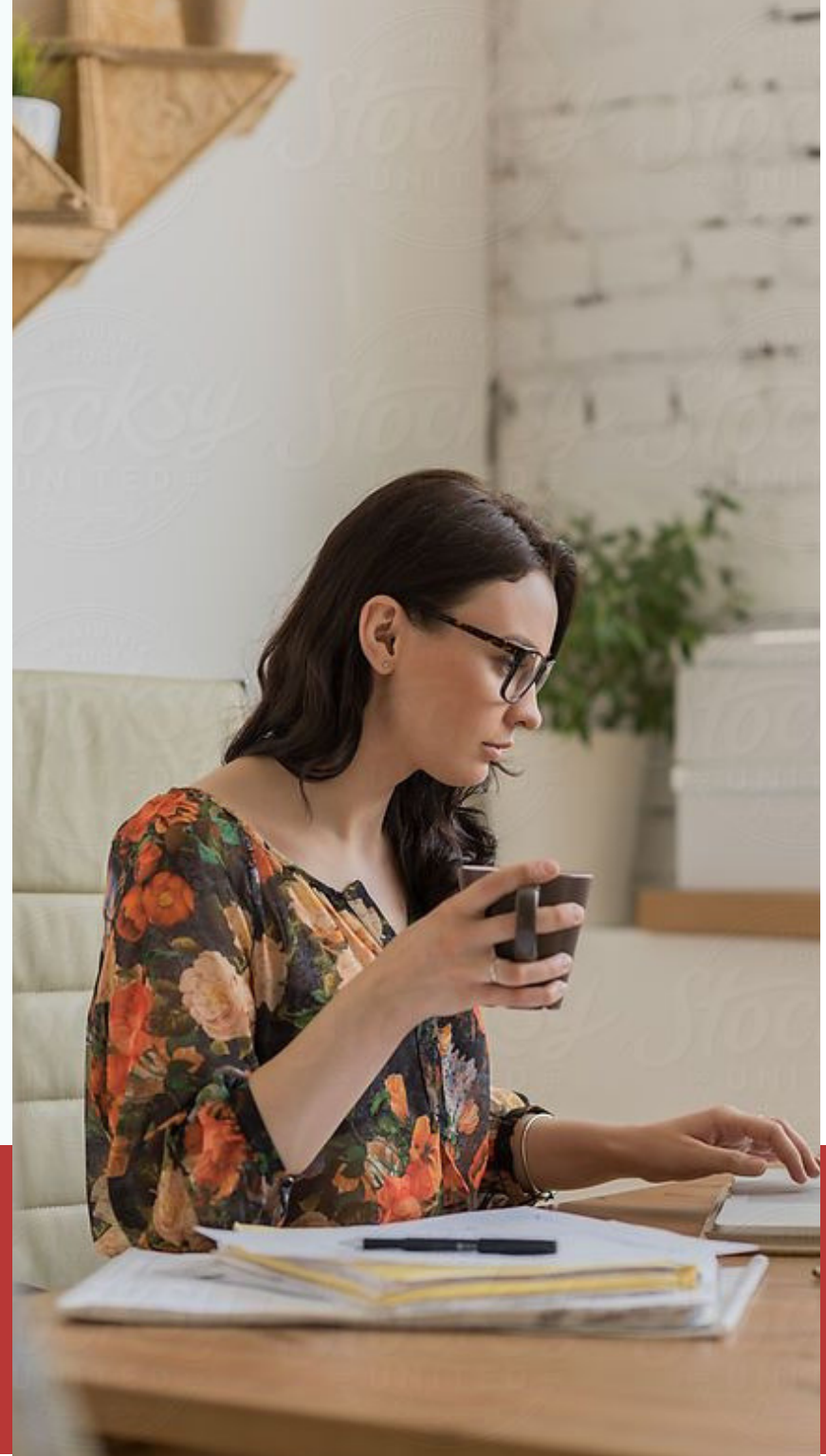
### 3. Scope and purpose of the Policy

- This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube and other social networking sites or internet postings, including blogs.
- It applies to effective use of social media both for organisation and branch purposes. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using the IT facilities and equipment of Comhaltas or belonging to the member.
- If a member of Comhaltas is found to be in breach of this policy, the branch will address this using the disciplinary procedures and will be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy
- This policy links to all other policies therefore social media should not be used in a way that breaches any of our other policies such as equal opportunities, data protection etc.



# 4. PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

- 4.1** All Comhaltas members have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that everyone understands the standards of behaviour expected of them and to take action when behaviour falls below this
- 4.2** In application of this policy, all members of Comhaltas must take the time to read and understand it. If there is any misuse of social media channels or questions regarding content or application of this policy, they should be reported to the Cathaoirleach of your branch
- 4.3** Any content which raises a safeguarding concern must be reported to Comhaltas in line with the reporting procedures as outlined in the Comhaltas safeguarding policy




# 5. GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- 5.1** The following sections of the policy provide Comhaltas volunteers and members with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely. We want to help protect our reputation, so in doing this, members must not post disparaging or defamatory statement about:
- A)** Comhaltas nationally or your branch
  - B)** Comhaltas members and volunteers
  - C)** All compliants should be dealt with through the branch, County, provincial or national committees and aim to avoid social communications that may be misconstrued in a way that could damage our reputation, even indirectly.





- 5.2 Members are personally responsible for what they communicate and address on social media (as part of their role or on personal sites). Please remember that what you publish may be available to be read by the masses (Including colleagues, future employees, volunteers, key political figures and social acquaintances for a vast period of time. Keep this in mind before you post social media content
- 5.3 Comhaltas does not permit the tagging of vulnerable adults or anyone under the age of 18
- 5.4 There is no obligation for its members to link their personal social media to any Comhaltas social media
- 5.5 Members are not permitted to set up social media accounts for purposes without prior consultation with their branch
- 5.6 If you disclose your affiliation as a member of Comhaltas, you must also state that your views do not represent those of Comhaltas. A good example of this could simply be in stating, "The views in this posting do not represent the views of Comhaltas." or "All views expressed are personal..."



**5.7** You can only use your Comhaltas branch e-mail address if your role involves using social media on behalf of the organisation

**5.8** You are uniquely responsible for the security settings of any social media sites you use and should ensure they are set to the appropriate level if you wish to limit who can see your information

**5.9** Please remember that you must respect confidentiality at all times and protect confidential information. You should be mindful of data protection issues, if in doubt speak to your branch.

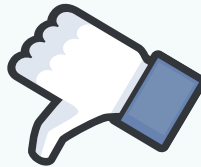
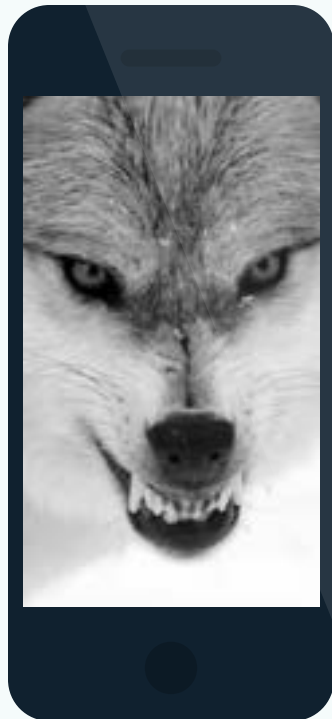
**5.10** If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, please refrain from posting until you discuss it with your branch

**5.11** If you see content in social media that criticises or reflects poorly on Comhaltas or our stakeholders, you should report it to your branch or regional resource centre. All members are responsible for protecting our reputation

- 5.13 The contact details of contacts made during the course of volunteering are regarded as our confidential information.
- 5.14 Contact details of volunteers are subject to data protection. Members are not permitted to access or store information on members that would breach data protection.
- 5.15 You should not use profanities or particularly controversial opinions when posting about Comhaltas or on a social media channel linked to the organisation as this can be used against Comhaltas' voice and brand.
- 5.16 When posting or addressing a matter on our social media channels, it's advised to speak in a professional and positive manner, demonstrating correct communicative etiquette. The use of your tone is extremely important in posting and if it's relevant to your post, the use of colloquial language or conversational tone is acceptable, but always make sure spelling, punctuation and grammar is of a particular fashion. The use of visual aids such as Emoji's or pictures are also acceptable if used appropriately and tastefully. These visual aids can be aesthetically pleasing to our audience and help build on brand identity.



# RESPONDING TO NEGATIVITY ONLINE...



*constructive criticism is something to be considered*

If a person has a critical idea, you can acknowledge their opinions or suggestion with a positive message to help build trust with your audience.

However, with negative criticism, do not dismiss it right away if the tone has alerted you. Do check that there is a genuine issue, acknowledge their comments and thank them for alluding you to the issue, and following this take steps to address the complaint through the appropriate channels. This allows reassurances and helps to rebuild trust if any has been lost.

In respect to dealing with 'trolls', who are people who adds unsettling or offensive content on a social media platform. If we acknowledge trolling and spamming, we then can watch out for these and delete or block their posts to avoid future damage.

## 6. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- It is important not to share any personal details of volunteers or message content if volunteers are enquiring regarding something via social media.
- It is in the best interest of Comhaltas members that use of personal information is restricted when it comes to posting over social media.

# 7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 SOCIAL MEDIA GOVERNANCE TASKS MUST BE ACCESSED BY BRANCH PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS, BRANCH CATHAOIRLEACH AND IN SOME CASES THE RUNAI. THESE SOCIAL MEDIA ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES CAN INCLUDE MESSAGE APPROVAL, SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT AS WELL AS TRAINING.

7.2 Personal relations with other volunteers must be carefully considered, especially younger volunteers in terms of inappropriate contact on social media channels, personal or work related.





# 8 POTENTIAL LEGAL RISKS

- 8.1 When posting internet content, volunteers must respect copyright, privacy, fair use and other applicable laws
- 8.2 Be vigilant when using Twitter, Facebook and other social networking platforms and follow their terms and conditions effectively
- 8.3 It is essential that you credit any sources you have utilised in your content if you are reposting or borrowing content from an external source for example, be aware of image copyright



# 9. Social Media security risks to Comhaltas

Security is vital in social media usage. Whilst using Comhaltas social networking channels, you may wish to share interesting links or content, but consider thoroughly checking the link before reposting. Be sure to create secure passwords and try not to use the same password for each channel as it can put you at risk of getting hacked



# 9.1

A) Human error is the most common risk as accidental tweets do happen as well as unknowing clicks on phishing links

B) Not paying attention on social media is much like human error but by not paying attention or leaving it unmonitored, it can put you at risk of being infected by a malicious virus which can spread to followers which then potentially may lead to lack of trust from your following, then unfollowing and losing your audiences support

C) Be wary of malicious apps and attacks; The internet is rife with malevolent software so pay attention to security warnings that appear on your computer as they can protect you, Comhaltas and respective volunteers from computer viruses.

D) Phishing scams are used on social media to trick people into handing over personal information such as banking details and passwords, so be extra attentive of fake friends and clicking on links sent in the messenger application of your social media channel

E) Privacy settings are also something to be mindful of as hackers can take control of a brands social media which then can risk sending fraudulent posts to followers or make adjustment to the channels appearance.





# Accountability

Exercising caution and using common sense is pivotal whether posting on behalf of Comhaltas or on your personal channels.





COMHALTAS

This document enables officials, employees, members or volunteers of Comhaltas to progress a positive, active online presence in order to heighten the experience and enjoyment for the benefit of all