



Charity No. 1198865

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Colchester Operatic Society fully complies with information legislation. For the full details on how we use your personal information please visit our website <https://www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk/about/privacy-policy/> or speak to our Secretary if you are unable to access the internet.

This policy applies to Colchester Operatic Society (COS) and its committees, including Colchester Operatic Society Second Edition (CO2), who are collectively referred to as “The Society” and “Colchester Operatic Society”.

Colchester Operatic Society and many of its members participate in social networking using websites such as (but not exclusively) Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, Threads and X (formerly known as Twitter). The Society uses production specific closed and/or secret groups (usually through Facebook) as a forum for communication between the committees & their members, cast members and members of the production team and stage crew. These are monitored by appointed members of the Executive Committee as administrators. Only relevant people are invited to join these groups and all posts made to the group must be approved by an admin. We also have a public COS Facebook group used to share information to a wider audience of members, including previous and potential members, and whilst still monitored by us, this group is not a confidential forum.

Whilst those invited to join these groups are free to use them as a communication and social networking tool, we ask that **everyone ensures that they do not breach the law, defame the Society or any other members of the Society**. We respect a member’s right to personal opinions and the freedom to voice these within our social media groups and on our public Facebook page, using their personal social networking accounts/pages, but we ask all members and appointed/employed individuals to:

- Ensure that they do not conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the Society.
- Take care not to allow their interaction online, both on personal social networking accounts/pages and within any members and/or production Facebook or other social media groups and forums, to damage or perceive to damage working relationships between individuals involved in any of our productions and activities.
- Never include material that is abusive, defamatory, sexist, racist, or that could be interpreted as inciting hatred towards others, discrimination, prejudice, harassment or bullying.
- To raise any issues or concerns related to the Society and its productions or activities directly with the relevant personnel and/or committee rather than inciting open discussion on social media platforms, groups and/or forums

If posts or comments made to ANY of our Facebook groups and social media platforms are deemed to be in breach of the above conditions they may be deleted or will NOT be approved.

Members of the Executive Committee, who manage the Society, make every effort that is reasonably possible to ensure that all of its members and appointed/employed personnel are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying, harassment and discrimination of any kind will not

be tolerated. This includes cyber-bullying, which could include bullying by text messages, phone calls, Instant messenger services, circulating photos or video clips or by posting comments online, including on Facebook groups and/or other social networking sites. Any evidence or reports of bullying, discrimination and/or harassment will be taken seriously by the Executive Committee, discussed and appropriate action taken. This may include removing individuals from our Facebook and social media group/s, removing an individual's role, position or status from the production and/or Society and if necessary, reporting an individual to the police for criminal prosecution.

Members with complaints regarding the Society, its productions, members or employees should follow our complaints procedure and refrain from publicly complaining using our Facebook group/s, page and/or other social networking sites and forums, as this can be detrimental to Individuals, personal relationships and/or the reputation of the Society.

We expect all members and appointed/employed individuals to read and abide by the terms of this policy.

In addition, we expect those appointed as administrators of Society social media pages, groups, accounts and websites to monitor the pages/groups/accounts/websites they have been assigned to, to ensure members adhere to our social media policy, reporting any violations of this policy and/or any evidence or incidents of bullying, discrimination and/or harassment to the Executive Committee and other authorities as and when necessary and taking appropriate action, such as removing any inappropriate material posted, to safeguard the Society; its members, volunteers and employees; and the wider community.

Policy Updated September 2023