

EAST ANGLIAN TRACTION ENGINE SOCIETY

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1 How the Society uses social media.

In addition to the Society's website, it currently operates a page on Facebook. This is used for posting and/or sharing relevant or interesting information regarding events (both the Society's own and others in the region), members' activities and anything of interest to its members and steam and vintage enthusiasts in general.

It may be desirable in future to look into using other platforms such as Instagram, any such development will also be subject to the provisions in this policy.

Discussion forums and dedicated chatrooms are not used in connection with the Society's social media activities at the current time.

Users of the Society's Facebook page are able to post comments, pictures etc. In the rare event these posts are inappropriate for any reason, they can be removed by any of the page admins.

the social media admins act on behalf of all trustees who have a responsibility in regard of the conduct of Society and club activities.

Social media activities related to promotion of the Society's own events (for example the Crank Up, which has its own Facebook Page) shall be conducted in accordance with this policy, with appropriate personnel (i.e. the event organiser(s)) and two or more of the EATES page administrators.

2 Oversight and controls

Admin access to the Society Facebook page is currently limited to:

Chairman and Webmaster	Kate Plant
Publicity Officer	Michael Pumfrey
Membership Officer	Robert Pumfrey

And one other Trustee nominated to act as page admin.

Keeping the number of page admin small ensures quality and consistency in posting, while having enough people to maintain access in the event of one admin losing access to their Facebook for any reason.

Any of the page admin can make a post "as" the Society. In practice most posts are made by the publicity officer. The membership officer has a special responsibility to post membership news, in particular the passing of members – especially if the other admins are unavailable to do so.

In general, posts on behalf of the committee (trustees) appertaining to Society activities or policy will have been approved, or indeed requested, by the committee at one of its general meetings.

Any of the four admins have the power to moderate content and delete posts if required, in consultation with the other admins and/or the wider committee if considered necessary.

Any moderation, editing or other actions taken by the admin team should be reported to the committee/trustees at a meeting (unless urgent action is necessary). These issues will normally be reported by the publicity officer.

3 Required conduct for those managing Society social media

Anybody posting “as” the Society needs to remember that they are representing the whole Society, and it is important that all posts reflect that.

The social media admin team need to be mindful in their use of personal social media that they do not, inadvertently or otherwise, harm the reputation of the Society.

In posting pictures, it is important that copyright/permission to reproduce images is considered. In the case of historic pictures of interest to the Society, they may be “out of copyright”, however it will still be courteous to acknowledge any source. Copyright queries over individual images should be dealt with promptly by the page admin.

Interactions with young, vulnerable or indeed any users will be limited to discussion relevant to the Society’s aims and activities. If something raises concerns with the page admin, it should be dealt with in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy. All page admins have access to the Facebook page messenger service, which ensures multiple oversight on discussions taking place.

The social media admin team carry out the task as part of their existing committee/trustee responsibilities. Their output is subject to group oversight by the other admins, and wider scrutiny by the committee/trustees.

4 Relationship to other policies

Third party users of our social media channels are afforded the same protections under our Safeguarding and Risk policies as visitors to our events and activities.

Social media admins and committee members generally should be careful to maintain a distinction between Society activities and personal activities on social media, being mindful of protecting the Society’s reputation and public perception as much as possible.

5 Responding to incidents

All page admins can amend, hide and/or delete content as required. This includes, but is not limited to, “spam” posts, offensive, derogatory or discriminatory posts and material likely to harm the reputation or public perception of the Society.

The chairman has admin access to the social media feed and can always be consulted if another admin is not sure of the best course of action with a particular post. They can also consult the rest of the trustees if considered necessary.

In the event a genuine concern or complaint is raised via the Society social media, a page admin should reach out to the affected person in the first instance with an offer to take their concerns to the committee/trustees for discussion and resolution.

In the event of abusive messages being received, the sender will not be engaged with. If the messages are threatening in nature, it may be appropriate to report them to the social media platform or the

appropriate authorities. Anybody posting or sending abusive material via the Society social media will be denied further access.

In the event of very serious abusive content, it may be appropriate to discuss it at trustee level to consider whether it should be reported to the Charity Commission under their serious incident reporting procedures, and/or whether further action or sanctions, such as suspension of Society membership may be appropriate. Any external reporting should be done on behalf of the trustees or by an executive decision on their behalf if considered urgent.

Where problematic content has been posted by a Society trustee rather than a third-party user, it should be discussed by the committee in accordance with the developed policy on conflicts of interest.

6 Managing potential risks in posting social media content

People can behave on social media, or respond to criticism in ways they would not when speaking or writing to the public.

The Society should not post any content which is or could be regarded as:

- Harmful
- Inconsistent with the Society's purpose or not in its best interests
- In breach of the law.

Social media admins should ensure that the Society's social media output is likely to be compliant with any relevant laws, for example:

- UK GDPR rules on publishing personal information or data (see GDPR Policy)
- Privacy (misusing private information or intruding on a person's right to privacy)
- Copyright law
- Defamation law
- Whistleblower protection
- Equality and Human Rights including discrimination, harassment and freedom of expression.

They should also be aware of the rules or any codes of practice of the platforms used, including risks associated with spreading false information, particularly if this is shared with intent to mislead. Nothing should be posted that could result in a criminal offence, including any communications that constitute hate crime or are malicious, threatening, indecent or grossly offensive.

In the event of any post that could be considered a breach of the above, the Society should act by removing or deleting it as soon as possible, with the poster dealt with in line with this and other relevant policies.

It should be considered whether it is necessary or appropriate to make a corrective public statement. While it may be reasonable not to do so, this should be balanced against the potential risk to the Society's reputation in neglecting to do so.

7 Society members' use of personal social media

The Society cannot and does not seek to restrict a member or any other person's freedom to use social media as they see fit. However, members do have a responsibility to protect the reputation and perception of the Society, as set out in the Constitution, which is the Society's Governing Document.

In the event that a trustee or member's social media posting, whether on the Society social media feed or elsewhere, is subject to a complaint by a third party, the trustees of the Society shall investigate it in the manner set out by this policy.

The Constitution sets out the steps to be taken if a member has acted in a way that risks damaging the reputation of the Society, and it is this pathway that will be pursued if the trustees consider it necessary in dealing with complaints concerning these matters.

Policy dated 8 March 2023

Review: to be reviewed annually, or upon a change of personnel.

Reviewed and confirmed: 27th March 2025.