

THE UNITED PARISH POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The United Parish of St Mary the Virgin (Speldhurst), St Martins of Tours (Ashurst) & St John the Evangelist (Groombridge)

The purpose of this policy is intended to guide appropriate, respectful and effective use of social media by representatives of our three Churches. It ensures that all online communications reflect our mission, values and responsibilities as a Christian community.

Scope:

This policy applies to :

- All staff, clergy, PCC members, volunteers and Ministry Leader
- Anyone posting on behalf of our three Churches on official accounts (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube etc)
- Personal accounts when referencing or representing our three Churches in any way

General Principles:

- Be Christ-like: Reflect Christian values – kindness, honesty, humility and respect in all interactions
- Be transparent: clearly identify when you are speaking on behalf of our Churches
- Be safe: respect the privacy and safety of individuals, especially children and vulnerable adults
- Be accurate: share only verified, appropriate and Church approved information
- Be responsible: understand that social media is public and permanent. Represent the Church with integrity

Content Guidelines (you may share):

- Event announcements, service times, and seasonal activities
- Sermon quotes, Bible verses and inspirational content
- Photos/videos of church life (with correct consent)
- Community involvement, outreach and partnerships

You must not:

- Post confidential or sensitive information
- Share photos of individuals (especially children) without explicit consent
- Use offensive, diverse or inappropriate language
- Engage in arguments, or controversial debates online
- Endorse political parties or candidates on behalf of the Church

Safeguarding & Consent:

- Always obtain written consent before posting identifiable images or videos of people
- Do not tag or name children in any post
- Follow the Church of England safeguarding guidelines at all times

Account Management:

- Each account should have at least two administrators for accountability
- Passwords should be stored securely and changed periodically
- Inappropriate or concerning comments should be reported to the Vicar or Safeguarding Officer immediately

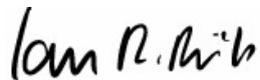
Personal Social Media Use:

- You are often perceived as a representative of the Church
- Avoid posting anything that could bring the Church into disrepute
- Do not disclose confidential Church matters or speak on behalf of the Church without permission

For questions or concerns related to this policy, please contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Dawn Pottow – dawn.pottow@speldhurstchurch.org

If you have questions about social media and children in our Parish please contact Kelly Kyte, St Mary's Families & Children's Worker at kelly.kyte@speldhurstchurch.org

Date 20 August 2025



Churchwarden, St Mary's Church, Speldhurst