



WALTERSTOWN GFC

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Policy Owner: Walterstown GFC Executive Committee

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Version	Author Name(s)	Date	Next Review Date
V 1.0	Ruth Chambers, Mark Foy, Elaine Carolan	March 2025	February 2026

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

This policy outlines the principles and procedures for managing Walterstown GFC's communications and public relations activities. The policy aims to:

- Promote the club's activities, achievements, and values.
- Ensure clear, consistent, and respectful communication with our members and community across all channels.
- Maintain a positive public image and uphold GAA/LGFA values.
- Ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other data protection laws and Child Safeguarding guidelines in all communications.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Walterstown GFC members, including coaches, players, parents, and supporters, in relation to the use of the club's communications platforms.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Communications Officer/Communication Committee: Responsible for overseeing internal and external communications, managing media relations, and maintaining the club's official channels. These channels include-but are not limited to the club website, the main club Spond group, X, Facebook, and Instagram, and the official club email.
- Committee Members and Coaches: Ensure all communications align with this policy and represent the club in a positive manner.
- Club Members: To communicate respectfully, particularly when engaging with the public or using social media.

4. POINT OF CONTACT/CLUB COMMUNICATIONS INQUIRIES

All club Communications inquiries must be directed to the Communications Officer/Committee via email at communications.walterstown.meath@gaa.ie.

5. COVERAGE

PR & Communications is a voluntary role within our club, and as such, it is not feasible to guarantee coverage for every event, match, or activity. Coverage shall be provided based on the availability of time and resources, with priority given to key events and activities.

- **Content Submission:** Coaches, parents, and members are welcome to submit relevant images, videos, or content to communications.walterstown.meath@gaa.ie for consideration. All submitted content will be reviewed, and efforts shall be made to share content that aligns with the club's values and communications strategy.
- **Approval Process:** All submitted content will be subject to review before consideration for posting. While the aim is to share as much content as possible, there may be instances where certain submissions are not posted due to time constraints or alignment with the club's messaging, at the club's discretion. The decision regarding what content is posted, and the volume of content shared rests solely with the Communications Committee.
- **Game Coverage:** A team photograph shall be taken at juvenile fixtures, but please note that while we aim to capture as many players as possible, it is not guaranteed that every individual player will be photographed in action during matches.

6. COPYRIGHT AND USE OF CONTENT

- All images, photographs, graphics, video content, and written content produced by the club or its members are the intellectual property of the creator, in accordance with the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000. This includes, but is not limited to, photographs taken at club events, training sessions, and matches, graphics created for promotional/advertising materials, video content such as event recordings or highlights, and written content such as match reports, website posts, social media captions, and other similar materials.
- No image, graphic, video, or written content may be reproduced, distributed, or used without the explicit written permission of the creator.
- Images, graphics, video content, and written content shared on official club channels are intended solely for the club's use and should not be used by any other party without prior approval from the original creator.
- Members are expected to respect the intellectual property rights of others and refrain from using any images, graphics, video content, or written content without prior consent.
- All creators retain their moral rights over their work, including the right to object to distortion or derogatory treatment of their work.

7. SOCIAL MEDIA

- Official social media accounts are managed by the Communications Officer or designated individuals and are overseen by the club's Children's Officer.
- Posts should reflect the club's values, celebrate achievements, and engage positively with followers.
- Members should avoid posting content that could damage the club's reputation. Comments deemed inappropriate will be removed.
- **County Development Squads and Teams:** Walterstown GFC recognises and supports the efforts of all players involved in juvenile county development squads/teams. However, to avoid potential disappointment should players not progress to final teams, the club refrains from posting announcements about juvenile players making county development panels/teams.
- **Condolences:** Walterstown GFC offers its condolences to the families and friends of club members during times of loss. The club aims to provide support and recognition through social media posts; however, members are asked to understand that the Communications Committee may not always be aware of such events.
- **Condolence Requests:** If a member wishes to have a condolence post made on behalf of the club, the relevant details should be emailed to communications.walterstown.meath@gaa.ie or sent via direct message on the club's social media sites. This will ensure that posts are handled with accuracy and respect.

8. ADVERTISING AND SPONSORSHIP

The club's social media platforms will be used to promote its activities, achievements, and partnerships in a manner that aligns with the club's values. The following guidelines apply to advertising and sponsorship content:

- **Main Sponsors:** The club will use and post logos/add tags from its main sponsors across official club social media platforms. These logos will be featured in posts that highlight the ongoing support provided by these sponsors to the club.
- **Sponsor Recognition:** Businesses that sponsor jerseys, gear, or other club-related materials will be acknowledged with a thank-you post, recognising their contribution to the club. These sponsors will also be seen in action shots of teams wearing the sponsored gear. However, these businesses will not be featured in regular promotional posts beyond this acknowledgement.
- **Paid Advertising:** The club offers paid advertising opportunities on its social media platforms, website, scoreboard, and at our club grounds. Businesses interested in promoting their services or products through the club's channels are welcome to inquire about available packages. All paid advertising will be subject to approval and will be clearly marked as sponsored content online.
- **External Business Content:** The club will not share or promote content for businesses outside of its official sponsorship agreements. This includes refraining from posting advertisements, promotions, or content created by external businesses.
- **No Content Creation for External Businesses:** The club will not create custom content for external businesses, nor will it engage in partnerships where the club's social media platforms are used to promote other commercial interests. The focus remains on promoting the club's activities, its main sponsors, and sponsor recognition only.

9. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- Coaches, volunteers, and parents must use a Spond group linked to the Walterstown GFC club Spond account for all official club communications. WhatsApp should not be used for this purpose.
- The club's Children's Officer must be included in every Spond group that involves players under 18.
- Players under 18 should not have sole access to a Spond group or share personal contact information, such as phone numbers or email addresses, within the app. A parent or guardian must be assigned to their profile. Any profile found to be in breach of this policy may be subject to deletion.
- Information shared within Spond or any other designated official platforms must be accurate, clear, and directly relevant to the activity.

10. FIXTURES AND COVERAGE

Fixtures for Meath GAA teams, including dates, times, and venues, are consistently published on the Meath GAA website. However, Meath LGFA does not provide specific fixture dates and times, instead only publishing on or before dates. This presents challenges in effectively planning and promoting coverage for ladies' fixtures in advance.

- **Fixture Notification:** Coaches, team managers, or the relevant individual should inform the Communications Officer of the fixtures for any upcoming ladies' games. Such information should be provided well in advance to facilitate potential promotion and coverage arrangements. Please note that promotion and coverage are not guaranteed solely on the basis of submitting fixture details. Notifications should be communicated to communications.walterstown.meath@gaa.ie.

- **Timeliness of Information:** To ensure proper planning and allow for the timely preparation of content, fixtures should be communicated in advance. Notifications received at the last minute, particularly on the day of or before the match, may hinder the ability to arrange adequate coverage.
- **Fixture Changes:** Any alterations to previously published fixtures, including changes to time, date, or venue, should be communicated to communications.walterstown.meath@gaa.ie at the earliest possible time. This will allow for necessary adjustments to promotional materials and coverage plans.

11. DATA PROTECTION

Managing Walterstown GFC's communications and public relations activity will involve the processing of personal data relating to our members and other members of the public. The types of personal data processed include:

- Players' names, images and videos
- Event attendees' names and videos
- Membership details
- Subscribers to newsletters or email marketing campaigns
- Members of the public

Personal data will only be collected for legitimate purposes relating to the club's communications and public relations/communications activities as outlined in this policy. Our lawful bases for processing personal data include the following (but may not be strictly limited to):

- **Consent (e.g., processing personal data through online forms for newsletters, photographs, online social media content or marketing):** Individuals must actively opt in (e.g., ticking a checkbox) and be clearly informed about the purpose of the data collection for us to rely on their consent. Individuals can withdraw their consent at any time (e.g., by informing the club that they wish to unsubscribe from email communications, or that they no longer want their photographs taken and uploaded to social media).
- **Performance of a Contract:** This lawful basis is relevant where the club processes personal data when someone applies for club membership or event registration, player participation in competitions, etc.

We will only collect the minimum amount of personal data that is necessary for the specified purposes outlined above. Personal data will be stored securely and protected against unauthorised access, loss or damage.

Personal data will be retained for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed. Personal data may be stored for longer periods in some circumstances where the personal data is processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes. An example of this is our retention of images and match reports.

12. POLICY REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

This policy is subject to periodic review and may be amended as necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective. Any changes will be communicated to members.

13. BREACHES OF THE POLICY

Any concerns relating to a potential breach of this policy, or any other complaints or grievances, should be referred to the Walterstown GFC Executive Committee. Matters will be reviewed in line with the Club Constitution and the GAA Official Guide and Codes, with the aim of ensuring fair, proportionate, and constructive outcomes. The Executive Committee can be contacted at: secretary.walterstown.meath@gaa.ie

14. RATIFIED BY

This policy was ratified by the Walterstown GFC Executive Committee on April 16, 2025, and comes in to effect on April 17, 2025.

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¹ © 2025 Walterstown GFC. All rights reserved. For any inquiries regarding this policy, please contact the Communications Officer/Committee at communications.walterstown.meath@gaa.ie. Policy last updated on April 17, 2025.

² Policy Owner: Walterstown GFC Executive Committee