

# Barrow and Wolds Group

✦ HOLY TRINITY ✦ ST. MARY ✦ ST. ANDREW ✦ ST. MARY

The Benefice of Barrow upon Soar with Walton le Wolds  
and the Benefice of Wymeswold and Prestwold with Hoton

## Social Media Guidelines

Social media is a very public way of enabling us as Christians to live out our calling to share the good news of Jesus Christ. One of its many joys is that it is immediate, interactive, conversational and open-ended. This opportunity comes with a number of downsides if users do not apply the same common sense, kindness and sound judgement that we would use in a face-to-face encounter.

While written specifically for all users who engage with the Church of England's and Archbishops' national social media channels, these guidelines are built on universal principles. They are a resource for Christians, people of other faiths and people of no faith. Dioceses and local churches across the Church of England are welcome and encouraged to adopt them.

- **Be safe.** The safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults must be maintained. If you have any concerns speak to the Parish Safeguarding Officer.
- **Be respectful.** Do not post or share content that is sexually explicit, inflammatory, hateful, abusive, threatening or otherwise disrespectful.
- **Be kind.** Treat others how you would wish to be treated and assume the best in people. If you have a criticism or critique to make, consider not just *whether* you would say it in person, but the *tone* you would use.
- **Be honest.** Don't mislead people about who you are.
- **Take responsibility.** You are accountable for the things you do, say and write. Text and images shared can be public and permanent, even with privacy settings in place. If you're not sure, don't post it.
- **Be a good ambassador.** Personal and professional life can easily become blurred online so think before you post.
- **Disagree well.** Some conversations can be places of robust disagreement and it's important we apply our values in the way we express them.
- **Credit others.** Acknowledge the work of others. Respect copyright and always credit where it is due. Be careful not to release sensitive or confidential information and always question the source of any content you are considering amplifying.
- **Follow the rules.** Abide by the terms and conditions of the various social media platforms themselves. If you see a comment that you believe breaks their policies, then please report it to the respective company.

**Additional Guidelines**

**Responding to Breaches of these Guidelines**

We may take action if we receive complaints or spot inappropriate, unsuitable or offensive material posted to our social media accounts. This may include deleting comments, blocking users or reporting comments as appropriate.

**Safeguarding**

The informality that social media encourages can mean that it might be harder to maintain a professional distance that is required when working with children, young people and the vulnerable.

Communicating directly online with someone, for example with private messaging, is like meeting them in private. You're advised to send messages to groups, rather than individuals, or share them publicly.

Be on your guard about fake friend requests and phishing scams.


**Sharing Photos**

There's nothing wrong with sharing photos online. You just need to make sure you have permission from anybody who features in the image before sharing, especially parental permission for children (ideally written permission). Be ready to remove an image as quickly as possible if requested.

**Confidentiality**


Use of social media does not change the Church's understanding of confidentiality. Within the life of the Church there are private meetings and conversations, particularly in terms of pastoral work.

Breaking confidentiality is as wrong as it would be in any other context. Arguably, it is worse as via social media a broken confidence could spread rapidly and be impossible to retract.

Incumbent ..... 

Churchwardens or PCC Secretary


Holy Trinity Barrow upon Soar and St Mary's Walton le Wolds

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St Mary's Wymeswold

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St Andrew's Prestwold

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Date: 20th January 2020