



Hate Speech Policy

Version:	1.0 FINAL
Date Agreed:	November 2023
Review Date:	November 2025

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Hate Speech Policy

1. Social media is a brilliant tool that enables people to connect with each other, share their experiences and inspire each other to get active and take part.
2. Unfortunately, it has also created an environment in which far too many people feel it is okay to make vile or threatening comments, with little respect for individuals, groups or consequences.
3. This policy is a declaration of Kielder Water Sailing Club's (the Club) commitment to protect people in our community both in person and online, and to play an active role in shutting down hateful comments and profiles.
4. This document outlines guidance on the actions that will be taken when someone has posted a hateful comment on one of Kielder Water Sailing Club's (the Club) social media platforms (including WhatsApp) aimed at one or more of the people in our community.
5. There can never be a 'one size fits all' approach to hate speech, so the Club will review each on a case-by-case basis before acting or reacting.

What do we Mean by Hate Speech?

6. Hate speech is typically directed towards another person or group on the grounds of protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, with the intention to harass, distress, offend and/or threaten.
7. However, hate speech could be directed towards anyone, at any time, for any reason at all, so it is important to be on the look out for it at all times in order to shut it down.
8. For the Club, this would be any negative comments directed at any member(s) across any of our social media channels. We also include any comments that may be considered grossly offensive, indecent, obscene or false.

Duty of Club Members

9. All Club members should abide by the following principles:

- **Don't be abusive:** make sure your words and any content you share aren't abusive or derogatory to others.
- **Don't spread hate:** don't give voice to hate speech.
- **React promptly:** report any hate speech to the Club as soon as possible in accordance with the Club's Complaints Policy which is available through the website. Asking the Club to review or respond to old comments risks reviving a conversation and having an adverse effect.
- **Be consistent:** in reporting and tackling hate speech.

When we See Hate Speech on Our Social Media Platforms

10. When we see or we are informed of posts that contain hate speech in any of our social media platforms, we will take the following steps:

Step One: Log it

11. We will screenshot the post and add it to the hate speech log. This will help us to see any themes or reoccurring topics and can be a helpful reference when dealing with new incidents.

Step Two: Report it

12. We will use platform reporting tools to report the post. There is usually a link on or near the post to report the content. More info:

- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [YouTube](#)

13. If we think the comment may breach the law (e.g., there is a specific threat of violence aimed at an individual or it is grossly offensive) we will report it to the police. This will be done through the [True Vision online portal](#), a government-funded website designed for reporting online hate crime which will pass our report to our local police force.

Step Three: Delete it

14. If the comment is offensive, indecent or obscene, we will delete it.
15. We will also consider whether to block the user account too.

Step Four: Respond

16. In some incidences it may be appropriate for us to respond to comments to demonstrate that we do not condone hate speech.
17. If we decide to respond, responses will be drafted by our EDI (equity, diversity, and inclusion) Lead or other appointed officer, and signed off by the committee to ensure diversity of thought and proper consideration.
18. Responses will:
 - Not personally attack the original poster.
 - Be consistent with the Club's tone of voice and stance around EDI.
 - Express support for those under attack.
 - Be civil, respectful and polite.

Step Five: Monitor

19. We will continue to update the hate speech log to track how many comments are received, and how each incident is dealt with.
20. We will review the hate speech log annually to decide whether any specific messaging, guidance or content on certain topics or issues should be created.

When we See Hate Speech on Other Platforms

21. We might see or be informed of some posts that contain hate speech in response to posts from other people or organisations similar to ours.
22. Just because they are not on our social media platforms, does not mean we will ignore them.
23. If the comment is in relation to our community, we will take the following steps:

Step One: Log it

24. We will screenshot the post and add it to the hate speech log.

Step Two: Contact the Account Being Targeted

25. We will contact the person or organisation through the channel (e.g. personal message), or via email to let them know we've seen the post and can support them as needed.

26. We will advise them to follow the steps above and encourage them to develop a policy like this one if they don't have one already.

Step Three: Report it

27. If we believe the comment contains hate speech, we will report the post using the platform reporting function or report it to the police if appropriate.

Step Four: Monitor

28. We will continue to update the hate speech log.

Resources

[RYA Guide to Hate Crimes](#)