**The Vauxhall Band**
**Social Media Policy**

**Date of Last Review - 11th January 2026**

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This is the Social Media Policy of The Vauxhall Band ("we"/"our"/"us").

The Vauxhall Band currently uses the account @thevauxhallband on the following social media channels, and this policy applies to their use and any other channels that The Vauxhall Band may join in the future:

Facebook
X (formerly Twitter)
Instagram
TikTok
LinkedIn
Threads
YouTube
Bluesky as @thevauxhallband.bsky.social

This policy applies to anyone working on our behalf, including our trustees, volunteers, and self-employed musicians and others ("freelancers") who we engage in the course of the charity's activities.

## Purpose

Social media use is governed by a number of laws. Equally, we have a very positive reputation, and this is extremely important in delivering our charitable work. The policy will help you understand how to use social media effectively and well and avoid problems.

## The Law

Use of social media is covered by a number of UK laws and social media has no national boundaries, so your posts may well be read in other countries. As a very simple guide, you may be breaking the law, if you post (or potentially repost) anything that may fall into any of the following categories:

- Harassment – not leaving someone alone.
- Menacing behaviour – writing something that may scare someone.
- Threatening behaviour – making someone believe that you were going to hurt them.
- Grossly offensive comments – making deeply unpleasant comments about a sensitive issue.
- Libel - a post is potentially libellous, if it is a false statement and may damage someone's reputation.
- Defamation - users may be sued for defamation, if they post an unsubstantiated rumour about someone.

- Data protection – breaching an individual's right to privacy.
- Copyright – posting material without permission that is owned by another person or organisation.

## Our Spokespeople

Only the Artistic Director is currently authorised to act as spokesperson for The Vauxhall Band, appointment of any other spokesperson would need to be approved by the Board. If you are not an approved spokesperson, do not represent or purport to represent The Vauxhall Band, as opposed to posting in your own personal capacity.

Even if you do not speak on behalf of The Vauxhall Band you are personally responsible for all online content you publish. If you were to post on an issue related to our work, people who know you may think you were speaking on our behalf and those that don't may think so too if you were to use our logo or refer to us in your posts.

## Guidelines

**Do not breach privacy or security.** Avoid posting personal information, such as someone's home address, and never share content about individuals without their explicit consent, unless it is absolutely clear that such consent would be granted. Be aware that some individuals, including those living with disabilities or health conditions such as dementia, may not be able to provide informed consent.

Don't make it easy for criminals, by posting information that they might use. For example, that the lock on the front door has broken (again), you will be taking a lot of cash to the bank or working late on your own.

**Clearly state your opinions are your own**. If you are not a spokesperson for The Vauxhall Band, make clear that your comments, opinions or tweets are your own, so these won't be interpreted as our position. This statement could appear on your profile. On Twitter, this should be in the 'Profile' section, which can be edited under 'Settings'.

**Abusive Posts.** A troll is someone who intentionally causes upset, harm, or offence by provoking people online. Be careful not to confuse a troll with someone who is critical and/or upset. There will be people who have valid concerns or have a genuine complaint that may come across as angry and irate. Look at their social media to see what they post and how they reply. Trolls often have a profile picture that is an object, rather than a person, or no profile image at all.

People who are abusive are usually trying to provoke a reaction from you, so don't give them what they want. Besides, you are unlikely to convince them they are wrong. Tweet or post separately to address the issue. You can also adjust your settings to not allow replies, use the relevant abuse reporting system, block them and, if you think they are committing a crime, report them to the police.

**Disagreeing.** If you disagree with something and feel you should respond, always be courteous and do not personalise your response. Focus on the issue, not the person who wrote the post.
**Text and Symbols.** Using emoji, 'lol' etc can help add humour to a fun post, but don't use it if you are making an important point, as this would trivialise your message. And using multiple exclamations, and lots of capital letters, bold and underlining is 'shouting', you would not be taken seriously.

**Think first, upload/repost/react after**. If something gets online, it stays there for a long time. Tweets now appear in Google search results. So that off-hand tweet or opinionated blog post can all be traced back to you.

**Ask for a second opinion.** Not sure if and how you should repost, react to or comment on something? Contact Laura Piras, Artistic Director laura@thevauxhallband.com for advice.

**Be politically neutral.** It is essential that we are not only politically neutral but seen to be. We aim to influence the government and its agencies positively in support of our community and criticising them won't help us do that. Equally, we treat all recognised political parties with respect and support any of their initiatives that support our own aims, but we do not actively support or promote any individual party. Information on campaigning can be found here and here.

**Ethics.** Posts should always be respectful of beneficiaries and portray them in a way they would wish to be, and not cause embarrassment, offence or alarm.

**Respect copyright, fair use and other laws**. Using imagery? Make sure you acknowledge the source and observe copyright laws. Images of crowds at events don't require the approval of each individual, but an image where a limited number of individuals are the subject matter of the image do. For example, an image of a band at a large cultural event, which includes the audience, doesn't require everyone in the audience's approval, but a small group of people, where they are clearly the subject of the image would. It is particularly important that you obtain informed consent if you wish to use images of children or adults who may be at risk of harm.

**Don't be offensive.**

Extremist views; sexism; pornography or other distressing or inappropriate content; discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic; and disparaging comments about any individual or group, including people with disabilities or those with mental health conditions, are unacceptable under all circumstances.

**Meaning**

Remember that the majority of our communication is through body language and voice tone/loudness etc, and the amount of written text in social media can be limited, so meaning can easily be lost. What may appear light hearted and funny to you, may potentially come across very differently on social media.

And take into account potential social and/or cultural differences in your audience who may be more sensitive to particular issues or subjects than the wider population.

### Moderation of Posts on Our Social Media

We act as a platform, both online and off, for our community to debate issues that matter to them, and we actively encourage diversity of opinion. We believe that open, honest debate can help to address divisions and just because we don't agree with something, doesn't necessarily mean that we would remove it. For example, critical comments about our work are rare but, whilst we always respond in a balanced and measured way, we do not remove these, even when we do not necessarily agree with these, subject to the guidelines below.

The community has diversity of views, some strongly held. There is nothing wrong in holding strong views, but that does not automatically make alternative views offensive. In general, as long as a post does not break the law, is a genuine contribution to a debate and is not offensive, we would not usually remove it. Specifically, we will take down any post that falls into the categories below:

- Anything we believe may fall into any of the categories in the section above titled 'The Law'.
- We would remove any post that contained views that we feel the majority of reasonable people would consider to be offensive.
    - The section 'Don't be offensive' above is not an exhaustive list but does provide guidance on what would normally be considered offensive.
    - The use of 'swear words' would normally also be considered offensive.
    - As would derogatory comments about an individual or organisation.
- Any post that is irrelevant to our work and the online conversations being held.

We may also block those posting such material and/or report the issue to the relevant authorities.

### Take Down Process

- Authority to remove posts lies with approved spokespersons.
- Any request to take down a post is to be managed using our complaints (or other) policy.
- Before a post is taken down, screenshot or otherwise record the post.

### Fake Social Media Accounts and AI Bots

Social media bots can be helpful, but many are malicious and, with the advent of generative AI, are becoming increasingly difficult to spot. Here are some indicators that may indicate an account is a bot.

- A recent account creation date
- The account shows coordinated resharing and amplifying of posts between a small network of accounts.

- Unrealistically fast response times to others, indicating that the account is almost always online.
- Low-quality comments with limited and repetitive vocabulary
- Usernames with long, random number sequences
- Stolen profile images from real people or "patriotic" profile images (such as flags, weapons, political symbols)
- A high volume of retweeted and shared content, with limited original posts
- Limited focus on content outside of a predefined set of hashtags and topics.

### AI Generated Imagery

**Marking AI Imagery.** If we use AI generated, stock or digitally enhanced imagery, particularly where the subject may be emotive or challenging, we will ensure that the way in which we do so is not reasonably likely to mislead. For example, we may make our policy on its use publicly available and use watermarks, alt text and/or footnotes and/or explain this in content text. We may not do so where its context and/or content is unlikely to mislead or influence. For example, an image of intergalactic war or use of a stock image on a post about opening hours.

**Accuracy.** We will ensure that any elements depicted in AI-generated images, such as medical equipment or cultural attire, are accurate and respectfully represented, to avoid misrepresentation or unintended offence.

**Social Media.** We recognise that AI deep fakes can be difficult to identify but those using our social media will be made aware of the risk. We will not like, share or support in the comments any imagery or content that we reasonably suspect to be fake.

### Distribution

This policy is to be brought to the attention of trustees and volunteers on appointment.

### VERSION CONTROL - Approval and Review

| Version No | Approved By | Approval Date | Main Changes | Review Period |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | Board | 25.01.2024 | Initial draft approved | Annually |
| 2.0 | Board | 27.01.2025 | Various. Please request. | Annually |
| 3.0 | Board | 11.01.2026 | Re-phrasing of certain paragraphs | Annually |

### Regulatory Guidance

Charity Commission E&W - Charities and social media.

Charity Commission: Managing online risk.

ICO: Content moderation and data protection.

**Resources**

UK Safer Internet Centre.

Digi Safe: Step-by-step digital safeguarding guide.

**Young People**

Facebook: Your child's online safety.

National Youth Agency: Safeguarding & Risk Management Hub.

NCPCC Learning: Protecting children from online abuse.

NSPCC Learning: Social media and online safety.