



St Thomas a Becket: Ramsey

Acceptable Use Policy

This Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) describes the terms and conditions for the use of the network and internet in the church, including social media. St Thomas a Becket church grants access if users abide by this policy. If users fail to abide by this policy access to the internet will be denied. Any misuse by employees may result in disciplinary action by the diocese. If St Thomas a Becket church incurs a financial cost due to user misuse or intentional malicious action, the user will bear the sole responsibility for the financial cost incurred

With the use of electronic networks, including Internet, St Thomas a Becket church is expanding technology access for congregation members, visitors and staff. With this access comes the responsibility for appropriate use. Members, visitors and staff, are expected to maintain Christian ethics in making appropriate decisions regarding their technology use provided by, and when in, St Thomas a Becket church.

Internet Use

It is our church policy not to allow unsupervised internet access to any child/young person under 18 nor vulnerable adults. Should individuals or groups wish to use our Wifi facilities, they must ensure under 18's and vulnerable adults follow this policy, or internet access will be withdrawn.

Users are reminded that their use of the Internet will be directly traceable to our Internet address. We therefore ask you not to visit sites which are:

- Illegal under current law;
- Defamatory, threatening or intimidatory or which could be classed as harassment;
- Contain obscene, profane or abusive language;
- Contain pornographic material whether in writing, pictures, films or video clips;
- Contain offensive material regarding sex, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or any other legally protected characteristic
- Infringe third party rights or are otherwise unlawful.

Internet Content

The church reserves the right to block access to any site. The church will take reasonable steps to block any site that it deems inappropriate. However, we cannot guarantee that all inappropriate content will be blocked. If you gain access to a site that you deem inappropriate, close your web browser immediately.

Systems and Data Security

The church will provide Internet access via the wireless network and will undertake reasonable steps to ensure it is secure from unauthorised users. However, no guarantee can be made to this effect. You are responsible for your own anti-virus and anti-malware precautions. The church will not be held responsible for any damage to your equipment whilst connected to its network.

You should not attempt to gain access to restricted areas of the network or to any password protected information without being duly authorised to do so.

Social Media

St Thomas a Becket church makes use of social media sites to share content and keeps in touch with the community and worshippers through Facebook and Twitter. Personal and Church social media

accounts must be kept separate. The guidelines in Appendix 1 must be followed to avoid the risk of:

- Forming inappropriate relationships.
- Using offensive, sexual or suggestive comments.
- Blurring the boundaries between public work/ministry and private lives.
- Grooming and impersonation.
- Bullying and harassment.

Mobile Phones

Where appropriate, mobile phones dedicated for work purposes will be provided and will be switched off outside working hours. Its usage will be monitored. This means that the work phone number is the only number that young people or adults are given.

Monitoring and Compliance

The church reserves the right to protect its network and systems by recording user ACTIVITY but not CONTENT, but a list of surfing activity may be recorded:

- To ensure that the use of the system is legitimate and in accordance with this policy;
- To comply with any legal obligation.

If your use constitutes a criminal offence, the information will be handed to the police.

All workers in church are accountable to the rector who will monitor communications

Wi-Fi Availability

We don't charge you for using the Wi-Fi. So you accept that sometimes, for technical, legal or operational reasons, it may not be available. We may also control the types of material that can be sent or received over the Wi-Fi. If we want to we can also suspend your access at any time in our sole discretion without responsibility to you. Your use of the Wi-Fi is at your own risk and we are not responsible to you for any damages, losses, costs or expenses you suffer because the Wi-Fi is unavailable, does not operate as expected or causes loss or damage to any data.

Prohibited Use

- Anti-social, non-Christian behaviour such as, but not limited to: pornography, harm to minors, hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, threats, and/or stories, jokes, cartoons which are in poor taste and do not support the mission of St Thomas a Becket
- Fraudulent, illegal, immoral, or unethical reasons. Examples include, but are not limited to: sending or relaying spam, transmitting viruses, grayware or wares, copyright or trademark infringement including file sharing websites, collecting personal data from others, launching Denial of Service (DOS) attacks.
- Unauthorized entry into other computational, informational, or communications devices or resources.
- Accessing or attempting to access the files belonging to anyone else on the network without express consent.
- Transmitting any communication where the meaning of the message, or its transmission or distribution would violate any applicable law or regulation or would likely be offensive to the recipient(s).

Appendix 1: Additional Guidelines on the Use of Social Media

Social media is immediate, interactive, conversational and open-ended. This sets it apart from other forms of communication and demands a new way of thinking. As well as the many opportunities, users should also be aware of (though not put off by) the associated risks.

1. Don't rush in

The immediacy of social media is one of its benefits – we can respond quickly to questions, correct misunderstandings, give our perspective about a breaking story in the news media. Responding quickly doesn't mean doing so without due consideration.

Before posting consider:

- Is this my story to share?
- Could this be 'Fake News'?
- Would I want my mum to read this?
- Would I want God to read this?
- Would I want this on the front page of a newspaper?
- The tone of a particular forum, if and how you might participate.

2. Transient yet permanent

Social media updates are immediate and will outdate quickly BUT they can have a more lasting impact and you should assume that anything you post is permanent. Even if you delete it later on, it may have been seen and re-published or referred to elsewhere.

3. You're an ambassador

If you are employed by the Church or a member of the Church, others will see you as a representative of the Church: So your actions matter. When talking about church matters, make it clear whether these are your personal opinions or those of the Church of England /Diocese.

4. Don't hide

Anonymity and 'hiding' behind aliases when using social media is frowned upon. It's also at odds with what we consider the main reason for using social media networks. How can anyone really connect with an alias? On any social media platform, if you choose a username or profile different to your real name, include brief personal details in the about section. When the account is a shared one, for example, a Facebook page for your parish, ensure people can easily find out who is responsible for the content.

5. Blurring of public/private life boundaries

In everyday ministry, the distinction between public duties and private life is difficult to draw. It is no different online. There are risks associated with personal opinions being seen as public statements, a minister's private life being invaded and the difficulties of detaching from work. Consider setting up different accounts for ministry and personal use to help set definite boundaries. Use privacy settings wisely.

6. 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. DO NOT add children, young people or vulnerable adults that are linked to church as friends to personal accounts

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.

7. Photography

There's nothing wrong with sharing photos online and it's the best way to show off your church and what you do. However, you must make sure you have permission from anybody who features in the image before sharing or publishing. Written parental permission is needed before any children are included in photos and avoid the use of names that could identify the children.

Be ready to remove an image as quickly as possible if requested.

8. Stay within the legal framework

Whilst sharing thoughts and reflections with friends or followers via social media can seem personal and private, it is not. By law, if one or more people can access it, content is classed as published, in the public domain and subject to legislation around libel, defamation, copyright and data protection.

9. 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. A broken confidence via social media could spread rapidly and be impossible to retract.

10. Be mindful of your own security

Don't overshare personal information. Never publish detailed personal information such as your address or telephone number, unless in a private message to someone you know and trust.

Policy agreed by PCC May 2024

Appendix 2 – Using Video in Church

Movies found on YouTube, the internet or other public source are subject to copyright protection. YouTube operates under a strict guideline that all videos must be copyright cleared by the person placing them on the site. However, you still need permission to show them in church.

Song videos that show the lyrics so that you can sing along to them are increasingly common on YouTube. However, CCLI recommends that you only show them in a worship service or other public setting with the consent of the publisher or copyright owner.

Often, such videos are uploaded to YouTube and then embedded on the publisher's website with details of how they permit it to be used. If the description of the video on the publisher's website or YouTube channel indicates that they intend it to be used in a church service, then this would constitute consent. However, if there is any doubt, CCLI recommend you contact the publisher or copyright owner for permission before showing the video.

Images are also often subject to copyright and need permission before use.

Any podcasts or videos made in the service must avoid using music unless an additional licence has been obtained. A Limited Online Music Licence (LOML) allows you to make church recordings available on the internet via streaming/webcasting or as download/podcast.

You also need permission to record from people taking part in the service – musicians, singers, readers or preachers – and that these people retain the copyright in their 'performance' for 70 years. If the only material you are making available is the preacher's sermon, either as a live stream or a downloadable podcast, you simply need the agreement of the preacher. No extra permission is needed. Again, the copyright remains with the preacher.

When recording 'special services' such as weddings – whether made by a professional videographer or on a family phone-camera – the church has no control of the recording and wedding couples should secure their own licences from PRS for Music that would cover both the wedding service and the wedding reception

If in doubt contact: Christian Copyright Licensing International
www.ccli.com
T: 01323 436 100