

# FLATCOATED RETRIEVER SOCIETY

Affiliated to The Kennel Club, The Field Trial Council, The Countryside Alliance, The B.A.S.C., The National Gamekeepers Organisation and The International Gundog League Retriever Society

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIETY MEMBERS

### **Introduction**

The Flatcoated Retriever Society recognises the huge contribution made by its members, Officers and Committee Members.

The purpose of this Code is to maintain high standards of conduct, and to protect the best interests of The Flatcoated Retriever Society. Conduct within the Society is driven by the Society's values and objectives as set out in the Constitution and Rules, which members agree to when signing their application to join the Society.

This code of conduct has been developed to set out The Flatcoated Retriever Society's expectations for all those taking part in, or attending events under its jurisdiction, along with general guidelines on the use of social media.

### **Why do we need this code?**

We are all under intense scrutiny in terms of the pedigree dog world and dog breeding generally. The advice and guidance offered in this document are not meant to penalise or cause difficulty, but are there for the protection of all of us and particularly the dog – unity and co-operation is therefore vital.

### **What we expect from you**

As with all sports, The Flatcoated Retriever Society expects all exhibitors and competitors to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and to ensure that their dogs are properly taken care of throughout the period of the event and do not become a nuisance to other dogs or to other attendees. Below are expectations which should be followed.

**Conduct** - participants have a duty both to their dogs and to others to make licensed events friendly and welcoming, and are expected to be co-operative and above all to create a safe environment, so all can enjoy their time at licensed events.

**Sportsmanship** - participants should conduct themselves at all times in an appropriate fashion and should display good manners and respect towards other participants, officials and to the judges. Any verbal communication with a judge should occur after judging has taken place, and must be conducted in a polite and professional manner.

**Abusive or aggressive behaviour** towards anyone at the event – including the judge, other participants, event management or other officials will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

**A zero tolerance approach.** No-one should be subject to intimidation or made to feel alarmed or distressed or put in fear of reprisal. Harassment is a criminal offence. To that end, The Flatcoated Retriever Society adopts a zero tolerance approach towards all type of harassment activity. Harassment may be defined as causing alarm, distress and anxiety and fear of physical violence or other threat, offensive statements, verbal abuse and threats. Conduct may include speech, obstruction and so on.

**Use of social media.** The rapid growth of social media technologies combined with their ease of use and pervasiveness make them attractive channels of communication. However, these tools also hold the possibility of a host of unintended consequences. To help you identify and avoid potential issues we have provided some examples of best practices which are intended to help you understand, from a wide range of perspectives, the implications of participation in social media.

**Maintain privacy** - Do not post confidential or proprietary information. Do not discuss a situation involving named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their permission.

**Does it pass the publicity test?** - If the content of your message would not be acceptable for face-to-face conversation, over the telephone, or in another medium, it will not be acceptable for a social networking site.

**Think before you post** - There's no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts and pictures years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied.

**Understand your personal responsibility** - You are personally responsible for the content you publish on blogs or any other form of user-generated content. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time. Protect your privacy.

**Be aware of liability** - You are responsible for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, libellous, or obscene (as defined by the Courts).

**Be accurate** - Make sure that you have all the facts before you post. It's better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later.

**Correct mistakes** - If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction.

**Respect others** - You are more likely to achieve your goals or sway others to your beliefs if you are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or disagreeing with a concept or person.

**Respect your audience** - Don't use personal insults or obscenity, also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered sensitive. Users are free to discuss topics and disagree with one another, but be respectful of others' opinions.

### **Outside Activities**

Society members should consider themselves ambassadors of the Society and should, therefore, ensure that none of their actions or activities has the effect of bringing the Society into disrepute.

### **Membership Subscriptions**

Society members must keep their annual subscriptions due 1<sup>st</sup> January up to date and where possible, attend the Society's AGM.

### **Important notice**

Society members should understand that if they do not follow these principles and fall short of the expectations and responsibilities in being a Society member, The Flatcoated Retriever Society may be obliged to implement and enforce Rule 11 within The Flatcoated Retriever Society's Constitution and Rules – which includes the possibility of removal as a member.

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