**Important Information regarding Copyright**

**November 2023**

To all Club and Society Executives,

Recently, there have been two instances of societies being contacted for infringing copyright, owing to images used on their websites. This has led to significant fees having to be paid to the copyright holder, in order to avoid court cases. The likelihood is that now SU clubs and societies are on external company radar’s, more could be contacted for infringement of copyright.

We are asking all clubs and societies **with immediate effect** to do a thorough check of their websites and other media channels, and to take down any images that infringe copyright. You must check all images on these sites, no matter how old they are. The most recent charge related to an image on a website which was uploaded in 2018, so historical images placed on your sites are at risk of infringement just as much as recent images.

The basics are that:

**Photographs, illustrations and other images will generally be protected by copyright as artistic works. This means that a user will usually need the permission of the copyright owner(s) if they want to perform certain acts, such as copying the image or sharing it on the internet.**

**The vast majority of images on the internet are likely to be protected by copyright, so it is only safe to use them if:**

* **you have specific permission to do so through a licence;**
* **or your particular use is specifically permitted in the terms and conditions of the website supplying the image;**
* **or if you have established that copyright has expired;**
* **or if you are using the image in a way which is covered by a permitted act/exception to copyright.**

**The use of licensed images is usually much safer than using unlicensed images which offer no protection against infringement.**

[This link](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/copyright-notice-digital-images-photographs-and-the-internet/copyright-notice-digital-images-photographs-and-the-internet) gives more detail on what can and can’t be used.

If your club or society is contacted about infringing copyright, then the club or society is responsible for meeting the costs of any infringement. This may lead to a curtailing of planned activity, and potentially insufficient funds remaining for the club or society to continue operating.

It is in your own interests to remove any image that may infringe copyright.

If you wish to use images on your website but are unsure about copyright infringements, we suggest you may wish to look at sites such as <https://unsplash.com/> as a useful resource of copyright-free images.