

Goring Tennis Club

Complaints and Appeals Policy

Document Control

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V 1.0	January 2019	Fenella Derbyshire Goring Tennis Club Safeguarding Officer	Adopted from the LTA published documentation Approved by Goring Tennis Club Committee
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1. Policy statement

All members are free to make complaints on any aspect of the Club, its management and its members.

Goring Tennis Club will ensure that complaints are listened to carefully, and that members are treated with respect, fairness and confidentiality when making a complaint.

Complaints by members should be made in writing to the Club Secretary, and will be reviewed by the Club Secretary and Chairman in the first instance. If either of those individuals is the subject of the complaint, then the Vice Chairman will review the complaint.

Goring Tennis Club will endeavour to address all complaints within 14 days, and we will reply in writing. If you are unhappy with the response from the review, then you should appeal in writing. We will then appoint the Chairman to conduct the appeal. All complaints and their outcomes will be reported to the Committee, but will not be recorded in any minutes which are made public to the wider membership.

2. Dealing with grievances informally

In the first instance, you may seek to resolve matters informally. This is a useful way of resolving some problems quickly and easily. For example, if you are concerned about the behaviour of another person, or about a decision they made, you may prefer to speak to that person directly to explain your concerns and try to work out a satisfactory solution between yourselves. You may also try to do this with the help and support of a committee member or the head coach.

If the informal process fails to resolve your problem, you may then try to find a solution through the formal procedure.

3. Dealing with grievances formally.

The formal procedure consists of the following steps-

Step 1 – starting the process

Bring the matter to the Goring Tennis Club Committee's attention as soon as possible. Do this by informing the Club Secretary of your grievance in writing. Set out brief details of your concern and explain how you believe it may be resolved. The Club Secretary will forward this to the designated committee members.

Step 2 – invitation to a meeting

On receiving the written notice of the grievance, you will be invited to a meeting. We will normally aim to hold the meeting as soon as possible, but otherwise without unreasonable delay. You will also be informed that you may be accompanied at the meeting by a fellow member.

Step 3 – the meeting

At the meeting, the designated committee members¹, will seek further information from you. This is your opportunity to give details about your grievance and to make suggestions for how it may be

¹ Whenever possible, this will constitute a male and a female committee member

resolved. There may also be a need to investigate your grievance further; for example, to interview witnesses or to make other enquiries. If so, the meeting may have to be adjourned to allow for this. The designated committee members may need to speak to you again as the investigation proceeds.

Harassment, bullying or other misconduct allegations

Where the grievance concerns an allegation of harassment, bullying or of other misconduct against another person, you will be informed that that person has the right to a fair hearing, including the right to have an opportunity to defend the allegation.

Note: If the alleged misconduct is of such a serious nature that it may amount to gross misconduct, consideration may have to be given to suspending the member from the Club/squads/tournaments while the complaint is being investigated.

Step 4 – meeting the other party (if necessary)

This step will be followed where the grievance concerns an allegation of harassment, bullying or other misconduct against another member. Following the initial meeting with the aggrieved member, the designated committee members will meet with the other person against whom the complaint is made to:

- outline the nature of the allegation
- confirm that it is being handled as a formal grievance
- give him or her an opportunity to answer the allegation
- inform him or her that the matter will be investigated further
- inform him or her of the next steps that possible termination of their membership may be taken should the allegation be proven
- Inform him or her of the need to avoid contact (or, of any steps to be taken to avoid contact) with the aggrieved member until the matter is resolved.

General notes about interviews and investigations

The Committee will carry-out any further investigations that are necessary and will keep detailed and accurate records of all meetings held with the aggrieved member and witnesses and of any other enquiries that are made. The Committee will aim to complete the investigation as soon as possible, but otherwise without unreasonable delay. All witnesses who give information will do so privately and not in the presence of anyone else who was involved in, or who was present during, the events giving rise to the grievance. All information or evidence provided by witnesses will be treated as confidential.

Step 6 – making a decision and informing the parties

Having obtained all relevant information, the Committee will consider whether the facts support the grievance and, if so, what action, if any, needs to be taken. The committee members involved will prepare a written report of the investigation and its findings. As soon as possible afterwards, you will be informed about the outcome of the investigation. This will be done in a meeting, if possible, and will be confirmed in writing.

You will be informed of your right to submit an appeal against the findings in the event that you are not satisfied with the outcome. Any person affected by the findings of the investigation, particularly any member against whom allegations of harassment, bullying or other misconduct were made, will be informed about the outcome of the investigation. This will be done in a meeting, if possible, and will be confirmed in writing.

Step 7 – Appeals

Where the grievance has not been upheld and/or where you are not otherwise satisfied with the outcome, you will have an opportunity to submit an appeal and to attend an appeal meeting. Inform us of your wish to appeal within 15 days of the outcome of the investigation. Put your request in writing. Set out brief details of the reasons for your appeal. This should be sent to the Club Secretary. You will be invited to an appeal meeting. We will normally aim to hold the meeting as soon as possible, but otherwise without unreasonable delay. You may be accompanied at the meeting by another member.

The appeal will be considered by the Goring Tennis Club Committee. As soon as possible after the appeal meeting, or otherwise without unreasonable delay, you will be informed of our final decision in writing.

Step 8 – what happens next?

Where the grievance has been upheld, and especially where there has been a finding of harassment or bullying we will take all reasonably practicable steps to reassure and protect you from further such acts. Where it is concluded that it is appropriate to take further action against certain members, this will be considered by the Committee. The Committee will have the power to impose any one or more of the following sanctions on any person found to be in breach of any policy:

- Warn as to future conduct
- Suspend from membership
- Remove from membership
- Exclude a non-member from the facility, either temporarily or permanently
- Turn down a non-member's current and/or future membership applications