

HESWALL LAWN TENNIS CLUB

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT AND POLICY ON COURT ETIQUETTE

INTRODUCTION

At the club's EGM held on 15 February 2022 club members voted for a members' code of conduct to be produced. Previously, the club did not have such a code of conduct. However, it is common practice now for tennis clubs to have in place such a code of conduct.

The following code of conduct and the policy on court etiquette reflect the friendly and supportive spirit which the club's members have enjoyed for many years. The club's committee is confident this ethos will continue and sees it as important in maintaining the club's reputation.

The code of conduct sets out minimum standards of behaviour which all members are expected to follow. It seeks to avoid any serious issues arising. The policy on court etiquette sits alongside the code of conduct and sets out a range of behaviours which are considered acceptable or unacceptable on and around the tennis court.

Should a breach of the code of conduct or a serious breach of the policy on court etiquette occur, a complaints and sanctions process is set out below.

This code of conduct and policy on court etiquette comes into effect formally on 1 May 2022.

AIMS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND POLICY ON COURT ETIQUETTE

The aims of the code of conduct and policy on court etiquette are to:

- Ensure that all club members are treated fairly and with respect;
- Advise all members of the standards of behaviour and court etiquette which they are expected to meet so that an environment is created within which members can enjoy their tennis and the club can continue to flourish;
- Provide a complaints and sanctions process so that any issues can be addressed.

CODE OF CONDUCT – STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

All club members are expected to treat with respect all other members and players. The club will not accept any behaviour which may cause physical or mental harm to any other member or player.

In this respect, unacceptable behaviours can take place on or off the court, within the club's grounds or clubhouse, at another club or any other locality away from home. Such behaviours can include:

- Being abusive or showing aggression (verbal or physical) towards another member or player;
- Swearing;
- Racket throwing;
- Intimidating another member or player (verbally or physically);
- Calling into doubt the integrity of another member or player, such as by repeatedly querying line calls;
- Sending abusive and / or overly aggressive emails to members and/or members of the committee; (for the avoidance of doubt, unless specifically invited to do so, it will never be appropriate for a member to attend at or send correspondence to the home address/private email address of a committee member about club matters)
- Placing abusive or overly aggressive posts on social media.

'Overly aggressive' includes emails or posts which bully, intimidate or harass anyone.

The above list is not exhaustive.

POLICY ON COURT ETIQUETTE

Tennis etiquette covers different areas from those addressed within the rules of the game. Etiquette covers a range of behaviours which are considered acceptable on and around the tennis court. The following sections are intended to be of assistance, particularly to new members who are themselves new to tennis. The club's policy on etiquette covers the following areas:

The club's reputation

- By their behaviour all club members should always protect and further the club's good reputation.

Showing respect and being courteous

- All club members must----
- Show tolerance, courtesy, good manners, fairness, honesty and integrity in their dealings with each other, members' guests and playing and social visitors;
- Welcome new members and players to the club, irrespective of their experience of the game and their level of play;
- Show respect and courtesy to your partner, your opponents and others on or around the courts;
- Not criticise your partner or opponent, do offer encouragement;
- Take any loud dispute that occurs during a match off court and away from other players on adjacent courts;
- Not walk behind courts when a point is in progress to avoid causing a distraction;
- During play and particularly between games keep the amount and volume of conversation to a reasonable level so as to avoid distracting players on other courts;
- If a ball strays from an adjacent court onto your court, not hit it back immediately but do so when the players on that court are ready and then hit it back to the server's end of the court;
- Leave courts free of any litter after the match;
- Wind the net down if no-one else will immediately use the court;
- As a courtesy to your opponents should include leaving the court together at the end of the match.

Do not walk onto another court during a game

- Before crossing a court to get to your court, wait for the conclusion of the point or if the match is a competitive one wait until the end of the game, or wait until you are invited to cross, and do so as quickly as possible;
- Be aware if you are already playing on court that others may wish to cross your court and facilitate that where possible;
- If your ball rolls onto an adjacent court, wait for a break in the play on that court before requesting politely its return rather than retrieving it yourself.

Line calls

- Only call the lines on your side of the net;
- Call clearly on the basis of what you believe honestly to be correct;
- If you are not certain, or did not see the ball clearly, the ball should be considered good and the doubt must be given in favour of the opponent;
- If occasionally you have doubt over a line call, ask politely your opponents if they are certain as to the accuracy of their call and, if they are certain, proceed and play the next point;
- If there is real doubt over a line call, consider offering to replay the point.

Ball clipping the racket

- In the event of an inadvertent hitting of the ball in flight due to clipping the racket, the player should admit immediately and concede the point.

Keeping score

- The server should announce the score before the point;
- If the server forgets or does so inaudibly, the receiver should request the server to make an audible announcement of the score.

Mobile phones

- Mobile phone calls should not be made or received on court; leave the court to make or receive a call;
- Mobile phones taken on court should be switched off or put on silent or vibrate mode to avoid creating a distraction. It is acceptable for a member to inform those being played with that an urgent call is expected and for the phone not to be on silent

Clothing and footwear

- Players should wear recognised tennis clothing of any colour, together with proper tennis footwear;
- Tennis footwear is required both to promote safety and unsuitable footwear can provide insufficient grip and may cause damage to the courts.

COMPLAINTS AND SANCTIONS

If any member(s) believes that they have experienced either a breach of the code of conduct (an unacceptable behaviour) or a serious breach of the policy on court etiquette, they should contact the club President or Safeguarding Officer if they feel it is a safeguarding issue. Thereafter, if considered necessary, the committee (or appointed sub-committee) will arrange a meeting with that member(s) to discuss the issue. The committee /sub-committee may also arrange a meeting with the person(s) who are the subject of the complaint.

In considering the complaint, the committee/sub-committee will take into consideration all the relevant evidence. After the committee/sub-committee has deliberated and the committee has decided on a course of action regarding the complaint, a feedback meeting will be arranged with the member(s) concerned.

In the event of any complaint being upheld, the committee may impose (as it considers appropriate in the circumstances) any one or more of the following sanctions on a member found to be in breach of the club's code of conduct or in serious breach of the club's policy on court etiquette:

- A warning in writing as to future conduct;
- Disqualification from any event or tournament in which the breach has taken place;
- Suspension from membership which will require the member concerned not to attend at the club's grounds;
- Expulsion from membership (will require two-thirds of the committee to vote in favour of the expulsion for it to take effect).

If the matter is a safeguarding issue, the appropriate line of action will be taken in accordance with the club's safeguarding policy and procedures.