



Knutsford Tennis Club

Complaints Policy

This guide provides background information about how Knutsford Tennis Club (KTC) handles complaints regarding conduct and behaviour. It also provides some guidance on other complaints which might be better handled by Knutsford Sports Club or the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA).

Values/principles

1. There are some important values and principles that the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) applies to its complaints process. Knutsford Tennis Club has adopted these.

Right to complain: You have the right to complain: we take complaints seriously. You should not be harassed, bullied or put at a disadvantage because of making a complaint.

Equality: you should receive a proper response to your complaint, regardless of your age, gender, disability, race, religion, nationality, social status, sexual orientation or political persuasion.

Fairness: we believe that complaints should be dealt with fairly and openly. Unless it would put other people at risk, those affected by a complaint should have a chance to contribute and respond to any investigation.

Safety and welfare take priority: we will always give priority to concerns that affect safety and welfare. Issues affecting children will be treated very seriously.

Confidentiality: we treat complaints as confidentially as possible and will only discuss them with those involved in the investigation or decision-making process.

Sometimes we have to discuss complaints with other organisations. If we are worried about a risk to a person or to the public, we might need to pass on our concerns to the right authorities. If necessary, we will get advice from other organisations such as the Police, Social Services or the LTA.

Complaints about conduct, behaviour or court maintenance

2. All complaints relating to the running of KTC should be made to the Club Chairman, or any other committee member. This includes (but is not restricted to) complaints about the application of the club rules regarding access to the courts, the conduct of anyone employed by KTC, court or floodlight maintenance.

Complaints about other matters

3. If you have a complaint related to the bar, club house, car park or surrounding grounds then it might be more appropriate for the complaint to be raised with the Chairman of the Sports Club.

Complaining locally

4. The best way to resolve problems is usually at local level, by talking to the people involved. You should normally try this before making a formal complaint. This might take the form of contacting a club committee member, match/tournament/ event organiser or coach.

Complaint formats: in person, email or letter

5. You do not need to put your complaint in writing at first, although you can do if you prefer. At the outset, you might make a complaint informally by contacting a KTC committee member or Sports Club committee member, if appropriate.
6. It is often helpful to have a discussion with someone at first and sometimes the matter can be quickly resolved without any fuss. However, more serious complaints where the member is seeking disciplinary or similar action must be in writing. In all cases, if we are to take any formal action on your complaint, we will ask you to put it in writing giving full details. This helps to ensure accuracy.

Level of Information



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7. Provide as much information as you can. It can be difficult for us to deal with a complaint if we do not have very much information. Remember that we might not be familiar with all the background. Try to include information such as names, contact details etc. The more information you are able to provide with your initial complaint, the easier it will be for us to investigate.

Possible outcomes

8. In many cases, we can help to resolve problems informally. This might include:
 - An explanation or apology
 - Clarifications to responsibilities or roles
 - Changes in local arrangements
 - An agreement between those involved to act or communicate differently in future
9. Sometimes, our involvement might lead to formal action. Examples of this include:
 - Formal disciplinary action under the rules of Knutsford Tennis Club
 - Formal disciplinary action against a member of staff
10. Some complaints are matters for the LTA. Your complaint could lead to formal action by the LTA. This might include:
 - Formal disciplinary or child protection proceedings against a Licensed coach, an official or player
 - Formal disciplinary action against an LTA employee
 - Action to enforce contracts or agreements with the LTA
 - A decision to refer the case to another organisation such as the Police or social services
11. KTC or the LTA may decide to close your complaint without taking further action. If this happens, you will be given the reasons for our decision.

KTC response to complaints

12. We try to give an initial response to complaints within five working days. If the matter is urgent, we will respond more quickly.
13. To begin with KTC will consider whether the matter complained about is within its powers to investigate. As is explained above (paragraph 3 & 4), some matters will be for others to consider and KTC reserves the absolute right not to become involved in any matters not directly related to the running of the Tennis club. The committee or a sub-committee will consider whether the matter complained about is one for the club to consider. If it decides it is not related to the running of the club, the complainant will be informed and given the reasons for this. If the decision was made by a sub-committee, the complainant can ask for the matter to be reconsidered by the full committee.
14. If KTC is to investigate the complaint we will investigate it fairly. This means that we will gather information from the relevant people or organisations. Normally our investigation will include talking to the person or organisation who is the subject of the complaint and where applicable requesting a written statement in response to the complaint. Occasionally we will need to show copies of information or reports to the complainant. This will be done with due consideration.
15. We will take reasonable steps to conduct a thorough investigation, but will always give priority to cases where there may be a risk to someone's safety or welfare, and we always reserve the right to end an investigation at any time.

Staying informed of progress

16. You, and any other parties involved in the complaint, will be given regular updates on the progress of your complaint. These will normally be every two weeks. If there are delays in handling the complaint for any reason, we will keep the parties informed.



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17. If your complaint leads to formal disciplinary action, you will normally be informed of the outcome of this action. Some cases require a higher level of confidentiality than normal. In these cases, we may not be able to inform you of the detailed outcome. We will still try to give you information about how it will affect you.

Disputes and arguments

18. Neither KTC nor the LTA offers an arbitration, dispute-resolution or independent enquiry service. We will not usually become involved in arguments or disputes between members or between organisations.

Advice from the Police, social services or other authorities

19. KTC or the Sports Club may receive complaints that we need to discuss with other authorities. These might include the Police, social services departments, the NSPCC or other government or local authority departments. This might be because:

- A criminal offence may have been committed, or
- There could be a risk to the public, or
- There could be a risk to the safety or welfare of a child

20. Like any person or organisation, KTC does not need evidence of a crime or of a serious hazard before consulting with these statutory authorities. If we believe that their input could be relevant, we will consult at the earliest opportunity. Sometimes this consultation will lead to the direct involvement of statutory services.

Is there anyone else I can talk to?

21. Sometimes it can be useful to speak directly to someone outside Knutsford Tennis Club:

- You need urgent advice about someone's safety or welfare
- You don't want to discuss the issue with someone at Knutsford Tennis Club
- Your complaint is very serious
- Your complaint involves other organisations
- You need specialist advice

The LTA is able to advise on a range of different complaints, and in some cases will handle the complaint directly. If you are worried about a child's welfare, you can contact the following people:

- The Child Protection Officer at the County LTA
- The National LTA Child Protection Department (24hrs)
- Childline, or the NSPCC advice line, local Social Services, Police

Questions or queries about this policy

If you have a general query about this complaints policy, or have a formal complaint you wish to raise you should contact the Chairman at KTC :

Knutsford Tennis Club
Mereheath Lane
Knutsford, Cheshire
WA16 6SZ

Contact details can also be found on the KTC Website under 'Safeguarding and KTC Codes of Practise' or email 'Feedback@KnutsfordTennisClub.Org.UK' or 'Complaints@KnutsfordTennisClub.Org.UK'.