



Complaints and Appeals Policy

Complaints Policy

The Complaints Policy is what we will follow if your complaint is about someone's conduct or behaviour. This could be because you think that someone has behaved in a way that is unsafe, unprofessional, discriminatory, offensive or intimidating. It could be because someone has broken important rules or policies.

Values and principles

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. 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.

How to make a complaint?

If you have a complaint, it is often best to start by having a conversation with someone at Montrose Tennis Club. You could speak to the club president or vice-president, the club secretary, the club welfare officer or a member of the club committee. They may be able to help to resolve your problem. You could also make a written complaint and leave it in the clubhouse office (the club does not have a postbox to accept written complaints by post) or email montrosetennisclub@gmail.com. If your complaint needs to be looked into further, you will normally be asked to put your complaint in writing. We accept anonymous complaints, but it is often very difficult to investigate these properly. It is easier for us to handle your complaint if you provide as much detail as possible.

Who to contact to make a complaint?

Complaints will usually be handled by committee members or officials at open tournaments.

Management committee: you can speak to any of our committee members

Coaches: any of the coaches can also tell you how to make a complaint

Welfare Officer: if you are a child or an adult at risk, or if you are worried about the safety or welfare of a child or an adult at risk

Anyone else involved at Montrose Tennis Club that you trust

What will we do to investigate?

The Management Committee will meet to hear complaints within fourteen days of a complaint being lodged. We will try to give an initial response to your complaint within five working days. If the matter is urgent, we will respond more quickly. We will investigate your complaint fairly. This means that we will appoint someone who is independent from the original incident, usually a committee member or possibly an external mediator. We will discuss the complaint with all of the relevant people. Individuals requiring additional support in the process may bring a companion to discussions or meetings. We will try to gather any information that may be relevant to handling your complaint. Sometimes we will ask to show copies of information from the investigation to other people to allow them to respond. This is because we believe in fairness and openness. We will not share information if we think that this will endanger someone's safety or welfare.

How will I know what is happening?

You will be given the details of a person who will be your point of contact at Montrose Tennis Club. That person will make sure that you understand the process, and will help to answer any questions or concerns that you have. You will be given an update on the progress of your complaint every two weeks. If there are delays in handling your complaint for any reason, we will keep you informed. If your complaint leads to formal disciplinary action against someone, we will usually inform you about the outcome. We will not tell you the outcome if that person is a child, or if we believe that telling you would create a risk to other people. In this situation, we will still try to tell you about how you are affected by the action that we have taken.

What are the possible outcomes or results of my complaint?

In many cases, we are able to resolve problems informally. This might include:

- A change in arrangements for particular activities
- An explanation or apology
- An agreement to communicate or act differently in future

If an informal resolution is not suitable, then a small group of committee members will look at the information about the case. We will make sure that this group does not contain anyone directly involved with your complaint. They might decide to take the following action:

- Formal disciplinary action under the rules of the place to play
- Formal disciplinary action against a member of staff
- Changes in formal contracts or arrangements put in place by the place to play
- A decision to refer the case to another organisation such as the LTA, Police, or Social Services
- Closure of your complaint without action

Is there anyone else I can talk to?

Sometimes it can be useful to speak directly to someone outside the place to play if:

- You need urgent advice about someone's safety or welfare
- You don't want to discuss the issue with someone at the place to play
- 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 or an adult at risk's welfare, you can contact the following people:

- The Child Protection Officer at the County LTA
- The LTA Safeguarding Team on 020 8487 7000
- Childline on 0800 1111, or the NSPCC advice line on 0808 800 5000, local Social Services through Angus Council Accessline on 03452 777 778, Police on 999 for emergencies or 101 for non-emergencies

Questions or queries about this policy

If you have a general query about this complaints policy, you should speak to the following person:

Gillian McLeod
Montrose Tennis Club Secretary
Email: montrosetennisclub@gmail.com
Tel: 07917 854402

The Appeal Policy

If you would like to appeal against the decision that has been made you can do this within fourteen days after being notified of the first decision.

You may only appeal against the first decision if

- Due process has not been followed
- New evidence is available

If your appeal meets the above criteria then the Management Committee will consider the appeal within fourteen days of receiving it. Someone who is independent from the original incident and complaint process will be appointed to handle the appeal. This may be another committee member or an external mediator.

You will be notified in writing of any decisions made within fourteen days. If there are any delays in this process then you will be kept informed.