

# **Woodthorpe Tennis Club**

## **Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

**Including Safe and Inclusive Behaviour and Safe And  
Inclusive Reporting Procedure**

Approved by Club Committee: April 2024

Next review date: April 2026

## **Diversity and Inclusion at Woodthorpe Tennis Club**

This Policy sets out our commitment to help make our sport more open and available for everyone.

Traditionally there are barriers to diversity and inclusion in tennis. Most tennis clubs, ours included, are not fully representative of the community more generally and particularly, children and adults from black and minority ethnic communities, children and adults with disabilities, and both adults and children from economically disadvantaged families are underrepresented in tennis. Whilst there is a limit to what a small tennis club can do, we can nevertheless contribute to the national effort to make our sport more accessible for more people.

We believe that everyone involved in tennis has a vital role to play in promoting diversity and inclusion and we ask all members to proactively promote safe and inclusive tennis and take action against all forms of discrimination. We will include actions to promote this policy in our Club Plans.

We are proud to have a Diversity and Inclusion Policy that demonstrates our commitment to making tennis more diverse and inclusive. Together we can make a positive difference to people from different backgrounds to participate in tennis at our club by encouraging more people who are underrepresented in tennis – firstly to pick up a racquet, and secondly by making sure that the experience of everyone at the club is a positive one, where diversity is welcome and discrimination, of any type, is challenged.

## 1. Policy Statement

This policy supports our club's aim to ensure that

- Tennis is diverse and inclusive
- Diversity and inclusion are part of the culture of our club
- We take a proactive approach to ensure that communities and individuals are valued and able to achieve their full potential

As a club we want to enable more people to play tennis in a manner that it is safe, inclusive, and fair. This applies regardless of a person's age, disability, gender, marital or civil partnership status, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status or any other background.

We recognise that many concerns and /or disclosures may have both safeguarding and inclusion or diversity elements to them. This policy reflects that they are often connected hence the reporting procedures and Code of Conduct replicates procedures in the Safeguarding Policy.

This Policy strives to encourage wider participation in tennis and ensure that everyone has a positive tennis experience at our club.

## 2. Use of Terminology

We have adopted the following definitions within this policy:

**Discrimination** – treating someone in a less favourable way and causing them harm, because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation

**Diversity** – acknowledging, celebrating and respecting the differences between groups of people and between individuals. We will work to ensure that people can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

**Harassment** – unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. The focus is on the perception of the complainant not the intent of the perpetrator. People can complain of behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

**Inclusion** – ensuring that tennis is equally accessible to any member of the community so they can be fully involved in whatever capacity they choose; and that they are supported to achieve their potential in any capacity e.g. player, employee, volunteer, coach or official. We will work to ensure that people have a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, that they feel respected and valued and are not singled out, with regard to their age, disability, gender reassignment status, sex, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or

maternity, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, race or sexual orientation, socio-economic status or any other background.

**Positive action** – Woodthorpe Tennis Club is committed to taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers – whether real or perceived – that restrict the opportunity for all sections of the community to participate equally and fully. We will ensure that we institute, support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access to tennis and participation in associated activities by people from any group that is under-represented in tennis or has difficulty accessing it and that they can do so with dignity or without being singled out.

(See Appendix A for full glossary of terms)

### **3. Scope**

Woodthorpe Tennis Club has safe and inclusive responsibility for:

- Volunteers, including board members
- Any coach or other person employed by the club
- Our own venue
- Ensuring all accreditation requirements are met by accredited coaches, officials and venues.

We recommend and support good diversity and inclusion practice to:

- Members, parents and carers
- Accredited coaches, officials and venues
- Volunteers recruited by other organisations
- Venues hired by or on our behalf
- Club events

This Policy is in line with national legislation (see appendix B for details of the relevant legislation)

### **4. Responsibility for implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

**Diversity and inclusion is everyone's responsibility: not responding to discriminatory or unacceptable language and behaviour is not an option.**

The club's Committee and Chair have overall accountability for this Policy and Reporting Procedure, for being the strategic lead on diversity and inclusion and for ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation (see Appendix for details).

The club's Chair - Frances Leaman and Welfare Officer – Sheila Downey have overall responsibility for implementation of the policy.

The Committee and Welfare Officer of the club are responsible for updating this Policy and Reporting Procedure in line with legislative and organisational developments; and for developing a strategic and proactive approach to diversity and inclusion and responding to discrimination concerns.

The Welfare Officer is responsible for supporting the club to identify where diversity and inclusion support is required; to implement safe and inclusive procedures; and to promote diversity and inclusion principles, including the Safeguarding and Reporting Procedure, to all members and others associated with the club.

All staff, coaches, officials and volunteers involved in tennis are responsible for raising diversity and inclusion concerns with the club's Welfare Officer to start with; then the Safe and Inclusive Tennis team if applicable, as outlined in the Reporting Procedure.

Players, parents and guardians are responsible for following the Safe and Inclusive Behaviour Reporting Procedure (see Section 5).

Woodthorpe Tennis Club is committed to:

- formally adopt this policy;
- take steps to ensure that our committee, members, participants and volunteers behave in accordance with the policy, including where appropriate taking disciplinary action under our constitution;
- ensure that access to membership as well as access to participation is open and inclusive;
- publish accurate information about the location and accessibility of our facilities;
- support measures and initiatives that British Tennis may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy as part of our commitment to our LTA membership.

**Where there is diversity and inclusion concern/disclosure the individual who is told about, hears, or is made aware of the concern/disclosure is responsible for following the Concern reporting Procedure (see section 6).**

## **5. Safe and Inclusive Behaviour Standards**

All members, staff and volunteers agree to:

- Prioritise the well-being of all children and vulnerable adults at risk at all times
- Treat all children and vulnerable adults fairly and with respect
- Be a positive role model. Act with integrity, even when no one is looking
- Help to create a safe and inclusive environment both on and off court
- Not allow any rough or dangerous behaviour, bullying or the use of bad or inappropriate language
- Report all concerns about abuse or poor practice to the club Welfare Officer
- Not use any sanctions that humiliate or harm a child or adult at risk
- Value and celebrate diversity and make all reasonable efforts to meet individual needs
- Keep clear boundaries between professional and personal life, including on social media

- Have the relevant consent from parents/carer, children and adults before taking or using photos and videos
- Refrain from making physical contact with children or vulnerable adults unless it is necessary as part of an emergency or congratulatory (e.g. handshake / high five)
- Ensure roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined and everyone has the required information and training
- Avoid being alone with a child or vulnerable adult at risk unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Refrain from transporting children or adults at risk, unless this is required as part of a club activity (e.g. away match) and there is another adult in the vehicle
- Not abuse, neglect, harm or discriminate against anyone; or act in a way that may be interpreted as such
- Not have a sexual relationship with anyone under 18 for whom they are coaching or responsible for\*

\*It is illegal to have a sexual relationship with someone who is under 18 years old if you are in a position of trust, including as a coach, it is illegal to have a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 16 in any circumstances.

All children agree to

- Be friendly and welcoming to other children and adults
- Play fairly and honestly
- Respect club staff, volunteers and officials and accept their decisions
- Behave, respect and listen to your coach
- Take care of your equipment and club priority
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of age, gender, ability, race, culture, religion or sexual identity
- Not use racist language , including on social media
- Not bully, intimidate or harass anyone, including on social media
- Not smoke, drink alcohol or take drugs of any kind on the premises or whilst representing the club at competitions or events
- Talk to the club welfare officer about any concerns or worries they have about themselves or others

All other adults including parents agree to

- Positively encourage their child and show an interest in their tennis
- Use appropriate language at all times
- Be realistic and supportive
- Not ridicule or admonish a child for making a mistake or losing a match
- Treat all children, adults, volunteers, coaches and officials with respect
- Behave responsibly at the venue and to not go on court or interfere with matches
- Encourage their child to play by the rules and teach them they can only do their best
- Deliver and collect their child punctually
- Ensure their child has appropriate clothing for the weather conditions
- Ensure their child understands their code of conduct

- Adhere to the venues safeguarding and diversity and inclusion policy
- Provide emergency contact details and any relevant information about their child including medical history

This Code of Conduct should be interpreted in a spirit of integrity, transparency and common sense, with the best interests of children and adults at risk as the primary consideration.

## 6. Concern Reporting Procedure

Anyone who has concerns that they or someone else is being discriminated against or has been a victim of discriminatory language or behaviour should:

<b>Respond</b>	Listen carefully to what the person is telling you. Do not interrupt; keep questions to a minimum; do not promise to keep the information secret	
<b>Refer</b>	<b>Is someone in immediate danger?</b> <b>YES</b> Call the police (999)  <b>THEN RECORD the matter</b>	<b>NO</b> Talk to the club's Welfare Officer in confidence- Sheila Downey 07341387686 <b>or leave a message for her by emailing the club at <a href="mailto:woodthorpelc@gmail.com">woodthorpelc@gmail.com</a>,</b> <b>OR</b> Talk to the LTA Safe and Inclusive Tennis Team (020 8487 7000) as soon as possible [Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm].  Hate crime can alternatively be reported through True Vision at <a href="http://www.report-it.org.uk">www.report-it.org.uk</a>
<b>Record</b>	Write an objective account of your concerns immediately using the Reporting a Concern Form found on our website under Safeguarding. Send it to the LTA Safe and Inclusive Tennis Team as soon as possible, and where possible within 48 hours of the concern/disclosure ( <a href="mailto:safeandinclusive@lta.org.uk">safeandinclusive@lta.org.uk</a> )  Handling a concern/disclosure can be emotionally difficult. If you would like to talk to someone after making a concern/disclosure, contact the LTA Safe and Inclusive Tennis Team by phone 020 8487 7000 or email <a href="mailto:safeandinclusive@lta.org.uk">safeandinclusive@lta.org.uk</a>	



## 7. Breaches of the Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Where there are concerns that the diversity and inclusion good practice has not been followed all staff, members, coaches, volunteers or anyone otherwise connected with the club are encouraged to

1. Raise the matter directly with the Welfare Officer or a Committee Member and seek resolution. In the first instance this can often resolve many disputes or concerns
2. If required, contact the LTA Safe and Inclusive Tennis team: [safeandinclusive@lta.org.uk](mailto:safeandinclusive@lta.org.uk). They can assist in liaising with the club and investigating the matter. Alternatively, the NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line 0800 028 0285, [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) can be contacted
3. Seek further advice from the Equality Advisory Support Service on 0800 800 0082. For further information the website is [www.equalityadvisoryservice.com](http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com)

If someone comes to you with a concern around discrimination, listen to their complaint, reassure them and advise them of the routes listed above.

If the concern is of a safeguarding nature refer to the safeguarding policy. This will be relevant if the concern is about a child or a vulnerable adult. If you are in doubt seek advice from the Welfare Officer or the LTA Safeguarding lead.

Breaches of this policy and/or failure to comply with the outlined responsibilities may result in the following action being taken by the LTA

- Venues – Potential removal of LTA accreditation
- Staff – disciplinary action leading to possible dismissal and legal action.
- Contracted consultants, officials and coaches – termination of current and future roles within all LTA organisations and possible legal action.
- Recruited volunteers - termination of current and future roles within the club and tennis organisations more widely, and possible legal action.

Where an appeal is lodged in response to a safeguarding decision made by the LTA Safe and Inclusive Tennis Team and Safeguarding and Protection Committee and/or Licensing and Registration Committee, an independent appeal body such as Sport Resolutions may be used. Their decision is final.

## **Appendix A:**

### **Glossary of terms**

**Age:** This refers to a person belonging to a particular age group

**Bisexual** refers to a person who has an emotional and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender.

**Bullying:** can involve any form of physical, emotional, sexual or discriminatory abuse. It can also include cyber-bullying – using social media or mobile phones to perpetrate bullying. Bullying may come under a safeguarding umbrella if the victim is a child or vulnerable adult

**Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.

**Disability:** A person having a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Discrimination:** treating someone in a less favourable way and causing them harm, because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

**Discrimination by association:** discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

**Discrimination by perception:** discrimination against someone because of the belief that someone possesses a protected characteristic.

**Diversity:** acknowledging and celebrating the differences between groups of people and between individuals.

**Equality:** treating everyone with fairness and respect and recognizing and responding to the needs of individuals. Taking positive actions to address existing disadvantages and barriers affecting how people engage with and participate in tennis.

**Ethnicity:** the social group a person belongs to, and either identifies with or is identified with by others, as a result of a mix of cultural and other factors including language, diet, religion, ancestry and physical features traditionally associated with race. Ethnicity is essentially self-defined and may change over time.

**Gay:** refers to a man who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also, a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality - some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian.

**Gender identity:** this is an individual's internal self-perception of their own gender. A person may identify as a man, as a woman, as neither man nor woman (non-binary) or as androgyne/polygender.

**Gender reassignment:** The process of changing or transitioning from one gender to another.

**Harassment:** unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. The focus is on the perception of the complainant not the intent of the perpetrator. Employees can complain of behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

**Hate crime:** crime that is targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person's disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender identity. This can be committed against a person or property.

**Homophobia:** the fear, unreasonable anger, intolerance or/and hatred toward homosexuality, lesbian gay and bisexual people whether that person is homosexual or not.

**Inclusive leadership** – leaders who are aware of their own biases and preferences, actively seek out and consider different views and perspectives to inform better decision-making. They see diverse talent as a source of competitive advantage and inspire diverse people to drive Organisational and individual performance towards a shared vision.

**Inclusion:** recognising that people from different backgrounds may have different needs and expectations and may experience barriers in trying to access tennis. An inclusive venue is one that takes steps to attract and engage with people from many different backgrounds and meet their needs so that everyone has a positive experience and has the opportunity to achieve their potential.

**Indirect discrimination:** a practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, but that has a worse effect on some people than others.

**LGBTQ:** an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Questioning.

**Lesbian:** a woman who has an emotional romantic and /or sexual orientation towards women.

**Monitoring equality:** refers to data collection and analysis to check if people with protected characteristics are participating and being treated equally. For example: monitoring of the number of people with a disability who play tennis at our venue.

**Non-binary** – an umbrella term for a person who does not identify as only male or only female, or who may identify as both.

**Positive action:** a range of lawful actions that seek to overcome or minimise disadvantages (for example in employment opportunities) that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs.

**Pregnancy and maternity:** pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the

employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

**Questioning:** it refers to the process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

**Race:** refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

**Radicalisation, extremism and terrorist behavior:** Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and/or forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. There is no single way to identify an individual who is likely to be susceptible to extremist ideology. The internet and the use of social media can be a major factor in the radicalisation of people.

**Reasonable adjustment:** What is considered reasonable will depend on all the circumstances of the case including the size of an organisation and its resources, what is practicable, the effectiveness of what is being proposed and the likely disruption that would be caused by taking the measure in question as well as the availability of financial assistance

**Religion or belief:** religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

**Sex:** refers to the biological makeup such as primary and secondary sexual characteristics, genes, and hormones. The legal sex is usually assigned at birth and has traditionally been understood as consisting of two mutually exclusive groups, namely men and women.

**Sexual orientation:** a person's emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person.

**Trans:** an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, cross dresser, non-binary, gender-queer (GQ).

**Transphobia:** the fear, unreasonable anger, dislike, intolerance or/and hatred toward Trans people, whether that person has undergone gender reassignment or is perceived to have done that.

**Transsexual Person:** someone who has started the process of changing their gender identity is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment.

**Unconscious bias or implicit bias:** this refers to a bias that we are unaware of, and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is

triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences.

**Victimisation:** when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance.

## Appendix B:

### Legislation

The **Equality Act 2010**<sup>1</sup> legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

People are protected from discrimination:

- at work
- in education
- as a consumer
- when using public services
- when buying or renting property
- as a member or guest of a private club or association

People are also protected from discrimination if:

- they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, e.g. a family member or friend
- they have complained about discrimination or supported someone else's claim

Discrimination can come in one of the following forms:

- Direct discrimination - treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others.
- Indirect discrimination - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.
- Harassment - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.
- Victimisation - treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment.