



Complaints Policy

At Grantham Tennis Club (GTC) we aim to ensure that we provide our services right, efficiently and to a high standard at all times. We would like to hear about what we are doing well and areas where we can improve.

We understand there are times you may not always be happy with our club. Therefore, your feedback is very important to us to ensure we continue to provide an excellent service.

This policy covers how you as a member can make a complaint and the process that will be followed. This Complaints policy also covers staff and volunteers. Training is available to staff and volunteers, appropriate to their involvement.

Complaints

The club takes complaints about conduct and behavior very seriously and works in line with the LTA's processes and procedures to respond to concerns.

This policy tells you how to make a complaint at *Grantham Tennis Club*. This is the policy that we will follow if your complaint is about someone's conduct or behavior. This could be because you think that someone has behaved in a way that is unsafe, unprofessional, discriminatory, offensive or intimidating. It could also 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?

The Club aims to avoid disagreements and hopes that all will reach amicable settlements in the spirit of promoting harmony within the Club. If this proves not to be possible and you still have a complaint it is often best to start by having a conversation with someone at the club. This can be arranged as a verbal conversation or in person. You can also write to the relevant person below if it's easier. It is easier for us to handle your complaint if you provide as much detail as possible. Depending on the nature of your complaint, you should contact the following individuals initially:

- Coaching matters - Heads of Coaching/Club Manager
- General tennis matters - Club Manager
- Junior matters - Child Welfare Officer
- Tennis Committee matters - Club Chairman
- General Club or other matters - Club Manager

You can send an email to the relevant individual or speak to them by phone. Contact details for Club Officials and Committee are available on our website.

What will we do to investigate?

- We will give an initial response to your complaint within five working days. If the matter is urgent, we will respond more quickly.
- The contact may ask someone else on the coaching team or committee who manages a specific area of the club's operations to look into the complaint.
- We will investigate your complaint fairly. This means that we will discuss the complaint with all of the relevant people involved. 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.
- We will take into consideration data protection and privacy in all dealings with any complaint and therefore we will not pass on any personal information unless we receive permission from the complainant to do so.
- Where the difference remains unresolved by the initial contact, further reference may be made to the relevant Committee

The Club will take reasonable steps to conduct a thorough investigation and will always give priority to someone's safety and well-being. It is important to recognise that whilst we aim to resolve all complaints, in

some situations we may decide we cannot investigate or take further action (i.e. this might be due to lack of information or detail). The club reserves the right to end any investigation or refer it to the LTA if required. If this happens you will be given the reasons for the club's decision.

If the nature of the complaint is with regard to the Club Manager, the member/visitor has the right to report the discrimination or harassment to the Directors of Grantham Tennis Club and/or Grantham Tennis Club Members Committee.

How will I know what is happening?

You will be given the details of a person who will be your point of contact for the duration of the investigation. That person will make sure that you understand the process involved, 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 committee of club officials will look at the information about the case. We will try to make sure that this committee does not contain anyone directly involved with your complaint. They might decide to take the following action:

- Formal disciplinary action
 - 1) No Action Needed
 - 2) Verbal Warning
 - 3) Written warning
 - 4) Suspension from the Club for a specified time
 - 5) Permanent ban from the Club

(a) warn as to future conduct;

- (b) suspend** from membership;
- (c) remove** from membership;
- (d) exclude** a non-member from the Club, either temporarily or permanently; and
- (e) turn down** a non-member's current and/or future membership applications

- o Formal disciplinary action against a member of staff
 - If the person accused of discriminatory behaviour is an employee of the Club, the Club will regard the incident as a disciplinary issue and will follow any disciplinary procedure set out for employees or (if none exists) the statutory disciplinary procedure.
- o Changes in formal contracts or arrangements put in place by the place to play
- o A decision to refer the case to another organisation such as the LTA, Police, or Social Services.
- o Closure of your complaint without action
- o Records will be kept for three years, or six years if safeguarding information is included, or the complaint is formal

Is there anyone else I can talk to?

Sometimes it can be useful to speak directly to someone outside Grantham Tennis Club if:

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

The LTA is able to advice on a range of different complaints, and in some cases will handle certain 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-<https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/LincolnshireTennis/Contact>
- National LTA Child Protection Department (24hrs)- <http://www.lta.org.uk/players-parents/Supporting-your-child/Safety-and-well-being-in-tennis/>

LTA Child Protection

T: 0208 487 7008/7116 / M 24hour: 07971141024

E:childprotection@lta.org.ukwww.LTA.org.uk/childprotection

Childline, or the NSPCC advice line, local Social Services, Police

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 01522554674

Questions or queries about this policy

If you have a general query about this complaints policy, contact the Club at info@granthamtennisclub.co.uk who can refer you to a point of contact for further guidance on this policy.

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

Date: 1/09/2022

Date of Next Review of this Procedure: 1/09/2023

Responsible Person signature:

Sarah Patton

Sarah Patton (Club Manager)