

Canterbury Tennis Club

Complaints Policy



Our Club has high values and we are proud of our safe, friendly and inclusive environment. However we do understand that occasionally there is inappropriate behaviour that causes concern and distress. Please let us know so than we can take action for the better.

It is your right to complain and our duty to respond. We also welcome positive suggestions for improvements.

This policy is about:

- How you as a member can make a complaint
- How we will follow it up
- How we will keep you in touch
- What action we have taken or intend to take

1. Complaints

This is the policy that we will follow if your complaint is about someone's conduct. Our Code of Conduct (as on our website and in our Club Manual) sets out what we expect of our members and how seriously we take behaviour that is unsafe, unprofessional, discriminatory, offensive or intimidating. Complaints could also be because someone has broken important Club Rules (also available online and in the Club Manual).

We do treat complaints as confidentially as possible but sometimes we need to discuss complaints with others involved or at risk and with outside Authorities in very serious cases. Our approach is in line with the LTA's guidance.

2. Making a Complaint

If you have a complaint, and before you set out all the details, you may wish to start by contacting a Club representative. This can be a phone call, e-mail, letter or in

person. Depending on the nature of your complaint, you should contact one of the following:

- Coaching matters – Simon Grieve, Head Coach or Lina Hopkins, Academy Administrator
- General tennis matters – Lawrence Groves -Tennis Club Chairman
- Safeguarding matters – Charlie McArdle - Welfare Officer
- Other matters – Sharon Chastang - Club Administrator

Their contact details are on the club website.

Formal complaints should be made as soon as possible after the incident while it is still fresh in your mind. Please include the information below and send to one of the representatives listed above.

- Your name, phone number, email address
- Date and time of incident
- Names of any witnesses
- Name of offender(s)
- Full details of the incident including what led up to the incident, who was involved, and the outcome
- Date when you report the incident

3. What happens next?

- We will give an initial response to your complaint within five working days. If the matter is urgent, we will respond more quickly.
- The Club, usually through the Chairman, will decide who best to investigate your complaint. This could be a single Committee member or a designated small group:
- To investigate your complaint fairly we will discuss your complaint with all those involved, including the person or persons who caused you to complain.
- Sometimes we will need to share information with other people to allow them to respond. Fairness is always important in these situations.
- The exception to the point above is that we will not share information if we think that this will endanger someone's safety or welfare.
- We 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.

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. This could be due to lack of information or detail.

The Club also reserves the right to end any investigation or refer it to the LTA or another authority. In this case we will tell you why we made this decision.

4. Keeping you in touch?

We will give you the contact details of the person who is your point of contact for the duration of the investigation. This person will answer any questions and make sure that you understand the process..

He or she will update you on the progress of your complaint every two weeks. If there are delays in handling your complaint for any reason we will let you know.

If your complaint leads to a formal disciplinary action against someone, we will usually inform you about the outcome. However 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.

5. The possible outcomes

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 achievable or appropriate then, following the investigation, the Club Committee has the authority to impose sanctions it considers fair and proportionate. These sanctions could range from warnings, conditions and temporary suspension to expulsion with no refund of fees

Other information that may be helpful

Who else could you talk to?

It could be useful to speak directly to someone outside The 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, professional or legal advice

The LTA is able to advise on a range of different complaints, and in some cases will handle certain complaints directly.

If you are worried about a child or vulnerable adult's welfare, you can contact the following people:

The LTA Safe and Inclusive Tennis Team

020 8487 7000 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

safeandinclusive@lta.org.uk

The NSPCC - 080 8800 5000

Can a sanctioned member appeal?

An appeal may be made against the most serious sanctions, such as a period of suspension or expulsion. It must be submitted in writing to the Club Chairman within 14 days of being notified of the decision, otherwise the appeal is not valid.

Appeals must include full details stating exactly what is being appealed against and the reasons for this. New evidence cannot be submitted at this stage.

To begin this process the Tennis Club Chairman appoints an Appeal Sub Committee, whose members were not involved in the investigation or in deciding the sanction - this ensures impartiality throughout the appeal.

Having reviewed the complaint to determine whether the investigation was properly carried out and the sanction proportionate, the Sub Committee reports back to the Club Chairman who makes the final decision on whether to support, change or revoke the original decision.

The Club's decision on matters of discipline is final.

Feedback and suggestions

While a complaint is, in every respect, feedback from those involved, there is other and equally important feedback from all members. This can include comments

about services such as membership, coaching, court bookings, tournaments and facilities. Surveys about members' satisfaction also help us make improvements.

We encourage as many members as possible to get involved in The Club. Some suggestions may be too ambitious for reasons such as budget and space but all feedback is useful.

Your comments, questions and ideas should be sent by e-mail to the Club Administrator and you will receive a thankyou within five working days. The Administrator may be able to give you an immediate response to your suggestion or question, but some matters will to be passed to a particular committee member or discussed at a committee meeting.