

Feedback: Complaints policy, feedback and suggestions

At Highbury Tennis Club we aim to ensure that we provide our services correctly, efficiently and to a high standard at all times. We are always keen to hear about what we are doing well and, equally important, we want to know where we can improve. Your feedback is pivotal to helping provide a good - ideally excellent - service.

This policy covers how you as a club member can make a complaint and it describes the process that will be followed. It also outlines how you can provide feedback or give suggestions on any aspect of the club's services.

1. Complaints

The club takes all complaints about conduct and behaviour seriously and follows the LTA's advice on how to respond.

This document describes the process that we shall follow if you complaint about someone's conduct or behaviour. This includes complaints about someone behaving in a way that is unsafe, unprofessional, discriminatory, offensive or intimidating or because someone has broken important rules or policies.

Values and principles

We base our complaints policy on the following 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: 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 to and respond to any investigation.
- Safety and welfare take priority: we shall 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 our concerns to the right authorities. If necessary, we shall 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 from within the club. This might be someone you know and trust e.g. a captain, a coach. This can be done face-to-face or over the phone. Alternatively you might prefer to email one of the people listed below. Please provide as much detail as possible as this helps us handle your complaint thoroughly and swiftly.

Key club contacts for complaints:

- Welfare Officer: Barbara Reissner; highburytenniswelfareofficer@gmail.com
- Committee member: Wendy Proudfoot; wendyproudfoot@hotmail.com
- Club Chair: Caroline Griffiths; caroline@intextmedia.com

Information about how to contact club committee members is provided on our club website here: <https://www.highburytennisclub.com/committee--club-docs.html>

What will we do to investigate?

LTA = the Lawn Tennis Association, www.lta.org.uk

Highbury Tennis Club Complaints Procedures

- We shall give an initial response to your complaint within ten working days. If the matter is urgent, we shall try very hard to 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 shall investigate your complaint fairly. This means that we shall discuss the complaint with all of the relevant people involved. We shall try to gather all information relevant to handling your complaint.
- Sometimes we shall show copies of information from the investigation to other people to allow them to respond.
- We shall not share information if we think that this will endanger someone's safety or welfare.
- We shall take into consideration data protection and privacy rules when handling a complaint and we shall therefore not pass on personal information unless we receive permission from the complainant to do so.
- Where the difference remains unresolved by the initial contact, further advice may be sought from the club committee.

The club will take reasonable steps to conduct a thorough investigation and will always give priority to someone's safety and well-being. While we aim to resolve all complaints, in some situations we may decide we cannot investigate further or take further action e.g. this might be due to a lack of information or detail. The club reserves the right to end any investigation or to refer it to the LTA as it deems appropriate. If this happens you will be given the reasons for the club's decision.

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 or less frequently if you have agreed to this. If there are delays in handling your complaint, we shall keep you informed. If your complaint leads to formal disciplinary action against someone, we shall usually inform you about the outcome.

We shall not tell you the outcome if we are investigating the conduct or behaviour of a child or if we believe that telling you would create a risk to other people. In this situation, we shall 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 hope that we shall be 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 from within the Club Committee will look at the information about the case. We shall try to make sure that this committee does not contain anyone directly involved with your complaint. They might decide to take the following types of action:

- Formal disciplinary action
- Changes in the club's contracts or arrangements
- A decision to refer the case to another organisation such as the LTA, the Police, or Social Services.
- Closure of your complaint without action

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Is there anyone else I can talk to?

Sometimes it can 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 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:

- **LTA Safe and Inclusive Tennis Team** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm):
020 8487 7000
safeandinclusive@lta.org.uk
- **NSPCC:** 080 8800 5000

Questions or queries about this policy

- If you have a general query about this complaints policy, contact the Club Chair at caroline@intextmedia.com who can refer you to a point of contact for further guidance on this policy.

2. Feedback and suggestions

We welcome all feedback and suggestions on the workings of the club. This can include your feedback on the club's services, such as membership, coaching, tournaments or facilities and also suggestions on how we can improve things and make additions to our services.

We urge as many members as possible to get involved in the club and one way is to provide feedback and suggestions. The club recommends that if you have some feedback or a suggestion that it is sent to a committee member, details of whom can be found on the Club Website.

What will happen with my feedback/suggestion?

- Once we have your comment, the committee member notified will aim to respond within ten working days.
- He/She may be able to respond to the feedback or suggestion quickly but may also have to discuss the comment with other club members or at committee level. In this case, it could take 3-4 weeks before a complete response is received.
- The response will determine what will happen to the feedback or suggestion and the person who posed the suggestion will receive a full update on their comment.
- All feedback and suggestions will be logged centrally to ensure continuity.
- The person who made the initial feedback or suggestion will have an opportunity to respond if they don't feel the comment has been taken on board or dealt with satisfactorily.