

HALLAMSHIRE TENNIS & SQUASH CLUB

MEMBER COMPLAINTS POLICY

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This procedure outlines how complaints relating to the conduct of members of Hallamshire Tennis & Squash Club ("the Club") may be raised and how they will be considered in a fair, impartial and timely manner. The Club is committed to fostering a positive, welcoming and respectful environment for all members.

1. INFORMAL RESOLUTION

Complainants are encouraged, where appropriate, to attempt to resolve minor concerns informally in the first instance. This may involve speaking directly to the individual(s) concerned or, where appropriate, raising the matter with the General Manager or, in their absence, a Senior Manager.

Many misunderstandings can be resolved quickly through open and respectful communication without the need for formal action.

2. FORMAL SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINT

If an informal resolution is not possible, is inappropriate, or the matter is of a more serious nature, a complainant may submit a formal complaint in writing.

The complaint should include:

- Full name of the complainant.
- Name(s) of the individual(s) involved.
- A clear and concise description of the complaint, including relevant dates, times and locations.
- Any supporting evidence, such as emails, photographs (where applicable) or witness statements.
- The outcome or resolution sought.
- The complainant's signature and the date of submission.

Formal complaints should be submitted to the General Manager via grievance@hallamshire.net.

Any safeguarding concern should be referred immediately to the Club Welfare Officer or Safeguarding Team in accordance with the Club's safeguarding procedures.

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMPLAINT

The General Manager will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint by email within seven days of receipt. The acknowledgement will outline the next steps in the process and, where possible, provide an indicative timescale for the investigation.

4. THE GRIEVANCE PANEL

The General Manager will conduct a thorough, fair and impartial investigation. This may include:

- Reviewing the written complaint and any supporting documentation.

- Interviewing the complainant.
- Interviewing the member against whom the complaint has been made.
- Interviewing any relevant witnesses.
- Gathering any other information considered necessary to establish the facts.

All parties involved will be given a fair opportunity to present their account and respond to any allegations made against them. The General Manager may request additional information or clarification where considered appropriate.

Any individual involved in investigating or determining a complaint who has a conflict of interest, or who is personally involved in the matter, shall withdraw from the process. An alternative person will be appointed to ensure the investigation remains fair and impartial.

Where a complaint is made against the General Manager, the Chair of the Board will undertake the responsibilities assigned to the General Manager under this procedure and will determine the appropriate outcome, following the same process set out above.

5. HEARING

Where considered appropriate, the General Manager may, at their discretion, convene a formal hearing.

If a hearing is held, all parties will be given reasonable notice of the date, time and location. They will be expected to attend, present their respective positions and respond to questions from the General Manager.

Members may be accompanied by another Club member for support. The accompanying member may not address the hearing on their behalf unless invited to do so by the General Manager.

6. DECISION & OUTCOME

Following the conclusion of the investigation and/or hearing, the General Manager will consider all of the evidence and reach a decision on the balance of probabilities.

The decision will normally be communicated in writing to both the complainant and the member against whom the complaint was made within 14 days of the conclusion of the investigation or hearing.

The complaint may be determined as follows:

- **Upheld** – the complaint is upheld and appropriate action will be taken.
- **Partially Upheld** – some aspects of the complaint are upheld and appropriate action will be taken accordingly.
- **Not Upheld** – the complaint is not upheld because the evidence does not substantiate the allegations.

Where a complaint is upheld or partially upheld, the General Manager may determine one or more of the following outcomes:

- A formal apology.
- A facilitated discussion or mediation between the parties.

- A written warning.
- A temporary suspension from Club activities or facilities for a period determined by the General Manager.
- Permanent expulsion from the Club in cases of serious misconduct, in accordance with the Club's Code of Conduct.
- A recommendation to the Board that Club rules, policies or procedures be amended to help prevent a recurrence.

Where the outcome is permanent expulsion, the decision of the General Manager must be ratified by the Board before taking effect. Should the Board decide not to ratify the decision, it may substitute such alternative outcome as it considers appropriate.

7. APPEALS

Any member dissatisfied with the decision of the General Manager (or the Chair of the Board where the complaint concerns the General Manager) has the right to appeal.

Appeals will only be considered on one or more of the following grounds:

- There was a significant procedural irregularity that may have affected the outcome.
- New and compelling evidence has become available that could not reasonably have been provided during the original investigation and may materially affect the outcome.
- The decision was manifestly unreasonable or unsupported by the evidence available.

An appeal must be submitted by email to board@hallamshire.net within 14 days of the date of the written decision. The appeal must clearly state the grounds of appeal and include any supporting evidence upon which it relies.

The appeal will be considered by a panel of not fewer than three Board members who have had no prior involvement in the matter.

The appeal panel will review:

- The original complaint.
- The investigation findings.
- The decision reached.
- The grounds of appeal.
- Any additional information considered necessary.
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The appeal panel may either:

- Uphold the original decision; or
- Amend the original decision.

The outcome of the appeal will normally be communicated within 28 days of receipt of the appeal.

The decision of the appeal panel shall be final.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaints will be handled with appropriate sensitivity and confidentiality.

Information will only be shared with those who need to be involved in investigating or determining the matter, except where the Club considers it necessary or appropriate to refer the matter to an external authority or governing body, including (but not limited to) the relevant sporting governing body, safeguarding authority or the police.

9. REVIEW OF THIS PROCEDURE

This procedure will be reviewed periodically by the Board to ensure it remains effective, fair and consistent with the Club's policies, legal obligations and best practice.

10. COMPLAINT AGAINST THE GENERAL MANAGER

Where a complaint is made against the General Manager, the Chair of the Board will undertake the responsibilities assigned to the General Manager under this procedure and will determine the appropriate outcome, following the same process set out above.