



COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

This document explains how to make a complaint at Coombe Wood LTC and sets out the procedures that the club will follow in handling the complaint and any subsequent appeal. The complaint could be because you think that someone has behaved in a way that is unsafe, unprofessional, discriminatory, offensive or intimidating, you feel that the club's policies, rules or code of conduct have been broken, or for other reasons.

You have the right to complain: the club takes complaints seriously. You should not be harassed, bullied or put at a disadvantage because of making a complaint.

1. How to make a complaint.

If you are not happy with an issue, but feel it does not rise to the level where a formal complaint is necessary please discuss this informally with the club's Secretary, Welfare Officer or any other member of the committee, who will listen carefully to your point of view and will try to resolve the issue. Many complaints or concerns are able to be resolved through informal discussions in this way.

If the matter is more serious in nature and you wish to make a formal complaint, the matter should be reported in writing to the club's Secretary, Welfare Officer or another member of the committee. The report should include, where relevant:

- (a) details of what occurred;
- (b) details of when and where the incident took place;
- (c) names of any person against whom a complaint is being made;
- (d) any witness details and copies of any witness statements;
- (e) names of any others who have been treated in a similar way (provided that those people consent to their names being disclosed);
- (f) details of any former complaints made about the incident, including the date and to whom such complaint was made; and



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(g) an indication as to the desired outcome.

2. How the club will handle the complaint.

If a concern is raised under the club's Safeguarding Policy, Diversity and Inclusion Policy or Anti-Bullying Policy then, depending on the level of that concern, it may be required to be dealt with directly by the Police, LTA or other external body as determined by those policies.

If the person against whom the complaint or whistleblowing concern is being made is a contractor (including coach) of the club, the club will follow any disciplinary or complaints procedure set out in the relevant contract.

For all other concerns or complaints:

The club's committee will appoint an ad-hoc sub-committee (the Complaints sub-committee, or Whistleblowing sub-committee as appropriate) of three of its members to consider the matter. The Complaints or Whistleblowing sub-committee

a) will request that all parties to the complaint or whistleblowing concern submit written evidence regarding the incident(s);

b) may decide to uphold or dismiss the complaint or whistleblowing concern without holding a hearing; 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 or concerns, 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;

c) may hold a hearing (whether or not such a hearing is requested by either party) at which all parties will be entitled to attend and present their case;



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d) will have the power to impose any one or more of the following sanctions on any person found to be in breach of any club policy, rule or code of conduct:

- i) give a verbal warning as to future conduct;
 - ii) requested by the club to not attend future matches on a temporary basis;
 - iii) undertake an LTA education course;
 - iv) suspend or have club membership removed;
 - v) required to leave the club along with any dependents;
 - vi) take any further action as may be required or permitted by law;
- e) whilst determining the appropriate sanction to take, the outcome of any previous complaints will be taken into consideration;
- f) will provide both parties with written reasons for its decision to uphold or dismiss the complaint within 14 days of such decision being made.

3. Appeal process.

Either party to the complaint or whistleblowing concern may appeal a decision of the Complaints or Whistleblowing sub-committee within 14 days of the decision being notified to that party, by writing to the club's Chair setting out the reasons for the appeal. An ad-hoc sub-committee (the Appeals sub-committee) comprising the club's Chair and two members of the club's committee (not including anyone from the Complaints sub-committee) will hear the appeal following the steps outlined in the complaints process in section 2 above.

The decision of the Appeals sub-committee will be final.

4. Confidentiality.

We treat complaints and whistleblowing concerns as confidentially



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as possible. Sometimes we have to discuss the issue 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 appropriate authorities. If necessary, we will get advice from other organisations such as the Police, Social Services or LTA.

We will take into consideration data protection and privacy in all dealings with any complaint or whistleblowing concern and therefore we will not pass on any personal information unless we receive permission from the complainant or whistleblower to do so unless otherwise required by law.