Raising Concerns and Complaints Policy

This policy tells you how to raise a concern or make a complaint at Burton Tennis & Squash Club.

The Committee have a duty of care to ensure governance structures and processes are in place to allow concerns or complaints to be appropriately managed and escalated to the relevant organisations or regulatory bodies as required, ensuring that everyone within the club environment is free to speak up with their concerns.
You can raise your concerns in several ways.

Raising a Concern or Seeking Support

Members are encouraged to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity to ensure a safe, supportive, and respectful sporting and social environment. If you have a concern, it is best to send an email as soon as possible to one or more of the following committee members –

Chair at Burton Tennis & Squash Club chair@burtontsc.co.uk

Safeguarding Lead at Burton Tennis & Squash safeguarding@burtontsc.co.uk

Secretary at Burton Tennis & Squash Club secretary@burtontsc.co.uk

You can raise a concern if you experience or witness:

- Unsafe working practices - someone has behaved in a way that is unsafe
- Poor standards of sporting conduct – unsportsmanlike behaviour
- Discriminatory - demonstrating, bullying, harassment, or inappropriate behaviour that is offensive or intimidating
- Sexual misconduct (will not be tolerated in anyway e.g. inappropriate behaviours or comments)
- Concerns about members wellbeing or safety

If you witness a concerning incident whilst at the club you need to raise this as soon as possible.

Concerns can be raised confidentially, and members will be supported throughout the process, in an open environment where, speaking up and listening are encouraged as this improves safety and member experience. It also contributes towards better sporting engagement and enhanced wellbeing.

When members feel that their feedback matters and is acted on, they become more committed to improving the sporting and social environment in an organisation, that actively promotes the duty of candour and supports its members when concerns are raised.

Is there anyone else you can talk to?

Sometimes it can be useful to speak directly in confidence to someone outside the Club if:

- You need urgent advice about someone's safety or welfare and/or
- You don't want to discuss the issue with someone at the club and/or
- Your complaint is very serious and/or
- Your complaint involves other organisations and/or
- You need specialist advice
- The LTA is able to advise on a range of different complaints, and in some cases will handle the complaint directly.

Key principles:

- You will be listened to and taken seriously
- Concerns are handled sensitively and appropriately
- You will not be disadvantaged for speaking up

Key values:

Equality

You should receive a proper response to your concern or complaint, regardless of your age, gender, disability, race, religion, nationality, social status, sexual orientation or political persuasion.

Fairness

We believe that concerns or complaints should be dealt with fairly and openly. Unless it would put other people at risk, those affected by a concern or 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 concerns or 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 (Lawn Tennis Association).

How to a make formal complaint

A formal complaint should be raised if the situation needs to be investigated further. Written complaints should be marked **confidential** and addressed to The Safeguarding Officer at Burton Tennis & Squash Club, Ashby Road, Burton upon Trent DE15 0LQ in a sealed envelope, hand delivered to the post collection box on the front door (car park level) or handed to either a committee member or to the bar person whilst the bar is open.

We accept anonymous complaints, but it is often very difficult to investigate these properly. It is easier for us to handle your complaint if you provide as much detail as possible.

Who deals with formal complaints

Complaints will be handled by appropriate senior committee members.

Management committee please email secretary@burtontsc.co.uk

Coaches – please email our Head Tennis Coach – tennis@burtontsc.co.uk

Safeguarding Lead - If you are a child or are worried about the safety or welfare of a child, please email safeguarding@burtontsc.co.uk

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. We will address your complaint and investigate any complaint fairly. This means that we will discuss the complaint with you initially to clarify points made on the complaint and then, if need be, all the relevant people and possible witnesses.

We will endeavour 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.

How you will know what is happening

You will be given the details of a person (committee member) who will be your point of contact at the club. That person will make sure that you understand the process and will help to answer any questions or concerns that you have.

Formal complaints

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 e.g. club member or committee member, we will 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 your formal complaint

In many cases, we can 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 senior 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 formal complaint.

We might decide to take the following action:

- Changes in formal contracts or arrangements put in place by the club
- A decision to refer the case to another organisation such as the LTA, Police, or Social Services, or Third-Party organisation/s as appropriate.
- Formal disciplinary action for any BTSC member/s under the rules of the club
- Formal disciplinary action against a member of staff
- Closure of your formal complaint without action

If formal disciplinary action is taken, then BTSC Disciplinary Policy will be followed (a copy of this can be found on the website or noticeboard in the clubhouse).

Withdrawal of formal complaint

At any point it is your right to withdraw the formal complaint, however you must do this in writing via electronic/letter to your point of contact at the Club, as soon as you make that decision not to pursue it. The complaint will stay on file for auditing purposes in a confidential file.

Although the formal process has been closed, we will offer you an opportunity to discuss informally any particular content of your grievance that will assist you to reflect on any considerations as to why you have withdrawn your complaint and/or enhance the experience of other members, however there will be no further discussion in relation to the actual complaint.

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

The Club's Safeguarding Lead

The National LTA Safeguarding Team Childline, or the NSPCC advice line, local Social Services, Police Questions or queries about this policy.

If you have a general query about this Raising Concerns and Complaints policy, you should email any of the following Points of Contact:

Chair at Burton Tennis & Squash Club chair@burtontsc.co.uk

Safeguarding Lead at Burton Tennis & Squash safeguarding@burtontsc.co.uk

Secretary at Burton Tennis & Squash Club secretary@burtontsc.co.uk