



## **Dorset LTA (Dorset Tennis)**

### **Policy for handling Disputes, Concerns and Complaints**

Dorset Tennis exists to promote the game of tennis in Dorset and to uphold the highest standards of sporting behaviour for all involved with tennis, be they players, coaches, officials, volunteers, tennis clubs or other organisations involved with tennis.

From time-to-time disputes or concerns can arise about the actions or behaviours of others, or incidents or circumstances that arise. This guidance and policy document is intended to help guide anyone involved in a tennis related dispute, with concerns, or wishing to pursue a complaint, to find the appropriate way to find help with the issue.

### **Safeguarding**

When these concerns are about the welfare of children or other vulnerable persons, there are clear mechanisms at every level (at Club, County and Nationally) for a concerned individual to register their concerns. Dorset Tennis' County Safeguarding Officer is Emma Plimmer who is available for advice and guidance.

Emma can be contacted by phone on 07493 844260 or e-mail, [safeguarding@dorsetlta.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@dorsetlta.co.uk).

Vicki Gregg, the LTA South West Regional Safeguarding Officer can also be contacted by e-mail, [vicki.gregg@lta.org.uk](mailto:vicki.gregg@lta.org.uk).

**HOWEVER**, if you have a concern or need to report anything, you can:

- complete a 'Register a Concern' form via the [LTA website](#)

Outside of office hours, please call the NSPCC on **0808 800 5000**. Or, if someone is in immediate danger, call the police (**999**).

### **Breaches of LTA Code of Conduct, and raising Serious Concerns of other kinds**

Our national Governing Body, the LTA, has adopted a Code of Conduct that sets out a clear set of standards that all involved with Tennis should meet. It also sets out behaviours that are prohibited.

The Code of Conduct can be found here:

<https://www.lta.org.uk/494b8d/siteassets/about-lta/file/lta-code-of-conduct.pdf>

If you are concerned (based on an incident or behaviours that you have directly witnessed or been subject to) that an individual player, coach, official, or volunteer, or a Club or other organisation involved with tennis has broken the Code of Conduct, you should report the matter to the National Governing Body.

The LTA nationally will consider concerns raised with it, and may decide to investigate further, decide that the matter does not warrant investigation or falls outside its jurisdiction, or may refer the matter for more local resolution.

The guidance below highlights the other kinds of concerns that the LTA will deal with nationally:  
<https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/governance-and-structure/policies-and-rules/customer-guidance-lta-support-and-complaint-handling/>

### **LTA Registered Clubs and other Venues**

If you are concerned about an issue (one that does not relate to safeguarding or a breach of the Code of Conduct or other serious public interest) relating to a matter that has arisen in your club – for example between two club members, or between a member and the Club, or whilst playing in a Club Team, you should raise the matter in the first instance with the Chair or Committee members that run your Club.

Raising a matter of concern or an issue promptly and directly with those responsible for running the Club or other venue is almost always the best way for such concerns to be addressed.

### **Leagues**

There are several leagues and inter-club competitions that operate in Dorset. If there is a dispute relating to a match that cannot be resolved by the players directly involved this should in the first instance be discussed between the two team captains. If the matter remains a concern and requires resolution this should be raised directly with the League Organiser. Each League has its own procedures for adjudication of disputes.

**Dorset League:** [dorsetresultssec@gmail.com](mailto:dorsetresultssec@gmail.com) Disputes shall be dealt with by the League Committee. In matters relating to match outcomes its decisions shall be final.

**Yeovil and District League** [mikewilliams969@hotmail.com](mailto:mikewilliams969@hotmail.com) Disputes shall be dealt with by the Y&D League Committee. In matters relating to match outcomes its decisions shall be final.

**Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.** [sandra@hampshireiowlta.uk](mailto:sandra@hampshireiowlta.uk) Disputes shall be dealt with by the League Committee. In matters related to match outcomes its decisions shall be final.

### **Complaints about Services Provided by Dorset LTA**

If you have a complaint about a service directly provided by Dorset LTA, that you (or your child) has received, you can raise a concern (other than one regarding safeguarding – see previous section on safeguarding) or a complaint by contacting the Honorary Secretary – [Secretary@dorsetlta.co.uk](mailto:Secretary@dorsetlta.co.uk)  
For example: county training, county representative teams, small grants, county-organised competitions.

Your complaint will be investigated by a person independent of the service being provided, in a fair and objective manner, and you will be provided with a formal response from Dorset LTA. As an organisation, we welcome constructive complaints and feedback as this helps us improve the services we provide where these fall short of the high standard we would wish to provide.

Dorset Tennis is committed to providing a quality service and working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our members, players, and competitors and by responding positively to complaints.

Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible
- we welcome feedback, and suggestions
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction which calls for a timely response
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- we respond in the right way e.g., an explanation, an apology, an action
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review our policy and procedures

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally and dealt with quickly. We aim to resolve these informal concerns quickly and keep matters private. This policy ensures that we provide guidelines for dealing with complaints from members of the public about our services, facilities, staff, and volunteers.

### **Dorset Tennis - General Complaints**

Dorset Tennis will:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing within 3 working days
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint; and
- act where appropriate.

A complainant will be responsible for:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to the Honorary Secretary by email [secretary@Dorsetta.co.uk](mailto:secretary@Dorsetta.co.uk) attention normally within one month of the issue arising.
- raise concerns promptly and directly with the Honorary Secretary
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date.
- allow Honorary Secretary a reasonable time to deal with the matter, and
- recognise that in some circumstances may be beyond the control of Dorset Tennis

Hopefully, the complaint can be resolved through this informal stage. However, where Dorset Tennis feels the complaint requires further investigation, a panel will be set up, made up of 2 members of the Executive Committee.

All members of the panel will be provided with all necessary information & documents and if required will ask the complainant and any others involved to attend the complaints panel hearing. This hearing will normally be held within 1 month of the original complaint being lodged and any decision made normally within another month will be communicated by email.

An appeal against the decision can be made 1 week after the decision has been communicated. In this case the complainant must state the basis for any appeal, in writing, for example new evidence or lack of due process.

The appeal will be heard by an appeals panel, made up of 2 members of the Executive Committee excluding anyone from the original complaints panel. The panel will normally meet within 1 month of the appeal being lodged and normally make any decision within a further month.

The decision will be communicated to the appellant by email and this decision will be final.

## **Confidentiality**

Apart from exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure and maintain confidentiality. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its facts.) Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Policy Approved by Dorset Tennis Executive Committee 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2024

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