

# **Pentyrch Bowls Club**

## **Complaints and Grievances Procedure**

This procedure specifies the ways in which members of the club can raise a concern as a complaint or grievance.

1. A complaint is a concern that a member considers should be addressed.
2. A grievance is a complaint concerning unfair treatment.

Any club member may raise a formal complaint or grievance if:

- they feel raising it informally has not worked
- they do not want it dealt with informally
- it is a very serious issue, some examples of which are: a safety issue, a safeguarding issue, or sexual harassment.

### **Confidentiality**

Complaints will be treated confidentially as far as possible. Sometimes, complaints may need to be discussed with others or advice may need to be sought from, for example, the Lawns Bowls National Governing Body. Or, if a risk to a person or to the public is identified, the management committee may need to bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate authority.

### **Dealing with a complaint or grievance informally**

Any club member who has a complaint or grievance about another club member or about any actions taken by the club should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve the matter by speaking informally to the individual(s) involved. Where appropriate, they may seek the assistance of one of any member of the management committee.

### **Dealing with a complaint or grievance formally**

If the matter is serious, or an attempt to resolve the matter informally has been unsuccessful, the complainant may raise the matter formally by putting the details of the complaint or grievance in writing and asking any management committee member to bring it to the attention of the management committee. The written complaint/grievance will be acknowledged in writing within 3 days. This will be made by any member of the management committee who is not the subject of the complaint/grievance or does not have any personal interest or involvement in the matters to which it pertains. This acknowledgement will provide a recommended solution if it is practical to do so. If it is not considered practical to resolve the issue immediately, the written acknowledgement will indicate when a more detailed response, outlining actions to be taken to investigate the matter, will be issued.

Where an investigation is appropriate, the written response, outlining the actions to be taken to investigate the matter, will be issued within 7 days of the date of receipt of the written complaint/grievance. This response will specify the nature and extent of the investigation, who will carry it out and when a decision will be made.

Completion of the investigation will take no longer than is necessary to carry it out and form a conclusion. Only in exceptional circumstances will this time period be extended. As a guide, a period of 14 days should be considered a reasonable length of time for completing the investigation. An extension to the original date given for completion of the investigation must be communicated to all parties concerned.

Any club members implicated in the complaint/grievance will be notified, in writing, of the complaint/grievance and will also receive a copy of the response outlining the actions to be taken to investigate the complaint/grievance and a copy any subsequent written communication.

## **The Investigation**

The investigation will be undertaken by a designated management committee member or members or, exceptionally, by a club member or club members who are not members of the management committee but who are acceptable to both the management committee and the complainant. The investigator(s) will not be the subject of the complaint/grievance or have any personal interest or involvement in the matters to which it pertains. A written report of the investigation will be sent to the management committee for consideration and copied to the complainant. The chairperson of the management committee will take no part in the consideration of the complaint/grievance, in order that they can consider any subsequent appeal against the committee's decision without any prior knowledge of the case. Any committee member who is the subject of the complaint/grievance, or has some personal interest or involvement in it, will likewise be excluded from any consideration of it. If the chairperson is the subject of, or has a personal involvement or interest in, the complaint/grievance and is thus ineligible to hear any appeal, another committee member should be designated at the outset as responsible for hearing any subsequent appeal, and therefore should also take no part in the committee's consideration of, and decision on, the investigation.

## **Outcome of a complaint/grievance investigation**

A final decision by the management committee on any complaint/grievance investigation may be relayed to the parties concerned during a face-to-face meeting, but must in all cases be communicated in writing to the complainant and other parties involved, normally within 7 days.

## **Appeal**

If the complainant is unhappy with the management committee's decision, they can appeal in writing within 7 days of receipt of that decision, stating the reasons for the appeal and listing any facts or evidence they feel were not given due consideration in the initial investigation. The appeal will be heard by the chairperson of the management committee, or the designated committee member as described above,

assisted by another member of the club who is not on the management committee and who has had no previous involvement in the case. Receipt of the appeal letter will be acknowledged and the appellant invited to a hearing of the appeal normally within 7 days.

After the meeting, the Chairperson or designated management committee member will communicate their decision to the appellant, usually within 24 hours of the appeal meeting. That decision will be final.

Any member submitting a complaint/grievance may be accompanied at any meeting or hearing forming part of this procedure by someone acting in a supportive or advisory capacity.