

# **ALNWICK TENNIS CLUB WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

## **1. Introduction**

Alnwick Tennis Club (ATC) is committed to developing a culture where all individuals are encouraged to raise any concerns about unacceptable practice and misconduct. It is the duty of everyone to speak up about genuine concerns. ATC takes any forms of misconduct seriously and has introduced this policy to enable all contractors (referred to as 'colleagues' as appropriate), players, parents, accredited coaches, volunteers and officials to raise concerns early and in the right way.

## **2. Raising a Concern**

2.1 If you have a concern you should report it in the first instance to the Chair of ATC. The individual raising the concern should tell the person they are reporting the matter to whether they wish to raise the matter in confidence so that appropriate arrangements are made.

2.2 If you do not feel comfortable reporting your concern to the Chair of ATC committee - you should call the Welfare Officer of the ATC committee.

## **3. What is Whistleblowing?**

3.1 When reporting a concern, the individual must reasonably believe two things:

- That they are acting in the public interest;
- That the disclosure may fall under one or more of the following areas:
  - a risk to health and safety;
  - a criminal offence or a miscarriage of justice;
  - bullying, harassment or discrimination;
  - risk or actual damage to the environment;
  - covering up wrongdoing;
  - bribery, betting, corrupt conduct, inside information and match fixing;
  - conduct likely to damage ATC's reputation;
  - unauthorised disclosure of confidential information; or
  - concealment of any of the above;

3.2 It is not necessary for the individual to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed – a reasonable belief raised in good faith is sufficient.

## **4. Commitment**

4.1 We believe in putting the whistle blower first, giving them the opportunity to report wrongdoing on their terms, in a way which makes them feel comfortable and confident, in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously, and dealt with quickly and confidentially

4.2 ATC is committed to this policy. If a genuine concern is disclosed under it, ATC will use all reasonable endeavours to protect the position of the individual concerned, provided they are acting in good faith. This assurance does not apply to someone who maliciously raises a concern that they know is untrue.

4.3 We understand that reporting a concern can be a challenging decision for the individual. If the individual feels their situation is intolerable before, during or on conclusion of any investigation discussions will be held with them. The purpose of the discussion will be to consider any reasonable steps to support the individual – for example ensuring they are not disadvantaged as a result of raising their concern.

## **5. Confidentiality**

5.1 ATC recognises that individuals may wish to raise their concern anonymously. In these circumstances their identity will not be disclosed without their consent. If a situation develops where ATC is not able to resolve a concern without revealing their identity (for example if evidence is required in court) we will consult with the individual concerned.

## **6. Procedure**

6.1 If a report concerning ATC is made the appropriate person will follow the ATC Complaints Procedure accordingly.

6.2 Where possible, the individual will be informed of who is handling their concern, including any timescales and whether any further information or assistance may be required from them. Where appropriate and if confidentiality allows, the individual will be kept informed. The individual may also be asked how they feel the matter might best be resolved.

6.3 Any information shared with the individual about the investigation must be treated as confidential. On conclusion of an investigation, where possible (i.e. where not anonymous), the individual will be informed of the outcome including any steps taken to resolve the concern.

6.4 If the ATC concludes that a whistle blower has made false allegations maliciously, in bad faith or with a view to personal gain, the individual may be subject to disciplinary action or other appropriate measures in accordance with ATC Policies.

## **7. External Disclosures**

7.1 The law recognises that, in some circumstances, it may be appropriate for individuals to report certain categories of concerns directly to a regulatory authority (e.g. medical profession). The individual must report any concerns involving criminal misconduct, child or vulnerable adult abuse or safeguarding to the relevant regulatory authorities. In certain situations the ATC may also have a duty to report matters to external statutory bodies.

7.2 It will very rarely (if ever) be appropriate to alert the media to a whistleblowing concern. If an individual reports their concern to the media without first exhausting the internal procedure set out in this policy, in most cases the individual will lose any whistleblowing protection and they may also be subject to disciplinary action or other appropriate measures in accordance with ATC Policies.

7.3 If you have any questions about this Policy please contact:

[info@alnwicktennisclub.co.uk](mailto:info@alnwicktennisclub.co.uk)

Chairperson [Ernie Harpur]:



Date: 13/02/2023

Welfare Officer [Diane Milburn]:



Date: 13/02/2023

February 2023