

## Telford Hornets Rugby Union Football Club: Complaints Policy and Procedures

Telford Hornets Rugby Club welcomes views of members and others involved in its activities, whether in the form of constructive comment, critical concern, or a complaint where we may have fallen short.

### Complaints Policy

This policy tells you how to make a complaint at Telford Hornets Rugby Union Football Club.

It explains the procedures that we will follow if your complaint is about someone's conduct or behavior. This could be because you think that someone has behaved in a way that is unsafe, discriminatory, offensive, unlawful, intimidating, or is in any other way against the Rules, the Articles, or the Policies of the Club.

### Values and principles

You have the right to complain: we take complaints seriously. You should not be harassed, bullied or put at a disadvantage because you make a complaint. We will try to treat you with tact and courtesy.

Equality: you should receive a proper response to your complaint, regardless of your age, gender, disability, race, religion, nationality, social status, sexual orientation or political persuasion. Fairness: we believe that complaints should be dealt with fairly and openly. Unless it would put other people at risk, those affected by a 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 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 RFU.

### How to make a complaint?

If you have a complaint, it may be best to start by having a conversation with someone at Telford Hornets Rugby Union Football Club. A good first contact would be one of the Directors. The Chairman and the Secretary have broad responsibilities for the running of the Club and oversee the work of the Board, and other Directors have particular areas of interest: finances, senior rugby, junior rugby, and the buildings and material assets of the Club. There is also a child welfare/safeguarding officer who is not a Director but who reports to the Board.

— consider who would be the best official to discuss your concern with?

They may be able to help to resolve your problem: we would always seek an informal resolution to any complaint in the first instance.

If you decide to take things further you will normally be asked to put your complaint in writing. Please include your name (and the name of your organisation if you are not a Club member), the date of the events leading to the complaint, and the details of what happened.

[While we will consider anonymous complaints these are difficult to investigate properly: we would be unable to respect all the values and principles listed above.] Who should you write to?

Formal complaints may be made in any of the following ways: \* by email to Senior Chairperson Rob McGuire — [robcmcguire@hotmail.com](mailto:robcmcguire@hotmail.com) by post to either the Secretary or Chairman, Telford Hornets Rugby Football Club, Hinkshay Road, Dawley, Telford, TF4 3NZ or by hand to any member of the Board or to the child welfare/safeguarding officer.

It should be remembered that the Club has no letter box and therefore mail addressed to the club often takes time to reach us and investigation of a postal complaint may therefore be delayed.

Child Protection - if you are worried about the safety or welfare of a child do not delay in raising concerns — please bring this to our attention now — an assessment of immediate risk will take priority. Contact details for the Child Protection Officer are on the Club's website, but talk about your concerns to any Board member if the child Protection Officer is not immediately available.

Welfare Officer — Claire Wallace  
07595 983118

[Clairewallaceread@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Clairewallaceread@yahoo.co.uk)

What will we do to investigate?

We will name a senior member of the Club as the Lead Official in a particular complaint and tell you who this is; this will not be someone already connected to your complaint.

We will try to give an initial response to your complaint as soon as possible, and aim to do this within two weeks.

We will investigate your complaint fairly. This means that we will discuss the complaint with all of the relevant people.

We will gather relevant information. Sometimes we will reveal information from the investigation to other people to allow them to respond, but we will consider whether doing so would affect someone's safety or welfare. Please tell us if you have any such concerns yourself.

How will I know what is happening?

The Lead Official will explain the process, and answer questions or concerns that you have. You will be given regular updates. If there are delays we will keep you informed.

When we get to a conclusion we will report back to you, including about how you could be affected by any action we will be taking.

What are the possible outcomes or results of my complaint?

Where we can resolve problems informally the outcome might include: « A change in arrangements for particular activities

« An explanation or apology

- An agreement to communicate or to act differently in future Where there has been a formal complaint a panel of board members will consider the information gathered by the Lead Official.

The first task will be to decide if the complaint is upheld and how bad any failure had been.

Where the complaint is upheld we will apologise, tell you what went wrong, and what we will do to put things right. This could include:

Formal disciplinary action against a member or against an employee;

A change in Club policy or procedures;

A decision to refer the case to another organisation such as the RFU, Police, or Social Services.

Appeals procedure:

Should you continue to not agree with any decisions made by the panel and committee members then you are entitled to lodge a formal appeal.

This must be done with the Lead Official that has over seen the matter so far, or if appropriate a new Lead official will be agreed upon by the committee.

You are able to appeal against a decision taken by the committee or board member, once you have received the result of the complaint.

This must be received and a meeting convened, between the complainant and a specially convened panel, within 2 weeks of the appeal being lodged. If this is not done within the time frame then the decision will be upheld.

Policy Adopted by the Joint Committees — February 2017

Reviewed 02/04/2019

To be reviewed: February 2020

(Senior Chairperson)