



## Comments, Complaints and Suggestions Policy

At Merrow Tennis Club (MLTC) we aim to ensure that we provide our services correctly, efficiently and to a high standard at all times. We are always keen to hear about what we are doing well and areas where we can improve. We understand that there may be times that you may not always be happy with the club. Therefore your feedback is very important to us to ensure that we continue to provide a good – ideally excellent service.

### Values and Principles

You have the right to complain, MLTC takes complaints seriously. You should not be harassed, bullied or put at a disadvantage because of making a complaint.

- 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 - MLTC believes 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 - MLTC will always give priority to concerns that affect safety and welfare. Issues affecting children will be treated very seriously.
- Confidentiality - MLTC treats 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 our concerns to the right authorities. If necessary, MLTC shall get advice from other organisations such as the Police, Social Services or the LTA.

### How to make a complaint

#### Informal Complaint

If you have a complaint, it is often best to start by having an informal conversation with someone at MLTC - the Chair, Head Coach, Welfare Officer or a Committee member. They may be able to help to resolve your problem. The details of who the Committee members are can be found on the Merrow website: <https://www.merrowtennis.com/committee.html>

- Club Chair: [chairmerrowtennis@gmail.com](mailto:chairmerrowtennis@gmail.com)
- Welfare Officer: Julie Pearn; [Julie.pearne@btinternet.com](mailto:Julie.pearne@btinternet.com)
- Head Coach: Jorge; [munoziorgemartin@yahoo.com](mailto:munoziorgemartin@yahoo.com)

#### Formal Complaint

Should you feel the complaint has not been addressed, or if it is of a serious nature, you should make a written complaint.

Written complaints should be sent to the **Club Secretary** on [secretarymltc@gmail.com](mailto:secretarymltc@gmail.com) or the Club Administrator on [merrowltc@gmail.com](mailto:merrowltc@gmail.com)

MLTC accepts 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. It is useful to include:

- Details of what occurred.
- Details of when and where the occurrence took place.
- Any witness details and copies of any witness statements.
- Names of others who have been treated in a similar way (provided that those people consent to their names being disclosed).
- Details of any former complaints made about the incident, including the date and to whom such complaint was made.
- An indication as to the desired outcome.

If the nature of the complaint is about the Club's Committee, then please contact the Club President. The current Club President can be found on the Merrow Tennis Club Website: <https://www.merrowtennis.com/committee.html> and their contact details from the members list on the court booking system [https://merrow.clubsolution.co.uk/proc\\_medlemsliste.asp](https://merrow.clubsolution.co.uk/proc_medlemsliste.asp)

## **Complaint Investigation**

- MLTC will give an initial response to your complaint within five working days. If the matter is urgent, we will respond more quickly.
- MLTC will investigate your complaint fairly. This means that we will discuss the complaint with all of the relevant people. We will try to gather any information that may be relevant to handling your complaint.
- Sometimes MLTC will show copies of information from the investigation to other people to allow them to respond. This is because we believe in fairness and openness.
- MLTC will not share information if we think that this will endanger someone's safety or welfare.
- MLTC will take into consideration data protection and privacy in all dealings with any complaint.
- You will be given an update on the progress of your complaint every 2 weeks or less frequently if you have agreed to this. If there are delays in handling your complaint for any reason, you will be informed.
- The complaint will generally be investigated by the Chair unless there is a reason not to do so. The outcome of the complaint will be discussed at the next MLTC committee meeting after the complaint is received in writing unless the complainant has requested otherwise.
- Where the complaint remains unresolved by the initial contact, further advice may be sought from the club committee.

Both parties will be provided with written reasons for MLTC's decision to uphold or dismiss the complaint within 10 working days of the decision being made.

Either party may appeal the decision of the Committee by writing to the President of MLTC within 14 working days of being notified of the decision.

### **Possible outcomes or results of a complaint at MLTC**

In many cases, it is expected to 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, the following more formal action may be taken:

- Warn a member as to future conduct
- Suspend from membership
- Remove from membership
- Exclude a non-member from the Club, either temporarily or permanently
- Turn down a non-member's current and/or future membership application
- Changes in formal contracts or arrangements put in place by MLTC
- A decision to refer the case to another organisation such as the LTA, Police, or Social Services.

While MLTC aims to resolve all complaints, in some situations MLTC may decide they cannot investigate further or take further action e.g. due to lack of information or detail. MLTC reserves the right to end any investigation or refer it to the LTA as it deems appropriate. If this happens you will be given the reason for the club's decision.

### **Feedback and Suggestions**

We welcome all feedback and suggestions about the working of the club. This can include your feedback on the club's services such as membership, coaching or facilities and also suggestions on how we can improve things and make additions to the club. If you have some feedback or a suggestion, we ask that you either speak to a member of the committee or email the Club Administrator on [merrowltc@gmail.com](mailto:merrowltc@gmail.com).

This policy was approved 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021

For review September 2024.