



# ELY PADEL CLUB

## Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Inappropriate Behaviour Policy

### 1. Our commitment

Ely Padel Club is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, inclusive and enjoyable environment for everyone who plays, works, volunteers or socialises at the club.

Everyone has the right to participate in padel without being subjected to bullying, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, unwanted attention or other inappropriate behaviour.

The club expects all members, visitors, coaches, volunteers, committee members and anyone representing or attending the club to treat others with dignity, respect and courtesy, both on and off court.

This policy applies to behaviour at the club, during matches, coaching sessions, competitions, social events and club activities, and where relevant to communications connected with the club, including group chats, messaging services and social media.

This policy supports and should be read alongside the Code of Conduct policy and the club's Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, Complaints and Disciplinary policies.

### 2. What do we mean by bullying?

Bullying is unwanted behaviour which may be repeated or form part of a pattern and which is intended to, or has the effect of, intimidating, humiliating, upsetting or undermining another person.

Bullying can be:

- **Verbal** – including name-calling, insults, ridicule, belittling or persistent criticism.
- **Physical** – including threatening behaviour, deliberately intimidating someone or unwanted physical contact.
- **Social** – including deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours or encouraging others to isolate someone.
- **Online** – including abusive messages, inappropriate comments, targeting individuals in group chats or social media, or sharing harmful content.

- **Related to a protected characteristic** – including behaviour connected to a person's age, disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity.

Bullying does not have to involve physical aggression. A pattern of apparently minor incidents can become unacceptable when considered together.

### **3. Harassment and inappropriate behaviour**

Ely Padel Club does not tolerate harassment or behaviour which is intimidating, humiliating, offensive, threatening, unwanted or inappropriate.

This includes behaviour which may reasonably cause another person to feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, intimidated, degraded or unsafe, even where the person responsible did not intend to cause offence.

Examples may include:

- offensive, insulting or degrading comments;
- unwanted teasing or joking;
- comments about someone's appearance, body, age, relationships or personal life;
- unwanted attention or repeated attempts to contact someone after they have indicated that they do not wish to engage;
- intimidating, aggressive or threatening behaviour;
- deliberately invading someone's personal space;
- unwanted physical contact;
- inappropriate comments, messages, photographs or material;
- discriminatory comments or behaviour;
- behaviour intended to embarrass, humiliate or isolate another person.

The list is not exhaustive. The club will consider the circumstances and context of each concern.

### **4. Unwanted sexual attention**

Ely Padel Club expects everyone to respect personal boundaries.

Sexualised behaviour or attention is not acceptable where it is unwanted, inappropriate or makes another person feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

This can include, for example:

- unwanted touching or physical contact at any time on or off the court in connection with EPC and includes (but not exclusively), kissing or hugging someone at the end of a game. (Shaking hands or racket bumping is considered acceptable behaviour).
- comments, jokes or remarks of a sexual nature;
- comments about someone's body or appearance which are sexual or unwelcome;
- persistent flirting or sexual attention after someone has indicated, verbally or otherwise, that they are not interested;
- intrusive questions about someone's sex life or relationships;

- sexualised messages, images or comments through club-related communications or social media;
- deliberately invading someone's personal space in a sexualised or intimidating manner.

**A person's clothing, friendliness, previous relationship, previous consent or participation in social activities should not be taken as permission for unwanted physical or sexual attention.**

Everyone is entitled to set their own personal boundaries, and those boundaries should be respected.

The club recognises that people may sometimes feel uncomfortable challenging behaviour directly. A person does not have to say "no" in a particular way, repeatedly object, or confront the person responsible for behaviour before it can be raised as a concern.

Where behaviour may amount to sexual harassment, sexual abuse or another safeguarding concern, the club will follow the appropriate safeguarding and reporting procedures.

## **5. What is expected of members and visitors?**

Everyone at Ely Padel Club is expected to:

- treat others with courtesy, dignity and respect;
- respect personal boundaries;
- behave appropriately on and off court;
- play fairly and respect opponents, partners, officials, coaches and volunteers;
- avoid language or behaviour which could reasonably be considered abusive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing or intimidating;
- respect someone's request to stop unwanted conversation, contact or attention;
- raise concerns where they believe someone may be at risk or experiencing unacceptable behaviour.

The LTA Code of Conduct similarly requires participants to help create a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment and prohibits abusive, threatening, intimidating and harassing behaviour.

## **6. What should I do if I experience or witness inappropriate behaviour?**

If you experience or witness behaviour which concerns you, you are encouraged to report it.

Where appropriate and where you feel comfortable doing so, you may tell the person that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask them to stop. **However, you are not expected to confront someone or deal with the situation yourself.**

A concern can be raised with:

- the Club Welfare Officer;
- a member of the Club Committee;
- a coach or other responsible club representative.

Concerns involving a child or young person under 18, or an adult at risk, should be reported promptly to the Club Welfare Officer and dealt with under the club's safeguarding procedures.

The LTA advises that safeguarding concerns can also be reported directly through its safeguarding reporting process.

## **7. How the club will respond**

All concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The club will:

1. Listen to the person raising the concern and treat them with respect.
2. Record relevant information objectively and confidentially.
3. Consider whether the matter is a safeguarding concern and, where appropriate, refer it to the Club Welfare Officer and/or LTA.
4. Take reasonable steps to protect anyone who may be at risk while the matter is considered.
5. Investigate or manage the concern fairly and proportionately in accordance with the club's disciplinary procedures.
6. Where appropriate, seek advice from the LTA, relevant safeguarding professionals or other appropriate organisations.
7. Respect confidentiality, sharing information only where necessary and appropriate.

The club will not make assumptions about a person's intentions. The focus will be on the behaviour, its impact, the circumstances and the available information.

## **8. False or malicious allegations**

The club recognises that raising a concern can be difficult and encourages people to report genuine concerns in good faith.

A concern which is raised in good faith will not result in action against the person simply because it is not subsequently substantiated.

However, deliberately making a false or malicious allegation may itself be treated as inappropriate behaviour and may be dealt with under the club's disciplinary procedures.

## **9. Protection from victimisation**

No member, volunteer, coach or other person should be treated unfairly because they have:

- raised a genuine concern;
- supported someone who has raised a concern;
- provided information during an investigation; or
- assisted the club in dealing with a safeguarding, bullying or harassment concern.

Any retaliation, intimidation or victimisation following a genuine report may itself be treated as a breach of this policy.

## **10. Children and young people**

Ely Padel Club has a particular responsibility to safeguard children and young people.

Adults working with or around juniors must maintain appropriate professional boundaries and follow the club's safeguarding procedures.

Any concern involving a child or young person must be referred to the Club Welfare Officer and managed in accordance with the LTA safeguarding framework.

The LTA identifies inappropriate physical contact, inappropriate messaging and inappropriate relationships or behaviour involving adults and young people as matters which should be reported.

## **11. Informal resolution**

Some concerns may be appropriately resolved informally, particularly where the behaviour appears to have resulted from a misunderstanding and does not involve safeguarding, harassment, discrimination or serious misconduct.

An informal approach may include:

- speaking to the individuals involved;
- asking that particular behaviour stops;
- agreeing appropriate boundaries;
- reminding members of the club's expected standards of behaviour.

**Informal resolution will not normally be appropriate where the concern involves, serious harassment, threats, discrimination, abuse, safeguarding concerns or behaviour which could put someone at risk.**

## **12. Serious incidents**

Where an allegation involves serious misconduct, sexual behaviour, violence, threats, abuse, a child or adult at risk, or potentially criminal behaviour, the club may take immediate protective action and seek advice from the LTA, safeguarding professionals or the police where appropriate.

If someone is in immediate danger, the emergency services should be contacted by calling **999**.

### **13. Confidentiality**

The club will handle concerns sensitively and confidentially.

Information will only be shared with those who need it to manage the concern, protect individuals, investigate an allegation or meet safeguarding or legal obligations.

Confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed where there is a safeguarding concern or where information needs to be shared to protect someone from harm.

### **14. No one has to deal with it alone**

If something has happened which makes you feel uncomfortable, intimidated, embarrassed or unsafe, you do not need to decide yourself whether it is serious enough to report.

If you are unsure whether behaviour is inappropriate, you are encouraged to speak to the Club Welfare Officer or another trusted club representative.

**The club would rather someone raise a concern which turns out not to require further action than remain silent about something which may affect someone's safety or wellbeing.**

### **15. Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated where necessary to reflect changes to LTA guidance, safeguarding requirements, legislation or club practice.

### **16. Reporting Concerns**

#### **Immediate Danger**

Call 999

#### **Non-Emergency Concerns**

The Club Welfare Officer is Julia Gilbert and can be contacted on:

M: 07774426654

E: [padel.eosa@gmail.com](mailto:padel.eosa@gmail.com)

- If unavailable or wish to contact outside EPC, contact the LTA Safeguarding Team directly on 020 8487 7000