

Abbeydale Tennis Club

Whistleblowing Policy

1. Purpose

Abbeydale Tennis Club is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding, welfare, integrity, and good governance.

This Whistleblowing Policy enables volunteers, staff, members, parents, coaches, and visitors to raise concerns about wrongdoing or unsafe practice **without fear of retaliation**.

The policy supports safeguarding requirements set by the **Lawn Tennis Association** and complements the Club Safeguarding Policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Committee members
- Employees and volunteers
- Coaches and officials
- Members and parents/carers
- Contractors and visitors

It covers concerns relating to:

- Safeguarding or welfare of children or adults at risk
 - Abuse, neglect, or inappropriate behaviour
 - Breaches of LTA Codes of Conduct
 - Criminal activity
 - Fraud or financial misconduct
 - Discrimination, bullying, or harassment
 - Health and safety risks
 - Covering up wrongdoing
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3. What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the reporting of **suspected wrongdoing** where it is in the public or club interest.

It differs from:

- Personal complaints or grievances
- Member disputes
- Coaching or selection disagreements

Those issues should follow the Club Complaints Procedure.

4. Duty to Speak Up

Everyone involved with Abbeydale Tennis Club has a responsibility to report concerns.

You do **not** need proof — only a **reasonable belief** that wrongdoing may be occurring.

5. How to Raise a Concern

Concerns should be reported as soon as possible.

Step 1 — Report Internally

Contact one of the following:

Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

Name: Lucy Slater

Email: safeguardingwelfareabbeydale@gmail.com

Phone: 07879122188

OR

Club Chair

Name: Jayne Bonner

Email: jayne@academytennis.co.uk

Step 2 — Report Directly to the LTA

If:

- the concern involves club leadership,
- you feel unable to report internally, or
- you believe action has not been taken,

contact:

LTA Safeguarding Team

Email: safeguarding@lta.org.uk

Phone: 020 8487 7000

Step 3 — External Reporting

Where appropriate, concerns may also be raised with:

- Police (999 emergency / 101 non-emergency)
 - Local Authority Safeguarding Team (0114 2734855)
 - NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285)
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6. Confidentiality

- Concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially.
 - Your identity will only be shared where necessary to investigate or protect individuals.
 - Anonymous reports will be considered, although investigation may be more difficult.
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7. Protection for Whistleblowers

Abbeydale Tennis Club will:

- Support anyone raising concerns in good faith.
- Protect individuals from victimisation or retaliation.
- Treat retaliation as a disciplinary matter.

This policy reflects protections under the **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**.

8. How Concerns Will Be Handled

When a concern is raised:

1. The concern will be acknowledged.
2. Risk to children/adults at risk will be assessed immediately.
3. The Club Welfare Officer will liaise with the LTA Safeguarding Team where required.

4. Appropriate action will be taken, which may include:
 - safeguarding referral
 - disciplinary investigation
 - suspension pending investigation
 - referral to statutory agencies

The whistleblower will normally receive confirmation that the concern has been considered, subject to confidentiality limits.

9. False or Malicious Allegations

Concerns raised **in good faith** will never result in disciplinary action.

However, knowingly making false allegations may lead to disciplinary action.

10. Record Keeping

The Club Welfare Officer will:

- Maintain secure records of concerns raised.
 - Store records in line with safeguarding data protection requirements.
 - Share information only on a need-to-know basis.
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11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

Next Review Date: 14th February 2028

Approved by: Q Steles

Role: Welfare Officer

Date: 14/2/2026