

## Dispute Guidance

### Notes on how to Make a Complaint

These Notes should be read in conjunction with the Dispute Guidance document. These notes are intended to be supplementary and subservient to the Dispute Guidance.

1. It unfortunately happens in any Club or walk of life that others behaviour can be perceived as inappropriate. If this happens then the aggrieved party has a perfect right to be heard and to have a rational way of dealing with the problem. In the absence of a rational approach it is likely that inappropriate behaviour will go unchecked and/or will provoke reciprocal inappropriate behaviour all of which can seriously damage the club.
2. If you want to tackle what you believe is inappropriate behaviour, possibly towards yourself, then you need to first take stock. Are you being oversensitive or have you read too much into what happened? If, having taken stock, you still believe that you have a grievance or complaint that you want to raise then you should do so.
3. Please avoid the temptation to make your issue an item of gossip. To get good quality results that all parties can accept it is best if matters are dealt with confidentially. Gossiping about others perceived bad behaviour can be seen as bullying or harassment. By all means discuss this with your close friends or with people who you feel you can rely on so you can have the benefit of their advice and perspective but do please make sure that they know and appreciate that this is a confidential situation.
4. The first step is going to be to try to contact the other party (or parties) to explain the issue to them and the impact that it has had on you or others. You should be very careful at this stage not to behave inappropriately yourself. It is very easy if you are hurt or upset to come across yourself as being hostile and aggressive which will risk damaging your case and could put you in the wrong. If the other party is perceived by you as difficult to approach or you are particularly upset then it may be better to find an intermediary who can communicate between you. Most people on being so approached will be only too ready to reassure you that no harm was meant. This is a sign of a reasonable person. You may of course get a hostile response which is in itself likely to be inappropriate. If you do get a poor quality response then it is important that you do not respond in kind.
5. If you still feel aggrieved after having informally approached the other party (or parties) then the next step is to invite them to take part in informal mediation. This should be done by someone you can both have confidence in, perhaps someone from outside the club. Neither yourself or any other party have to take part in this process but a willingness to do so does show a reasonable attitude.
6. If you still feel aggrieved after this then you should consider making a formal complaint. By doing so you are making sure that the issue can be dealt with rationally and fairly. As well as protecting yourself you will also be protecting the

Club and helping the other parties to see that their behaviour can be damaging. Your complaint should simply and fairly explain the facts of the case and then explain the impact that the behaviour has had on you and your enjoyment of the club. You might want to suggest remedies but please make sure that these are reasonable and achievable. Please try to stick to the facts of the case and do not be tempted to use the complaint as a mechanism to abuse or mistreat any of the other parties.

7. Your complaint should be sent to the Chairman and/or Secretary only unless they are both a party to the issue in which case it should go to the most senior and trusted member of the Committee that you can find.
8. The Club should make strenuous and immediate efforts to resolve the issue as soon as possible to limit the continuing damage that might otherwise be done. Your responsibility will be, with the other parties, to make your best effort to seek a resolution and a closure of the issue so that everyone can move on.
9. Like the other parties, you have a right to appeal as explained in the Dispute Guidance document. Any appeal needs to be on one of the grounds specified.