



**WILTSHIRE
TENNIS**

Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy

Particularly to protect children (U18) and adults at risk

June 2022

Background

Wiltshire Tennis is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all, where bullying and harassment cannot exist, and where we can all speak up about any concerns that we have. To enjoy tennis in a relaxed and secure atmosphere we treat everybody with dignity and respect.

Wiltshire Tennis has procedures in place to address harassment, bullying and victimisation. If you believe you have been subjected to, or have witnessed, harassment or bullying please, in good faith, do raise this as soon as possible. All complaints and concerns will be handled sensitively, promptly, firmly and fairly. We will also provide you with support and guidance when dealing with your complaint.

We have a zero-tolerance view of bullying and harassment, which applies to all adults, children, staff, players and visitors to Wiltshire Tennis venues and events.

Consequences

The coaching team and management committees will be firm but fair when dealing promptly and effectively with instances of bullying or harassment. Such behaviour has consequences for all of us.

Reporting

“Say something if you see something”.

This means that anyone who knows that bullying or harassment is happening is encouraged to contact the County Safeguarding Officer, Liz Lewis, in person or via the Wiltshire Tennis website: safeguarding@wiltshiretennis.org.uk

If, for any reason, you are unable to do this you may seek advice from the coaches, the Head of Tennis, committee members or organiser/s of your event.

You may prefer to contact the LTA directly, using an online form found at: safeguardingconcern@lta.org.uk

As always, if anybody is in immediate danger call the police on 999.

Please be sure that you know what bullying and harassment are, how they affect others, how you may report, how you will be supported and how offenders will be dealt with.

The following sections of this policy, and its Appendices, are intended to inform and assist you.

What is Harassment?

Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. The conduct may be related to a protected characteristic such as age, sex, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, or any personal characteristic.

A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended target, where the behaviour is not directed at them personally. This can include harassment related to someone with whom you have an association. For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if that creates an offensive environment for them. The way you behave may amount to harassment even if you did not intend it to.

Harassment can be carried out by one individual against another individual or a group, or by a group against an individual. It may take place over a period of time or it could be an isolated incident.

Examples of harassment involve, but are not limited to:

- unwanted physical contact: this could include inappropriate touching, sexual contact, pushing and physical assault;
- over-familiar or inappropriate behaviour: such as sexual or racial 'banter', offensive gestures, leering;
- verbal harassment: such as offensive remarks, insults, distasteful jokes and innuendo, gossip, or ridicule related to age, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, race, caring responsibilities, appearance, status, nationality, trade union membership or religion, belief, political opinion;
- written harassment: such as the circulation or display of offensive or suggestive material including e-mail, the sending or displaying of inappropriate and unwanted messages, texts, images, and graffiti (this may include displaying publicly or privately images taken without permission);
- unwanted conduct based on religion, belief, political opinion;
- display of inappropriate material: for example calendars, posters, photographs, post-cards, flags and emblems;
- coercion: such as pressure for sexual favours;
- exclusion: from normal sporting activities, conversation and social events, hostility on the courts or in changing rooms;
- spreading malicious rumours;
- victimisation (i.e. treating someone less favourably) because they have made a complaint of harassment or helped someone else to do so.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. It can also involve the misuse of power. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority, but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Bullying, like harassment, may be verbal, non-verbal, or physical. It can be carried out by one individual against another individual or a group, or by a group against an individual. However, bullying is different from harassment and is usually deliberate behaviour. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person and results in pain and distress to the victim.

Examples of bullying involve, but are not limited to:

- Emotional bullying: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting e.g. threatening gestures and verbal bullying where someone is being given cruel nicknames, taunted, threats and intimidation;
- Physical bullying: pushing, kicking, hitting, slapping, tripping, punching or any use of violence and anything else that causes physical harm including inappropriate use of tennis balls;
- Racist bullying: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- Homophobic bullying: focussing on the issue of sexuality;
- Social / Verbal bullying: including gossiping about others, leaving someone out or embarrassing players in front of others, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- Cyber-bullying: in all areas of the internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls and / or misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

Why will Wiltshire Tennis respond to reports of bullying and harassment?

Harassment and bullying both hurt. No one deserves to be a target of either, and we want to be sure that we do not let it happen.

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Individuals who are bullying will be supported to find different ways of behaving. We do not think that people are weak just because they raise a concern.

Wiltshire Tennis will seek advice from the LTA before instigating an investigation.

Stage 1: Reconciliation.

It is likely that we will first seek reconciliation, i.e. getting the involved parties together. It may be that a genuine apology resolves the situation.

Stage 2: Further action.

If necessary, the LTA will appoint a trained individual to investigate further.

Stage 3: A Panel

1. A panel may be constituted, comprising three people from the following: Head of Tennis, County Safeguarding Officer, an Officer of Wiltshire Tennis. Only one member of the panel may be, but does not have to be, a coach.
2. An individual nominated by the LTA's safeguarding function may also join the panel.
3. The panel should meet with the complainant (together with parent/guardian/ "grown up" where appropriate) to verify details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
4. The same panel should meet with the alleged perpetrator (together with parent/guardian/ "grown up" where appropriate), and provide them with details of the allegation. The alleged perpetrator should be asked for their response to the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed.
5. If bullying has, in the panel's view, taken place the individual will be warned and put on notice of further action, e.g. temporary or permanent suspension from matches, squad coaching, events etc. If the bullying continues, consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
6. Where coaching or training camps are concerned, the parent/guardian/ "grown up" of the bully or bullied player can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so and if appropriate.
7. Wiltshire Tennis is likely to monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
8. Where coaching is involved, the Head Coach should make all coaches aware of the individuals involved, the concerns expressed and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

Outcomes

- **The bully (bullies) may be asked to make a genuine apology. There may be other consequences.**
- **If possible, the children/those involved will be reconciled**
- **In serious cases, suspension or exclusion from the Wiltshire Tennis activities will be considered.**



Some advice for Junior players

How are you feeling?

- If you're feeling upset at the way you're being treated on the court by your team-mates, or adults around you, there are things you can do.
- If people make fun of you on the court or in the changing room, or try to upset you to put you off the game, so that you don't want to take part in training or matches, that could be bullying.

If it keeps happening, it is definitely bullying.

- Even if other people find it funny – and you don't – then it's bullying.

What can you do?

- Speak to your grown-up (parent or guardian) or an adult whom you trust.
- Check out these websites: www.beatbullying.org.uk
www.bullying.co.uk
www.childline.org.uk
www.kidscape.org.uk
www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk
- Ask your grown-up (parent or guardian) to contact your coach or the event organiser and explain the situation.
- If you have already tried to stop the problem, and it hasn't worked, please tell them this as well.
- Keep a diary of what happens including dates, times and other people who were around.
- Ask friends who were there to back up what you say.
- If your friends are too worried to help, then you should still tell your grown-up (parent or guardian), a coach, your team captain, or the County Safeguarding Officer: safeguarding@wiltshiretennis.org.uk

Assistance for parents, guardians and other adults.



Anybody (especially a child) may show by their behaviour that they are being bullied or harassed in some way. Some examples are listed below. We should all should be aware of these possible signs and should raise concerns when we see, unexpectedly, that person:

- becoming frightened of walking to or from our activities,
- changing their usual routine,
- being unwilling to go to booked tennis sessions / matches,
- beginning to miss regular sessions,
- becoming withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence,
- stammering,
- threatening, or attempting, to run away,
- threatening, or attempting, suicide,
- crying themselves to sleep at night or having nightmares,
- feeling ill in the morning,
- developing poor form on the court,
- coming home with torn clothes, or with possessions which are damaged or "gone missing",
- asking for, or stealing, money (which they could be using to pay off a bully),
- with unexplained cuts or bruises,
- becoming aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable,
- beginning to bully other children or siblings,
- stop eating,
- being frightened to say what's wrong,
- giving improbable excuses for any of the above,
- being afraid to use the internet or mobile phone,
- being nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.

The above could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

If your child has confided in you, it is important to listen to what they say and allow them to have a say in the action. They may want to take their time as it may be a sensitive situation but, although it is important to go at their pace, it is essential to encourage them to get this sorted out sooner rather than later, before it escalates. Understand and respect their concerns and fears, which are very real to them and need sensitivity. They may be worried they will get further bullied. Agree a way forward with your child, and plan together to meet with a coach, the Head of Tennis, County Safeguarding Officer, or another adult who helps organise activities. Give a listening ear, space to talk and reassurance.

Making a complaint

Guided by this policy you may make a specific complaint to the County Safeguarding Officer. safeguarding@wiltshiretennis.org.uk

Other Wiltshire Tennis policies may be of assistance, e.g. Safeguarding Policy, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.



Informal action for adults.

Personal differences

It is important to remember that whilst one person might not find certain behaviour offensive, another person may find the same is harassment or bullying.

You will not be subjected to less favourable treatment or victimisation as a result of raising a complaint of harassment or bullying in good faith.

Helping others

An individual who is being harassed or bullied may not feel able to raise their concerns, therefore we all have a duty to be vigilant, and to speak up where we witness behaviour which may be construed as harassment or bullying. In these circumstances you should report your concerns to a coach, the Head of Tennis, an Officer of Wiltshire Tennis, the County Safeguarding Officer - Liz Lewis - using safeguarding@wiltshiretennis.org.uk

Helping yourself

If you are being bullied or harassed or are unhappy with the way you have been treated, and if you feel able to, first consider raising the problem informally with the person responsible. Explain to them that their behaviour is not welcome, or makes you uncomfortable, and make it clear that you expect the behaviour to stop.

It is possible that the person is unaware of the effect of their behaviour and needs to have this brought to their attention so that they can correct it, so it is important that they know how the behaviour is affecting you. You could do this by either talking to the person or writing to them about it. If you need support to do this, speak to someone you can trust who can provide advice and assistance to help you resolve the issue.

Raising a concern

You are encouraged to mention your concerns to the Head of Tennis, a coach, an Officer of Wiltshire Tennis, or the County Safeguarding Officer using safeguarding@wiltshiretennis.org.uk

Making a complaint

If you prefer, make a specific complaint to the County Safeguarding Officer using this policy for guidance.

Other Wiltshire Tennis policies may be of assistance: Safeguarding Policy, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.