



# Lydney Town AFC Youth Complaints Procedure

**Lydney Town AFC Youth Football Club (LTYFC herein)**, 'we', 'our', 'us', are a FA Charter Standard accredited club and is a charity registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales, Registration number: 1198391

LTYFC supports all our members to participate football in a safe environment, develop friendships and have fun. We adopt transparent policies that are developed in line with FA guidelines and we welcome constructive interaction with members and others. Notwithstanding this we also recognise that on occasions individuals may wish to register a complaint or grievance and, in such cases, it will follow this procedure.

## Policy

It is club policy that this procedure will be adopted in a manner so as to make those wishing to register a complaint or grievance to feel they may do so safe in the knowledge it will be dealt with fairly and that they should feel free to raise their concerns without fear of victimisation or reprisal.

It is further considered to be appropriate that wherever possible such matters should be dealt with amicably within the club itself, where appropriate bilaterally between the aggrieved party and the person believed by them to be the cause of the issue or concern.

## How to make a complaint

Rather than allowing an issue or concern to be prolonged, it is strongly advised that any person suffering any kind of grievance should raise it promptly as soon as the issue manifests itself by following the stages herein. Reasons for grievances may include:

- **Discrimination, Harassment or Abuse**

No person should be subjected to discrimination, harassment or abuse. If you believe this behaviour is occurring, please make a complaint: Complaints should be submitted in writing to either of the following key committee members: Chairman, Secretary, Welfare.

If your complaint involves suspicions of harm against a child, please immediately call the clubs Welfare Officer on the number provided within the club handbook. If you are unable to get hold of the Welfare Officer or they are not appropriate, please call the Club Chair or Secretary. Regardless of the former statement, if your complaint is an emergency, the police must be called. More information for whom to contact can be found in the clubs safeguarding policy.

- **Training Sessions or Matches**

If your complaint is about training sessions or match games, do not raise these directly with the coach at training sessions or pitch side before/during/after matches. All complaints should be made in the first instance to your parent representative. They will either provide advice to you straight away or signpost to the appropriate person who will deal with your concerns.

## Stages and Time-scales

### Stage 1 - Informal Review

As soon as an aggrieved party is clear about their concerns they should inform their parent representative, (or alternatively contact anyone on the committee) who will offer advice and guidance or raise the matter with the appropriate management committee member.

All Club Officials are charged with making themselves available to listen to such concerns objectively and, where the concerns are legitimate and appear to be in breach of club policy, to remedy the issue as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Should the concern not be considered legitimate for good reason and such reasons are clearly stated to the aggrieved party who accepts the explanation then no further action is required.

In the event the parties are unable to reach such an agreement the procedure will proceed to stage 2.

## **Stage 2 - Formal Review**

Any formal grievance must be submitted in writing (email or letter) to the Club Secretary or Club Chairman.

All such complaints will be registered by the Club and become a matter of record (subject to appropriate confidentiality being maintained). Upon receipt of a written grievance the recipient (Responder) will acknowledge receipt of the grievance within 7 days of its receipt; Consider the significance of the grievance (with other designated responders where appropriate) in order to determine an appropriate course of action. Should the grievance be considered serious it may be referred directly to the Welfare Officer and/or the FA. Any consideration of complaint action or investigation, shall include at least two (2) key officials from the Club Committee, as well as one of the Charity Trustees. The key officials will include, where possible, either the Chair, Club Secretary or Welfare, as well as other appropriate/relevant club officials.

Where a decision is made to progress the complaint within the club the Responder will inform the person(s) against whom the complaint is made and provide detail of the allegations or complaint. The accused person will be invited to provide a signed written statement in response to the allegations within 7 days of receipt.

Upon receipt of the accused person(s) statement the Responder may request written statements from other relevant persons/witnesses to obtain corroborative evidence.

Then, depending on the nature or significance of the complaint, the Responder may either:

Attempt to resolve the situation by implementing an action which is fair, reasonable and proportional to the complaint, or if the matter cannot be resolved it should be passed to the next higher-designated authority or body.

Responders will aim to respond fully to all grievances within 15 days of receipt of the original grievance or, where that is not reasonably practicable, to provide an alternative time-scale within that time-frame.

Once an action has been determined the accused person(s) will be notified in writing of the course of action to be taken and the aggrieved party will be informed about the outcome of the enquiry.

In the event the grievance is upheld and action is taken against the accused person(s) they will have the right to appeal within two weeks of receipt of the letter describing the course of action and Stage 3 of this procedure will then be implemented.

Should a grievance not be upheld, the aggrieved party will have the right to appeal within two weeks of receipt of the letter describing the outcome and Stage 3 of this procedure will then be implemented.

## **Stage 3 - Escalation or Appeal**

Appeals or escalations will be made in writing (email or letter) to the Chair of Trustees, Club Secretary and Chairman. Such appeals must include the original grievance, the documented response and clear justifications for the basis of the appeal explaining why the outcome was flawed.

Appeals made become a matter of club record (subject to appropriate confidentiality being maintained) and will be acknowledged within 7 days of receipt.

Upon receipt of an appeal the Chair of Trustees, or assigned Trustee will:

- Review the submission and determine whether there is a clear case of error or not. In the event the appeal is considered frivolous or argumentative the appeal may be rejected at this stage without further review. Where the Trustee considers the appeal may have merit he/she will:
- Appoint other Trustees, and if desired, selected club committee members, or other club members who may have relevant expertise or perspective and the Welfare Officer, to review the appeal in a closed meeting with the Chair of Trustees (the Appeal Committee).

Following such meeting the Appeal Committee will arrange a formal review with the appellant, the accused Person(s) (should they not be the appellant), any witnesses the Appeal Committee consider necessary and any person(s) the appellant/accused person(s) may wish to represent or assist them.

The date of such review will not be set so early as to prevent adequate preparation, nor so late as to incur inappropriate delay. Normally such reviews will take place behind closed doors starting one hour before a scheduled committee meeting. Chair the Appeal Review inviting submissions from all relevant parties, directing discussions and summarising the events/issues as described by the parties present.

Wherever possible, following such review, the Appeal Committee will either uphold the original decision or reject it. Exceptionally they may consider it appropriate to modify the original determination in which case such ruling may itself become subject to Appeal.

The Trustees decision is final and the majority of Trustees should agree on the decision.