



## Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure

### Purpose and scope

This procedure is designed to help and encourage members of Alfold Football Club to achieve and maintain standards of behaviour as detailed within the club's Code of Conduct. The club will adhere to all disciplinary procedures set by the relevant County Associations and Leagues to which the club belongs. In addition, the club will run its own internal procedures.

### Complaints Procedure

In the event that any member feels that he or she has suffered un-fair treatment that is not in accordance with the rules or spirit of the game, or believes that Club Policies, Rules of Code of Conduct have been broken, or they have an issue that cannot be resolved within their team or the coach, they should follow the procedures below.

1. You should report the matter in writing to the Club Secretary and Chairperson of Alfold Football Club. The report should include where appropriate:
  - a. Details of what, when and where the incident took place.
  - b. Names of any witnesses
  - c. Names of any others who have been treated in a similar way
  - d. Details of any former complaints made about the incident; date, when and to whom made.
  - e. A preference for a solution to the incident.

All complaints will be dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee this consists of 3 members of the club management committee the Club Welfare Officer and two more members of the Club Committee. Where the potential breach involves a member of the management committee, the complaint will be chaired by someone independent of the Club Committee.

Where possible, the complaint will be dealt with through written statements from the person against whom the complaint was made and all witnesses named by both parties. These statements will be made available to both parties, unless in the view of the Disciplinary Committee, the complexity or seriousness of the complaint requires a formal hearing, the complaint will be judged on the basis of the written statements. In all cases, the Disciplinary Committee will report their findings and recommendation to the other committee members before communicating them to the parties involved in the dispute.

## **Disciplinary Procedure**

The Disciplinary Committee will consist of the Club Welfare Officer, Chairman and 1 other committee member.

A meeting will be convened within 14 days of the alleged breach of the Code of Conduct and the member will be notified in writing of the nature of their failure to maintain the standards detailed in the Code.

On the day of the incident giving rise to the breach of the Code of Conduct, that matter should be reported to the Club Secretary, or Vice Chairman in their absence, by the team/coach/manager. If the Club Secretary considers that a potential breach of the Code of Conducts has occurred, the matter will be passed to the Welfare Officer who will coordinate the investigation and institute the disciplinary procedure.

Members will be notified of the time, date, venue of the meeting by letter and will be required to confirm attendance no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting. The member will be required to attend with parent/guardian, if they are under 18, who may make a representation on their behalf. The member and or their representative will be given an opportunity to state their case prior to any decision being made by the Disciplinary Committee.

No disciplinary action will be taken against a member until a full investigation as to the circumstances of the incident have been conducted by the club.

At all stages of the investigation the member will be required to be accompanied by their parent/guardian, if they are under 18, who may make representations on their behalf and confirm that the member fully understands the potential breach of the code, the procedure taking place and the sanction, if any imposed by the Disciplinary Committee. All aspects of the investigation will remain confidential.

No member will be dismissed from the Club for a first breach of the Code of Conduct except in the cases where there has been a Gross Misconduct. In those circumstances a specific procedure will be followed.

A member will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action imposed. An appeal should be addressed to the Club Secretary and submitted within seven days from the date that the Disciplinary Committee's decision is communicated to the member.

## **Warnings**

### ***Stage 1 – Verbal Warning***

If the conduct is deemed to be in breach of the standards laid down in the Code of Conduct, a member will in the first instance be given a verbal warning. The member and their parent/guardian will be advised of the reason for the warning and notified that this is the first stage of the Disciplinary procedure. The member will be notified that they have the right to appeal, the timescale upon which the appeal should be submitted to the Club Secretary for the Club's further consideration. A note of the verbal warning will be kept by the Club Secretary, but will be discarded after 12 months or in line with the present requirements of the Data Protection Act.

### ***Stage 2 – Written Warning***

If the matter is more serious or there is a further breach of the Code of Conduct, then a written warning will be given to the member. This will explain the reason for the warning, the improvement in conduct required and the timescale. Further, if there is no improvement that action detailed in Stage 3 may be considered. The right of appeal against this decision will be advised and explained to the member. An action plan will be mutually agreed with the member or parent/guardian if under 18. A copy of the written warning will be kept by the Club Secretary, but will be discarded for disciplinary procedure after 12 months subject to satisfactory conduct.

### ***Stage 3 -Final Written Warning***

If there is still a failure to improve and conduct is still unsatisfactory, or if the matter is sufficiently serious to warrant only one written warning but insufficiently serious to justify dismissal from the club, a final written warning will be given by the Committee. This will explain the reason for the warning, the improvement required and the timescale. An action plan will be mutually agreed with the member or parent/guardian if under 18. It will also warn that dismissal from the Club will result if there is no improvement and will advise the right of appeal. The Club Secretary will hold a copy of the final written warning, but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to satisfactory conduct.

### ***Gross Misconduct***

The following list gives examples of behaviour that are normally regarded as gross misconduct:

1. Violence, extreme aggression or serious abuse of referees, match officials, spectators, club members, players or either side of opposition team officials or cause harm to a club member or member of the public.
2. Deliberate damage to Club property
3. Brining the Club into disrepute by actions or words
4. Serious negligence or disregard of the Club rules that causes or could have caused unacceptable loss, damage or injury
5. Any forms of inappropriate behaviour towards a member of the club

In the even that a member of the Club is alleged of gross misconduct by a match referee or other authority, the member shall automatically suspended; pending investigation/disciplinary hearing according to the Club's policy or when superseded by County FA policies and procedures.

As in the Disciplinary procedure the member will be required to attend a meeting within 14 days of the alleged gross misconduct, the member will be suspended from all training nor be allowed to attend matches until the meeting has taken place. Should the member charge with serious gross misconduct not attend the Disciplinary Meeting then a decision will be made in their absence and the decision of the Committee will be confirmed in writing to the address noted on their registration document.

The Committee have the authority to take whatever action is appropriate within the club rules and constitution. In the most serious of cases this could lead to dismissal from the club. Individuals/parents will be expected to pay any fines imposed by the League or County FA in relation to such an incident. In the terms of a member being removed from the club they will be required to return all Alfold property with 2 days of being dismissed.