



NEWCASTLE TENNIS CLUB CONSTITUTION

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1. NAME

The name of the organisation shall be Newcastle Tennis Club, (hereafter referred to as The Club), situated on Bryansford Road, Newcastle, County Down.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of The Club are:

- (a) to promote and foster the game of tennis
- (b) to provide equal opportunities for participation by all sections of the community.

3. AFFILIATION

The Club shall be affiliated to the national governing body Tennis Ireland.

4. MEMBERSHIP

(a) Anyone whose application is acceptable to the Club and whose subscription has been paid for the current year or has been waived by the Management Committee shall be a member of The Club. Annual Membership in the Club shall be from 1st April to the 31st of March each year. The categories of membership are as follows:

(i) Senior – 18 years and over. Full adult members are members who have reached the age of 18 years on or before January 1st in the current season.

(ii) Junior – up to 18 years old. Junior members are members under the age of 18 years on January 1st in the current season.

(iii) Student - Aged 18 - 25 years, and in full-time education.

(iv) Development – Aged 4 - 7 years, and participating in a Coaching Program provided by The Club.

(v) Family Membership – Family members consist of parents or guardians, and any of their child(ren) who are under 18 years of age on January 1st in the current season and child(ren) over 18 years of age who are in full time education.

(vi) Life Membership – Life membership may be awarded for exceptional service to the Club and may be granted only by a resolution passed at an Annual General Meeting.

(vii) Off-Season Membership – Members of affiliated clubs may play by arrangement during the winter. At the discretion of the Committee, affiliated Clubs may use the NTC facilities without incurring fees for the purpose of official events such as League Matches.

(viii) Coaches - All coaches must be qualified and insured to coach on our premises.

(ix) Probationary Membership – This is issued at the discretion of the Committee.

(x) Visitors - A person visiting the Club on the introduction of a member and on paying the fees fixed by the Club will be granted Full-Playing Membership for that One Day. Visitors must seek permission from a Committee member via email. This temporary membership will not entitle the visiting member to vote or attend General Meetings of the Club.

(b) Newcastle Tennis Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of all its members. Every individual in the Club should at all times show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of fellow members, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Club and the guidelines contained in the 'Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland' and the 'Tennis Ireland Safeguarding Policy' which is available on the Club website.

(c) The Club Child Protection Policy, The Club Code of Conduct and The Club Constitution shall all be accessible to members on The Club website and a copy of each shall be on display in the Clubhouse.

All members must sign the relevant Club Code of Conduct. By signing the Code of Conduct, members are agreeing to abide by all Rules, Codes and the Constitution of The Club.

(d) Subscription fees for each category of membership shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(a) **Procedure** - All candidates for admission as a new member save as otherwise herein provided shall have their names put before the Club.

(b) **Proposals** - Each candidate for admission to membership of the Club shall be proposed by one full-playing member and seconded by a member of Committee. The Application Form must be signed by his/her Proposer and countersigned by a Committee member. An interval of not less than 2 weeks shall elapse between nomination and election of members.

The Committee's decision on all applications for membership is final and the Committee is not obliged to state any reason for the rejection of any application.

On acceptance of the candidate to membership, the Secretary shall intimate the same to him or her in writing and request payment of subscription. Should this not be paid within one calendar month of despatch of the Secretary's notification of admission the election shall be absolutely void unless the candidates can satisfactorily explain to the Committee the cause for the delay.

(c) Candidates for membership whose names have been rejected cannot be proposed again within the same subscription year.

(d) The Committee shall have the power to declare that any class of membership shall be closed until further notice and shall immediately on passing any resolution in pursuance of this Rule shall draw members' attention to this resolution.

5. OFFICERS

The officers of The Club shall be as follows:

Chairperson

Vice Chairperson

Administrative Secretary

Treasurer

Competitions Secretary

Public Relations Officer

Junior Club Co-Ordinator.

The above comprise the management committee. In addition, at Annual General Meeting, a non-voting President shall be appointed. This is an honorary title only. The President shall have a vote at AGM as an ordinary member, but shall not have a vote on the Management Committee.

(a) Chairperson. The Chairperson facilitates the smooth operation of Committee meetings and has a casting vote if it is needed. The Chairperson shall sit for a maximum of 3 consecutive years, and will stay on the committee for one additional year in an advisory capacity after leaving office.

(b) Vice Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson supports the work of the Chairperson and is the Chairperson's deputy if needed.

(c) Administrative Secretary – The Administrative Secretary shall service the Management Committee when it meets by recording the proceedings of all meetings, dealing with all correspondence and keeping a register of all members.

(d) Treasurer. The Treasurer shall present annual accounts and shall furnish statements of accounts as required by the Management Committee.

(e) Competitions Secretary. The Competitions Secretary shall co-ordinate entries for The Club in external competition.

(f) Public Relations Officer. The Public Relations Officer is responsible for all communication from the Management Committee to the general membership, and for publicizing and promoting The Club in the wider community through various means such as local and social media.

(g) Junior Club Co-Ordinator. The Junior Club Co-Ordinator shall be the Chairperson on the sub-committee relating to the Junior section of the Club (known as the Junior Committee. S/he shall report all business pertaining to the Junior Section to the Management Committee.

In keeping with the Child Protection Policy, The Club shall appoint 4 members (ideally two of each gender) who will have a remit for child protection. One of these must be the Designated Child Protection Officer who shall co-ordinate response to any incident reported. All four must have attended relevant training courses.

6. ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

(a) The Management Committee shall have power to:

(i) hold regular meetings (normally monthly) so as to manage efficiently the affairs of The Club.

(ii) encourage regular turnover of Committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience.

(iii) co-opt additional members in a non-voting advisory capacity.

(iv) appoint sub-committees and assistants to the office bearers as it deems necessary. All sub-committees shall be accountable to the Management Committee, which shall have the power to approve or rescind decisions made by sub-committees as it deems appropriate.

(v) fill vacancies arising during its term in office.

(vi) accept or reject applications for membership.

(vii) review membership of anyone who may have infringed The Club rules, or who owes money to the Club, or whose conduct is likely to bring The Club into disrepute, in accordance with disciplinary procedures.

(viii) appoint any delegates to the governing body and to any other bodies which may, from time to time, require representation.

(b) Five voting members of the Management Committee will constitute a quorum for the business of any meeting. If a quorum is not present then the meeting must be adjourned.

7. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Newcastle Tennis Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in the club should at all times show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of The Club and the guidelines contained in the Tennis Ireland Safeguarding policy and the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.

The action points to assist clubs to maximise compliance with the Code are set out in **Appendix 1**.

All members will have access to the relevant Code of Conduct, the Club's Safeguarding Statement, the Constitution and the Safeguarding Policy. All club members, volunteers and coaches should sign their respective Codes of Conduct.

8. CONDUCT

Any member who believes the conduct of another member is contrary to the constitution of The Club, or any tennis club regulations, or whose conduct is likely to bring The Club into disrepute, may inform any member of the Management Committee in writing. The decision of the Committee on breaches of the Code of Conduct referred to it shall be final.

9. COMPLAINTS, DISCIPLINE AND APPEAL

COMPLAINTS

A Complaint must be made within 14 days of the alleged incident. Complaints should be made in writing in the official Complaint Form to the Committee. It must refer specifically to an incident(s) and it must specify the rule, allegedly broken. The Complaint must be submitted to the Committee and be accompanied by a fee of £30.00.

If unable to remove the cause, the Committee shall submit them to the Hearings Committee. If the complaint is upheld, the fee is refundable. The decision of the Committee on complaints referred to it shall be final.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Chairperson in conjunction with the Secretary will appoint a panel of three committee members to hear the disciplinary case. A Disciplinary Action may be initiated by the Chairperson of the Hearings Committee. The Panel will hold the disciplinary hearing within 14 days of notifying in writing the member subject to the disciplinary procedure.

The Panel will have the following actions at its disposal under the disciplinary procedure.

(i) Issue a warning about future conduct.

(ii) Impose a fine where applicable. The member being fined will be informed in writing of the amount and the date, by which it must be paid. All fines to be paid to the Treasurer. Failure to pay the fine will result in further options being invoked.

(iii) Recommend the member undertakes a period of re-training or re-education if applicable.

(iv) Impose a suspension for a defined period. During the period of suspension, the member is suspended from all activities at, or on behalf of The Club, and therefore shall be ineligible to participate as a member in the affairs of The Club. The member may not use any Club facilities during the period of suspension. The member shall be informed in writing of the reasons for the suspension and the date from which the suspension shall commence. The member may invoke the Appeals Procedure. If the decision of the Appeals Procedure finds in favour of the member, the Secretary shall inform the member in writing of the date from which s/he is reinstated.

(v) Terminate the membership of the person where it has been clearly demonstrated that a serious breach of The Club's constitution has taken place. The individual member shall have the right of appeal. The decision of the Disciplinary Panel should be notified in writing by the Secretary to the member within 7 days of the hearing. If the disciplinary action arose from a complaint by a member this member will also be notified in writing of the decision of the panel. While an Appeal is pending, the member is suspended from all activities at, or on the Club's behalf. Following termination of membership, the member may not use Club facilities under any circumstances.

APPEAL

A member may appeal the decision of the Disciplinary Panel. The appeal must be made in writing to the Secretary within 14 days of the member being notified about the decision of the Disciplinary Panel.

The Appeal must specify:

(1) the date of decision being appealed.

(2) the aspects of the decision being appealed.

(3) the grounds of appeal

The Appellant must provide a copy of relevant documentation, and an appeal fee of £50.00 (which will be refunded in the event of a successful appeal).

This appeal will be heard by a separate Appeals Panel of three Committee and/or Club members appointed by the Chairperson in conjunction with the Secretary. None of the Panel members will have been part of the original Disciplinary Panel or witnesses to the hearing.

The appeal will be heard within 5 days of the receipt of the letter of appeal. The decision of the Appeals Panel will be notified by the Secretary to the member within 7 days of the hearing. If the disciplinary action arose from a complaint by a member, this member will also be notified in writing of the decision of the Appeals Panel.

The decision of the Appeal Panel is final.

The details of the procedures to be followed in regard to all Complaints, Disciplinary Action and Objections can be found in the **Tennis Ireland Complaints, Objections & Disciplinary Rules and Procedures**. It is strongly recommended that all members familiarise themselves with this document before initiating any action.

See **APPENDIX 2** for terms definition.

10. FINANCE

(a) Annual subscriptions shall be proposed by the Management Committee for approval by the membership at the Annual General Meeting.

(b) The financial year end of The Club shall remain the same from year to year unless the Management Committee proposes a change which must be ratified at an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting before a change can be implemented. Membership commences on April 1st. If a member's subscription remains unpaid one month after the due date, s/he ceases to be a member. The Management Committee has the power to re-instate lapsed members.

(c) All monies shall be lodged in a bank account in the name of The Club.

(d) The Treasurer shall close the books on the 31st December annually.

(e) The Management Committee shall have power to authorise expenditure on behalf of The Club.

(f) The annual statement of accounts shall be agreed by the Management Committee and certified prior to presentation at the Annual General Meeting.

(g) Cheques shall be signed and countersigned by two of the following four officers: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Administrative Secretary.

11. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- (a) The Annual General Meeting shall be held in February of each year.
- (b) At least 2 weeks' notice in writing shall be given to all members.
- (c) The Annual General Meeting shall receive the Treasurer's report and Secretary's report, and such other reports that reflect the workings of The Club during the preceding year.
- (d) The election of the Management Committee shall be from nominations submitted in writing to the Administrative Secretary at least one week prior to the Annual General Meeting. All nominations must be proposed and seconded by Senior members or members over 16 years old with individual membership, present at the Annual General Meeting.
- (e) Voting at the Annual General Meeting shall be restricted to those members present whose annual subscriptions have been fully paid or who are Life members prior to the commencement of the meeting. Eligible voters are as follows:
 - (i) Senior members, present at meeting.
 - (ii) Members over 16 years with individual membership, present at meeting.
 - (iii) Members under 16 years with individual membership shall be represented by a parent or guardian, present at meeting, 1 vote per family.
 - (iv) Family membership means 1 vote for each adult present.
- (f) Decisions taken at the Annual General meeting shall be taken by a simple majority of those present who are entitled to vote and voting, motions for such decisions having been proposed and seconded. No proxy votes shall be allowed.

12. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by:

- (a) the Management Committee, OR
- (b) at least 10 members who shall state in writing the business to be discussed.
- (c) at least 14 days' notice shall be given in writing to all members.
- (d) only the business specified in the notice convening the meeting shall be discussed.

13. RESIGNATION

Any member wishing to resign must notify the Administrative Secretary in writing to that effect and must be clear of all liabilities before the resignation may be accepted.

14. DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution of The Club, any assets remaining after settlement of all outstanding debts and liabilities shall not be distributed amongst the members, but shall be given to some other charitable body or institution having similar objectives to those of The Club.

15. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

This Constitution may only be amended by a proposal passed by a majority of members present and entitled to vote at an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting.

16. SPECIAL POWERS

The Management Committee shall have the power to deal with any matter not specifically provided for in the constitution or of such urgency as would preclude the calling of an Extraordinary General Meeting provided that their action is reported to and ratified by such a meeting at an early stage.

17. TRUSTEES

(a) The Club shall appoint 4 Trustees.

(b) The Trustees may invest the funds of The Club and acquire and dispose of property on The Club's behalf provided that not less than three quarters of the Management Committee are in favour. Neither the Trustees nor the Management Committee members need be present at the meeting when the investment decision is made provided the Chairman has obtained their written consent prior to the meeting.

(c) No personal liability shall be attached to any Trustee unless it is caused by his/her own wilful default.

(d) The Trustees shall not be removed from office unless they resign, or the Management Committee removes him/her from office by special resolution.

(e) In the case of a casual vacancy, the Management Committee of the day has the power to appoint a new Trustee provided the remaining Trustees are in unanimous agreement. Otherwise the Management Committee will call a meeting of themselves

and the Trustees whereby the appointment can be ratified by a simple majority of those attending and entitled to vote.

(f) The names of the current Trustees shall be published on The Club website.

18. TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION

In the interest of fostering a cohesive, active membership, the Management Committee shall encourage the general membership to communicate with the Committee, sharing views and aspirations for the improvement of The Club. The Management Committee will keep the membership well informed in matters about The Club, and photos of all serving Committee members and Trustees shall be visible on the notice board inside The Club, and on the website.

APPENDIX 1

ACTION POINTS TO ASSIST CLUBS TO MAXIMISE COMPLIANCE WITH TENNIS IRELAND CODE OF ETHICS

To ensure that best practice is being followed by this club we shall work closely with our Governing Body. In order to promote the best practice in children's sport, we shall comply with the guidelines as set out by Tennis Ireland:

- Adopt and implement the Tennis Ireland Safeguarding policy as an integral part of Club policy on children in the Club.
- Have its constitution approved and adopted by club's members at an AGM or EGM.
- Permit all members over 16 years of age to vote, where possible, in the running of their junior section. One parent / guardian should have one vote for all their children under 16 years of age, where relevant.
- Ensure that the Club Management Committee is elected or endorsed by registered club members at each AGM.
- Adopt and consistently apply a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting Sports Leaders.
- Clearly define the role of the committee members, all Sports Leaders and parents / guardians.
- Appoint/ reappoint at least one Safeguarding Officer at the AGM as outlined in Tennis Irelands policy. In the event that a Club caters for both boys and girls, one safeguarding officer of each gender should ideally be appointed.
- Appoint one of the Safeguarding Officers to act as Designated person to liaise with the Statutory Authorities in relation to the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse. Any such reports should be made according to the reporting procedures outlined by Tennis Ireland.
- Ensure best practice throughout the club by disseminating its Code of Conduct, including the disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in operation within the club to all its members. The club's Code of Conduct should also be posted in all facilities used by the club.
- Have in place procedures for dealing with a concern or complaint made to the Statutory Authorities against a Committee Member or Sports Leader. Regulations should stipulate that a Sports Leader who is the subject of an allegation, which has been reported to the Statutory Authorities, should stand aside while the matter is being examined. S/he should be invited to resume full duties immediately if s/he is vindicated following advice from statutory authorities.

- Ensure that relevant Sports Leaders report to the Club Management Committee on a regular basis.
- Encourage regular turnover of committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience.
- Develop effective procedures for responding to and recording accidents / incidents.
- Ensure that any unusual activity (high rate of drop-out, transfers, etc.) is checked out and reported by the Designated Officer in the club.
- Ensure that all club members are given adequate notice of AGMs and other meetings.
- Ensure that all minutes of all meetings (AGMs/ EGMs/ Committees) are recorded and safely filed.

APPENDIX 2

DEFINITIONS

(extracts from the Tennis Ireland Complaints, Objections & Disciplinary Rules and Procedures-See below for Link)

Complaint: *means any written complaint made against any Participants, Individual Associate, Member, or Branch or Tennis Ireland or any subcommittee therein within the meaning of clause 3.2 of the Procedures*

Disciplinary Action *means the steps undertaken in initiating, investigating, prosecuting and administering disciplinary misconduct by a Participant, Individual Associate, Member, Branch and Tennis Ireland.*

Hearings Committee *means the Member, Branch or Tennis Ireland hearings committee appointed by the executive committee or boards to administer and hear Complaints, Objections or Disciplinary Actions.*

Leader *means the coach, manager and/or team leader that has responsibility for Participants at a particular Event.*

Official *means any person who referees, umpires or officiates at an Event.*

Participant *means any athlete or assistant such as a doctor, physiotherapist, parent, coach, trainer, mentor, psychologist, manager, advisor, agent or representative that accompanies an athlete to an Event*

Useful Links

- [NTC Child Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland](#)
- [Tennis Ireland Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Tennis Ireland Disciplinary Code](#)