

# Thornhill AFC



## Complaints, concerns and feedback policy

*This policy explains the standards we have for managing complaints, concerns and feedback we receive from members of Thornhill AFC and external parties.*

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 At Thornhill AFC, providing a safe and secure environment for our members is core to our expected outcomes as a football section.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the standards we have when responding to a complaint, concern or feedback about our work, including the behaviour of our volunteers or those working on our behalf.
- 1.3 We will address any concerns you may have about our volunteers, the work that we do or the way we raise or spend money, as quickly and effectively as possible. Feedback is important and helps us to improve.
- 1.4 If you don't feel we have handled your complaint or concern as you would have expected it to be handled, we would like the opportunity to make this right. You can also take matters further if you don't feel we have dealt with the issues or actions you have raised, and this policy sets your options out

### Scope

- 1.5 This policy applies to all that we do, including any interaction away from the Club.
- 1.6 This policy is aimed at people external and internal to Thornhill AFC. If you are a volunteer, it also applies to you.

### Definitions

- 1.7 This is what we mean by a complaint, concern, or feedback:
  - A **complaint** is where someone tells us they are unhappy about the standards of service, actions, or lack of action by the section, our volunteers, or any individual working on our behalf.
  - A **concern** is a disclosure or allegation about possible or potential abuse (including sexual exploitation or abuse), wrongdoing, risk, illegal activity or poor practice in any area of our work.
  - **Feedback** is an expression of praise or dissatisfaction: it could be an opinion, reaction, comment, compliment, suggestion, or remark.

## 2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 We would like the opportunity to address any complaints, concerns or feedback you may have about our volunteers or the work that we do.
- 2.2 We welcome you getting in touch so we can respond, learn from and improve what we do.
- 2.3 This policy describes our approach to handling complaints, concerns and feedback raised. It describes how we will manage complaints or concerns we receive, including any alleged or actual fraud, misconduct by our volunteers (including sexual exploitation and abuse), or the way we have planned or delivered events.
- 2.4 We are committed to providing a safe and responsive mechanism for handling complaints and feedback, so we can quickly address any concerns that arise around the behaviour of our volunteers or the section. This also supports the way in which we learn as a section, so that we can improve what we do.

### What behaviour we expect from our members and volunteers

- 2.5 We expect all of our members and volunteers to act with integrity as representatives of Thornhill AFC. We also expect everyone to understand how their personal behaviour affects their own safety and security, as well as that of others.
- 2.6 Our members and volunteers are expected to act in line with the FA Code of Conduct. The FA Code of Conduct provides clear standards of behaviour that we expect, and we are committed to ensuring our high standards are met. If you see or experience any behaviour that does not meet our high standards, please let us know.
- 2.7 Our members and volunteers are expected to look out for and to proactively report any concerns about our work or the behaviour of our people.

## 3 What we do with complaints, concerns and feedback

- 3.1 We aim to make getting in touch with us as easy as possible. We can be contacted in writing via email or through our website.
- 3.2 Our aim is to make our materials available in plain language so that they can be read and understood. If our materials have been difficult to read or understand, we would welcome feedback as to how we could improve this for the future. If you need an alternative format, please let us know.
- 3.3 If you get in touch with us to complain, share a concern or provide feedback, we expect our people to take it seriously and treat you with courtesy and respect.
- 3.4 Our aim is to make you feel safe, listened to and given an appropriate response when you share a complaint, concern or feedback with us.
- 3.5 If a complaint has been made by, or about, a child or young person under 18 or an adult at risk, we take all necessary measures to ensure the safety of the individual, in line with our safeguarding policy/ies.
- 3.6 We are committed to maintaining the confidentiality of your personal and sensitive information, in line with our data protection responsibilities. Only those who are involved with responding to your complaint will be made aware of it.

- 3.7 We aim to respond to complaints, concerns and feedback as quickly as possible, usually within 10 working days of you getting in touch. Sometimes we may need to investigate your complaint in more detail to ensure we take the right action. Depending on how complex the concern is, we may need some more time to look into it. If that is the case, we will contact you to keep you updated.
- 3.8 When the investigation is complete, we will contact you again to provide our response, including what we plan to do about it.

#### 4 **How we use feedback to improve our section**

- 4.1 We are committed to improving the quality and effectiveness of our work. We may use feedback wherever possible to help us learn and improve our junior football section.
- 4.2 We will only use the information you have given to investigate your complaint or concern and to learn from and improve our procedures.

#### 5 **Your rights if you are unhappy with our response**

- 5.1 If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your initial concern, please do let us know as we would like the chance to try and make it right.
- 5.2 You also have the right to contact the following organisation:
- The West Riding FA  
Telephone: (0113) 282 1222  
Email: info@westridingfa.com
- 5.3 Usually this organisation will take up a case after giving us an opportunity to reply or provide some more information.

#### 6 **Procedures supporting implementation**

- 6.1 This policy is supported by procedures which our volunteers use to manage and respond to complaints, concerns and feedback. These procedures affect three areas of our work. In each situation we have developed (and continue to develop) different procedures that reflect the needs and available communication methods of that situation. It is expected that all those involved in those areas of operation should be aware and be able to easily explain how anybody could give feedback, express concern or complain. In particular there are three areas of our operations that have different approaches while all reflecting the same underlying values approach and determination. These areas are:
- **Our coaches.** This is how we review, respond and learn from complaints and feedback in our capacity as volunteers.
  - **Our Committee members.** This is how we review, respond and learn from complaints and feedback in our capacity as volunteers away from coaching activities.
  - **Our Fundraising.** This is how we review, respond and learn from complaints and feedback relating to how we raise and spend money.

7 **Review and maintenance**

- 7.1 This policy was approved in November 2021. It will next be reviewed in November 2022.

Thornhill AFC Committee