

## Code of Conduct of County Longford Golf Club

### SCOPE

This Code applies to Members, guests and other visitors. It does not apply to actions by staff, contractors or other persons who may be on the Club premises outside of golf or related activities. There are separate contractual and disciplinary codes applicable to such persons.

### DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

Arbitrator	Representative of Sports Dispute Solutions Ireland
CCC	Complaints Consideration Committee as per Section 5c below
Chairperson	Chairperson of Management Committee
Club	County Longford Golf Club
Club Secretary	Honorary Secretary of Joint Club
Club Property	All of Club's property including Club's course, driving range, car park, approach area, clubhouse and other buildings
Code	This Code of Conduct
Complainant	Person who submits a Complaint
Complainees	Person about whom a Complaint is made
Complaint	A written expression of dissatisfaction relating to an alleged breach of this Code
Conduct Rules	The Conduct Rules (and principles) set out at Section 1 of this Code.
Golf Ireland	Golf Ireland is the single Governing Body for golf on the island of Ireland.
Member	Any Member of the Club
Minor Breach	A breach other than a Serious Breach of the Code.
Officers	Comprises the following Joint Club officers - President, Mens Captain, Ladies Captain, Mens Vice-Captain, Ladies Vice-Captain, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer
Rules of Golf	All rules of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews
Sanction (noun)	A request re future behaviour or an admonishment or a penalty or punishment given under this Code when a person has not complied with Conduct Rules
Serious Breach	A Serious Breach is a breach of this Code such that the Complainees may be subject to temporary Suspension as a Member, or to a request to resign as a Member or a permanent expulsion as a Member.

## 1. CONDUCT RULES

All Members are expected to read, to be familiar with, and to comply fully with each of the following, which individually and/or together are referred to as Conduct Rules:

- a. Rules of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (the Rules of Golf) which can be viewed at <https://www.randa.org/en/rog/the-rules-of-golf>. We recommend that you download the Rules of Golf app (if possible) from <https://www.randa.org/en/rules/rules-app>.
- b. Rules of Golf Ireland (including the rules of handicapping), which can be viewed at <https://www.golfireland.ie/rules-of-golf>.
- c. All additional written rules, policies and regulations of the Club, which may include the following:
  - i. Club constitution which can be viewed on the Club's app (Clubnet).
  - ii. This Code of Conduct which can also be viewed on the Club's app (Clubnet)
  - iii. Local Rules (a modification of the Rules of Golf or an additional Rule that the Club adopts for general play or a particular competition), written notices and/or communications (including emails) issued or reflected on the Club's app (Clubnet), on the Club's website or on/in any part of Club Property, eg course, clubhouse, driving range, noticeboards.
  - iv. Written rules on Club's scorecard.

This Code emphasises that the Rules of Golf require that all players must play golf in the spirit of the game by:

- **Acting with integrity** – for example, by following the Rules of Golf, applying all penalties, and being honest in all aspects of play.
- **Showing consideration to others** – for example, by playing at a prompt pace, looking out for the safety of others, and not distracting the play of another player. If a player plays a ball in a direction where there might be a danger of hitting someone, he/she should immediately shout a warning, such as the traditional warning of “fore”.
- **Taking good care of the course** – for example, by replacing divots, smoothing bunkers, repairing ball-marks, and not causing unnecessary damage to the course.

## 2. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH CONDUCT RULES

Where it is alleged that a Member has not complied with any of the above Conduct Rules and Principles, the person(s) forming that view should firstly raise the matter with that Member in an informal and respectful manner - with the positive intention to help that Member and our Club.

If efforts made do not resolve the matter informally, and you wish to make a formal complaint, the processes relating to a formal complaint about any alleged breach of or non-compliance with any of the above Conduct Rules are set out below.

### **3. WHAT IS A COMPLAINT UNDER THIS CODE?**

For the purposes of this Code, a Complaint is a written statement expressing an allegation of a breach (failure to comply with) of the Conduct Rules set out at Section 1 above.

Members are requested not to make a trivial or vexatious complaint. For clarity, the making of a trivial or vexatious complaint (including but not limited to a claim pursued to cause harassment, annoyance, frustration, worry or leading to avoidable financial costs) could in itself be regarded as a breach of this Code.

### **4. MAKING A COMPLAINT**

- a. A Complaint must be submitted on the Complaint Form attached (at Appendix 2) directly to the Honorary Secretary within 10 working days of the alleged incident.
- b. A Complaint will be dealt with in a confidential manner to the maximum extent possible.
- c. The handing of Complaints shall be fair and without bias.
- d. The Honorary Secretary will acknowledge receipt of the Complaint Form within 5 working days of receipt of the Complaint Form.
- e. The Honorary Secretary will also send a copy of the Complaint Form to the Complainee (the person about whom the Complaint has been made) within 5 working days of receipt of the Complaint Form.
- f. The Honorary Secretary will ask the Complainant and the Complainee to discuss and resolve the matter in an amicable manner.
- g. If the Complainant subsequently advises that he/she has not succeeded in resolving the matter and that he/she wishes the Complaint to be considered, the Honorary Secretary and the Chairperson will then decide whether, in their opinion, the Complaint relates to a minor or serious breach of the Code.

### **5. PROCESSING OF A COMPLAINT ABOUT A MINOR BREACH OF THE CODE**

- a) A Minor Breach of the Code is a breach of the Code other than a Serious Breach (see Section 7 below) of the Code. Therefore, a Sanction for a Minor Breach may not include the temporary suspension or permanent suspension of a Member.
- b) Where a Complaint is considered by the Honorary Secretary, Chairperson and one other Officer to be of a minor nature or relating to a Minor Breach of the Code, the Honorary Secretary shall refer the matter to a Complaints Consideration Committee (CCC) to fairly consider, investigate and advise its findings and recommendation(s) to both the Complainant and Complainee.
- c) The Complaints Consideration Committee (CCC) shall comprise at least three or more members (maximum of 5 with gender balance) of the Management Committee and, if considered necessary, any other independent Member of the Club.

The CCC may also include a relevant expert, if considered necessary, taking the circumstances of the alleged breach of the Code into account.

The CCC may not include;

- i. any Member who has been or is directly or indirectly involved in the matter giving rise to the Complaint.
  - ii. any Member who has had a prior involvement with either party and whose participation could be perceived to potentially compromise the ultimate decision or ruling.
- d) As part of its consideration of the Complaint, the CCC may seek information orally or in writing from any of the following:
- i. The Complainant (who may, even if not requested, submit a response to the CCC in respect of an alleged Complaint);
  - ii. The Complainee;
  - iii. Witnesses to the alleged issue, matter or incident;
  - iv. Golf Ireland or Sports Dispute Solutions Ireland (SDSI) *or*
  - v. Any other relevant party.
- e) Where the CCC, having fairly investigated and considered the matter, upholds the Complaint as a Minor Breach of the Code, it may recommend to the Management Committee the imposition of one or more of the following Sanctions:
- i. Verbal warning.
  - ii. Written warning.
  - iii. A request to the Complainee to give a written undertaking as to his/her future conduct upon such terms and conditions as the CCC or Management Committee may prescribe (including an acknowledgement that a breach of such an undertaking shall constitute a further breach of this Code).
  - iv. The imposition of a fine or financial penalty. Any Member refusing or failing to pay a fine so imposed shall be suspended from membership of the Club until such time as the fine has been paid. Subject to an appeal under Section 6 below, the refusal or failure to pay that fine within one month from the date upon which it was imposed may constitute a Serious Breach of this Code.
  - v. Disqualification from related competition(s) and the withdrawal of any prize(s) and/or the return of related prize(s).
  - vi. Temporary suspension from competitions of the Club for a stated period.

## **6. APPEAL OF DECISION IN RESPECT OF A MINOR BREACH OF THE CODE**

- a. Where the Complainee or Complainant is dissatisfied by the decision (including any Sanction being imposed) by the Management Committee, either party may appeal the decision in writing to an independent Appeals Committee within 10 working days of the issuance of the decision.
- b. Any such appeal must set out whether the appeal is limited to an appeal only against the severity of the sanction imposed and, if not so limited, shall fully set out the grounds for the appeal including but not limited to the following:
  - (i) The procedures set out in this Code which the Appellant alleges were not correctly followed; *and*
  - (ii) Any new information or material which were not reasonably put before or available to the CCC or the Management Committee prior to making their decisions.
- c. Any sanction imposed by the CCC or the Management Committee will not apply pending the outcome of such an appeal.

- d. The Appeals Committee shall comprise up to 5 persons (minimum of 3) with gender balance, none of whom is a member of the Management Committee.
- e. The appellant shall contribute an appeal administration fee of €100 which shall be refunded if the Appeal is upheld.
- f. Except where new material information is provided, the consideration of the appeal by the Appeals Committee will solely examine the processes and procedures followed by the CCC and the Management Committee and it will not reconsider the circumstances or submissions made.
- g. The Appeals Committee shall inform the Appellant and the Respondent of its decision.
- h. The Appeals Committee shall also submit a written report to the Management Committee.
- i. Even though the matter relates to an alleged Minor Breach of the Code, the Management Committee shall have the discretion to refer the matter for independent investigation and arbitration to Sports Dispute Solutions Ireland (SDSI) or to a similar body, whose decision shall be final and binding on all parties. The decision as to who shall bear the costs of such arbitration will be decided by the Arbitrator.

## 7. PROCESSING OF A COMPLAINT ABOUT A SERIOUS BREACH OF THE CODE

- a) A Serious Breach is a breach of this Code such that, in the opinion of the Chairperson, Honorary Secretary and one other Officer, the Complainee may be subject to temporary suspension as a Member or to permanent expulsion as a Member if the Complaint is upheld.
- b) The Chairperson, in conjunction with the Honorary Secretary, shall convene a special Management Committee meeting to investigate and consider the matter. Otherwise, the matter will be addressed at the next regularly convened meeting of the Management Committee.
- c) As part of its consideration of the Complaint prior to the special meeting of the Management Committee, the Management Committee may seek information about and/or clarification about the matter from any one of more of the following:
  - i. The Complainant;
  - ii. The Complainee;
  - iii. Witnesses to the alleged issue, matter or incident;
  - iv. A Club committee or subcommittee;
  - v. Golf Ireland or Sports Dispute Solutions Ireland (SDSI) or
  - vi. any other relevant party.
- d) The Complainant and Complainee shall be notified about the special Management Committee meeting at least 7 working days before that meeting. The notification may include a request to either party or both parties to attend that meeting.
- e) If the Complainant or Complainee is required to attend the special meeting, he/she may ask a friend/representative of his/her choice to attend with him/her at this or at any related subsequent meeting of the Management Committee, subject to the Member informing the name of his/her representative to the Honorary Secretary no less than 4 working days in advance of the special Management Committee meeting.
- f) No member of the Management Committee shall be eligible to act as a representative of the Complainant or Complainee at any such meeting or meetings.

- g) Any member of the Management Committee who may not be independent or who may not be perceived to be independent (i.e. any person who has a conflict of interest or was involved in submitting the Complaint Form), shall not be eligible to take part in any proceedings investigating or considering the Complaint or any decision imposing the Sanction and shall not attend any special meeting(s) about the Complaint.

This does not preclude such a member of the Management Committee from providing relevant information to the Management Committee provided that such information is shared with the parties.

- h) If the Complainant or Complainee is requested to attend the special meeting, he/she (either personally or through his/her Representative) may address the meeting and put his/her case to the Management Committee.
- i) Following such a meeting, the Management Committee shall inform the Complainee and Complainant whether it is proposed to convene any further meeting(s) to consider either the matter or any proposed sanction. The parties concerned shall be given notice at least 7 working days in advance of the date of any such further meeting and shall be invited to attend and/or be represented thereat.
- j) If, having been requested to attend a meeting, the Complainant or Complainee is unable to attend such a meeting, he/she may make a written submission to the Management Committee in advance of the meeting.
- k) In the event that the Complainee, having been requested to attend a meeting of the Management Committee, is able to attend but fails or refuses to attend such a meeting, or does not make written submission relating to the alleged Complaint, or if such explanations or the submission are considered unsatisfactory by the Management Committee, the Management Committee may proceed to make a decision and impose a Sanction, provided a quorum of the Members of the Management Committee are present, and provided the reasons for such decision and the sanction imposed are advised in writing by registered post to the Member's last known address within 10 working days of the making of the decision.
- l) In arriving at a decision, the Management Committee may refer the matter to Golf Ireland or any other relevant authority for independent assistance, advice or otherwise.
- m) Having considered all matters and any independent advice received, the Management Committee will convey its decision (including Sanctions if any under Section 8 below) in writing to the Complainant and the Complainee.

## 8. SANCTIONS

- a. Subject to the procedures at Section 7 having been followed, the Management Committee shall have the power to impose any one or more of the Sanctions set out below on any Complainee whose conduct, either inside or outside the Club, has been judged by the Management Committee to be a Serious Breach of the Conduct Rules and/or is otherwise judged to be injurious or detrimental to the interests of the Club and/or has brought the Club into disrepute:
- i. Temporary suspension from Membership of the Club for a stated period.
  - ii. Request the Complainee to resign his/her membership. If the Member concerned fails to resign within 10 working days from the date of the Management Committee's request to so do, the Honorary Secretary shall call a special meeting of the Management Committee to consider the matter further.
  - iii. Permanent expulsion from membership of the Club.

- b. A Member subject to any of the above three Sanctions shall not be entitled to enter upon Club Property (except to collect his or her property) during the suspension/ expulsion, whether in the company of another Member or otherwise.
- c. The Complainee shall cease to be a Member after the expiry of thirty days from the date on which the Management Committee advised its decision under section 7.m above.
- d. The Complainee's annual subscription if paid, levies (if paid) and other charges (if paid) may be refunded either wholly or in part, or may be retained, at the discretion of the Management Committee.
- e. Any decision of and/or Sanction imposed by the Management Committee is subject to the Appeals procedure as set out at Section 9 below.

## **9. APPEAL OF DECISION IN RESPECT OF A SERIOUS BREACH OF CODE**

- a. The Complainant or the Complainee may appeal the decision of and/or any sanction imposed by the Management Committee within 7 working days of the decision being notified to him/her by requesting the Management Committee in writing to call an Extraordinary General Meeting for his/her case to be considered by the Members of the Club and to confirm or rescind or modify the Management Committee's decision and/or any Sanction imposed.
- b. The Management Committee shall call such an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held within 14 working days of such a request. Section 20 of the Club's constitution sets out the rules relating to General meetings.
- c. Where a notice of appeal has been given in accordance with the procedures and within the time limit set out above, the decision of the Management Committee and any Sanction imposed by it shall not take effect pending the outcome of the appeal.
- d. The Extraordinary General Meeting shall, by a simple majority of those in attendance (and voting by secret ballot), decide whether to confirm or rescind or modify the Management Committee's decision and/or any Sanction imposed.

## **10. RECORDS**

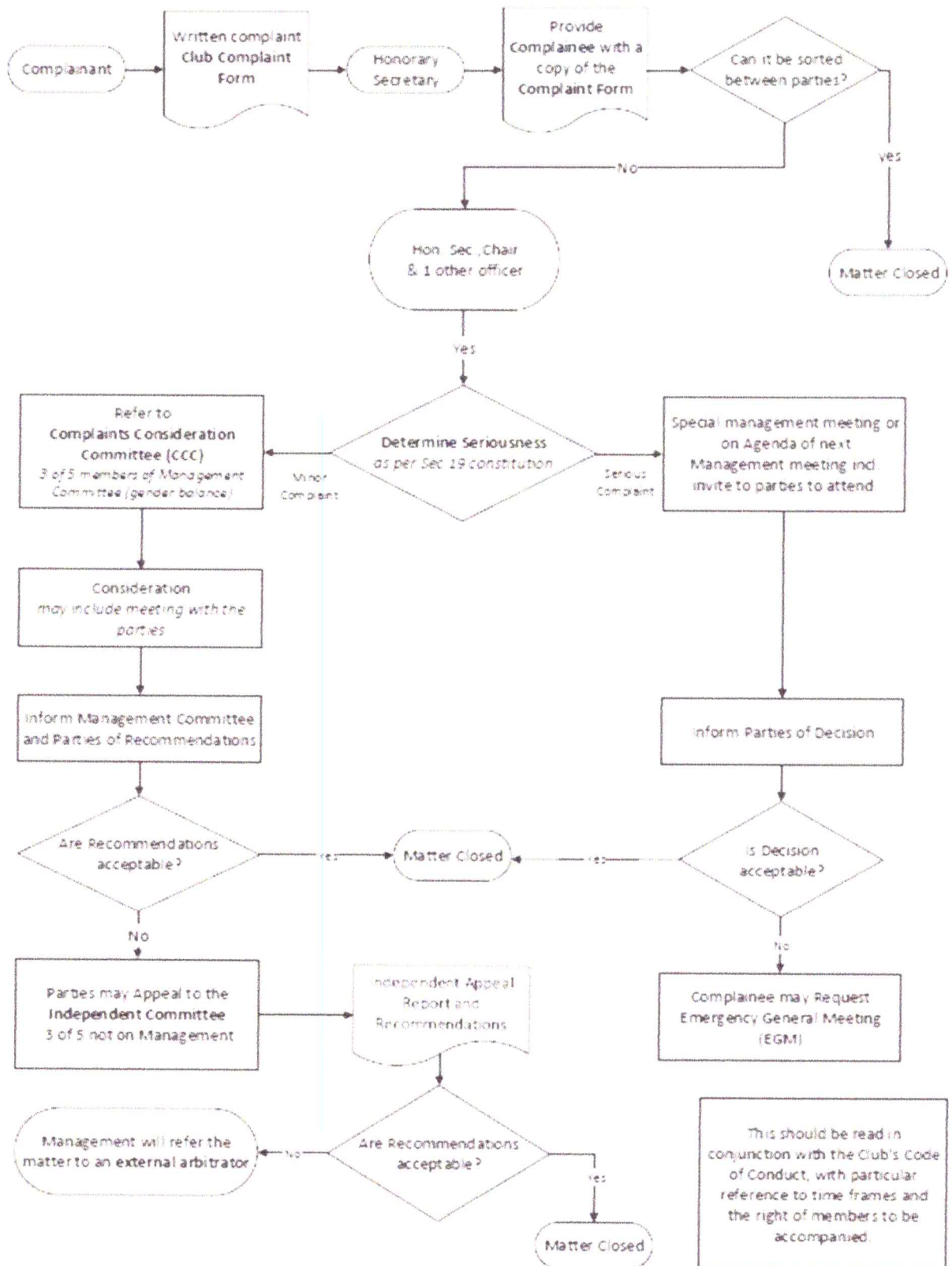
- a) Minutes of all meetings relating to a Complaint must be recorded in writing but shall be kept confidential by all parties to the maximum extent reasonable and possible.
- b) Records relating to the Complaint shall be retained for a reasonable period. An application by the Complainee for destruction of the records shall be considered fairly.

## **11. OTHER**

Notwithstanding the procedures set out above in this Code, the Management Committee may amend the above procedures within reason if the amendment is considered necessary to act fairly and within the spirit of the Code.

# Appendix 1 – Flowchart Summary

*This chart is merely a guidance summary. The detailed terms of the Code shall prevail in the event of any inconsistency between the Code and this summary.*





## Appendix 2- Club Complaint Form

Our Club's Code of Conduct sets out our policies and procedures relating to complaints. The Code should therefore be reviewed prior to completing this Complaint Form.

- Complaints must be submitted in writing using this form.
- A copy of the submitted Complaint Form will be provided to the Complainee (the person being complained about).

### How to Make a Complaint

We encourage you (the Complainant) to firstly discuss your complaint with the person being complained about (the Complainee) in an informal manner - and seek to resolve the matter fairly with the Complainee.

If your efforts to resolve the matter have not been successful, record your complaint in writing using this form to fully describe the nature of your complaint and the result which you are seeking. When you have fully completed and signed this Complaint Form, post (or email) it to the Club Secretary.

### Your Details (the Complainant)

Your full name	
Your postal address	
Your email address	
Your telephone number	

**Please describe your complaint in detail below (or on a separate page). As a minimum, you must provide the following information:**

1. Complainee's full name and contact details if available	
2. Date(s) of incident(s) which led to you making this complaint	
3. Date(s) on which you expressed your dissatisfaction to the Complainee	
4. Full name of <u>each</u> other person/witness who was present when the matter arose	
5. State here (or below) what result you ideally wish to achieve following consideration of your complaint. Your answer to this question is an important aspect of our consideration of your complaint.	

6. State in detail below your account of the matter and why you believe that the Code of Conduct was breached. If there is insufficient space on this page, please record details on separate page(s), which should be submitted with this Form.

Signature of Complainant \_\_\_\_\_

Date signed \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY**

Complaint Reference Code:	
Date on which Complaint Form received	
Results and action(s) taken and dates on which Complainant and Complainee informed	

### Appendix 3 – Examples of Possible Breaches of Code

This appendix lists illustrative examples and is NOT a complete list of all breaches of the Code.

1. Failure to act with integrity, eg not following the Rules of Golf, not applying penalties, being dishonest in play. Cheating or the use of any unfair means in competition eg deliberately recording an incorrect score on a score card.
2. Failure to show consideration to any person, eg when a player plays a golf ball in a direction, and it is clear prior to playing the ball that there is a reasonable possibility of the golf ball hitting any person, eg a Member, an employee of the Club, a contractor or any guest or visitor - regardless of whether or not the person is in/on a vehicle or buggy or similar.  
  
Furthermore, a player must shout a warning like FORE when he/she plays a golf ball, and it is clear upon/after playing the golf ball that there is a reasonable possibility of that golf ball hitting any person.
3. Recurring failure of a player to reasonably keep up with the pace of play, without any attempt to mitigate the resultant delay for others, eg by unreasonably failing to let others through when appropriate.
4. Behaviour which brings or is likely to bring the Club into disrepute.
5. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence where that conduct
  - a. took place on Club Property, or
  - b. affected or concerned other Members of the Club or members of the public, or
  - c. itself constitutes a breach of the Code.
6. Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, offensive or disrespectful behaviour towards any Member, employee of the Club, contractor or any guest or visitor.
7. Any other behaviour likely to cause injury to or impair the safety of another person, eg throwing an object at another player or spectator or an employee.
8. Repeatedly using vulgar or offensive language.
9. Bullying, harassment, or any form of discrimination/intimidation of any Member, employee of the Club, contractor or any guest or visitor.
10. Discrimination based on gender, age, race, religion, occupation, sexual orientation, relationships with others, disability, or membership of any minority community.
11. Obstruction of, or improper interference with the functions, duties or activities of any fellow Member, employee of the Club, contractor (or a contractor's employee) or any authorised visitor.
12. Disruption of, or improper interference with the administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the Club, whether on Club Property or elsewhere.
13. Damage to or defacement of Club Property or the property of other Members caused intentionally or recklessly, or misappropriation of such property.
14. Failure to comply with a previously imposed penalty, requirement or undertaking.
15. Fraud, deceit, deception, or dishonesty in relation to any aspect the Club.
16. Deliberately distracting another player while he/she is making or about to make a stroke.

Ratified by Management '24

Signed by Chairperson: Captain

Dated: August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

