

Northumberland Fell Runners

Grievance and Disciplinary Policy

Northumberland Fell Runners (the “Club”) is a friendly, down-to-earth club, and as members we pride ourselves on our good conduct, team spirit and camaraderie. However, it is important everyone is confident there is a clear process for dealing with any problems if they arise.

We would hope to deal with any minor disputes informally, but the policy for dealing with more serious matters is set out below.

Safeguarding

- The Club Welfare Officer is the lead contact for all members in the event of any issues around safeguarding, including allegations of malpractice or abuse relating to children or [‘Adults at Risk’](#) as defined under the Care Act (2014). Reports of this nature will be dealt with swiftly in accordance with England Athletics’s safeguarding policy and procedures.

Misconduct Complaints

- Outside of safeguarding issues, all formal complaints about the behaviour of members need to be submitted in writing to the Club Secretary
- The Club’s committee will then consider any complaint within 14 days, unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- If the complaint is sufficiently evidenced, the Club Secretary will appoint three club members to sit on a disciplinary panel.
- The panel members must have no interest or involvement in the matter of the complaint. If necessary and appropriate, the Club Secretary may ask England Athletics to source suitable panel members from another EA-affiliated club.
- Any member who is the subject of a formal complaint will have the chance to provide a rebuttal.

- If the complaint is upheld, sanctions can include a warning, suspension of membership, or termination of membership.

- The panel's decision will be final and conclusive, and the decision of the disciplinary hearing will be notified in writing to the person who lodged the complaint and the member against whom the complaint was made within seven days of the hearing.

- There is a right of appeal. Any appeals must be received by the Club Secretary within seven days of receiving the written decision.

- If appropriate, the Club will then appoint an appeals panel of three people who were neither involved in the original investigation, nor the events which gave rise to the original complaint. The appeals panel will then consider if the decision on the complaint should be overturned or changed.

- Any complaints of serious misconduct regarding the behaviour of members will be reported and dealt with by England Athletics in accordance with its disciplinary procedures. Examples of these include, but aren't limited to:
 - Theft
 - Fraud
 - Physical violence
 - Safeguarding breaches
 - Health and safety breaches
 - Any act or omission which brings the sport into disrepute

- If a dispute arises between any members about the validity or propriety of anything done by any member or officer under these rules and the dispute cannot be resolved by agreement, the parties to the dispute must first try in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation before resorting to litigation.

- More information on how you can expect complaints to be handled can be found on the [England Athletics website](#).