

Victoria Park Tennis and Bridge Club

Club Charter and Code of Conduct

(updated April 2019)

We are a joint Tennis and Bridge Club. Our aim is to support and promote the participation of tennis and bridge. The Club is run on a voluntary basis and relies on the goodwill, cooperation and hard work of its members. The Club does not run itself!

Each member as a condition of membership agrees to the following:

- To be bound by this Code of Conduct;
- To be a member and be bound by the LTA's rules and disciplinary code (tennis players only).

Respect and Behaviour

All Club members must show tolerance, respect, courtesy, good manners, honesty and integrity in their dealings with other members and guests.

Equality

The Club is opposed to discrimination in any form. All members have a responsibility to make everyone feel welcome at the Club at all times.

Safety and Responsibility

All members will act responsibly and look to ensure the safety of everyone at the Club at all times and particularly to consider the safety and well-being of junior players and children. No one at the Club should abuse, neglect, harm or discriminate against anyone or act in such a way that might be interpreted as such.

If any member has concerns that someone has suffered or is at risk of this sort of behaviour, then this should be reported as soon as possible. Doing nothing is not an option.

If there is an accident then an accident report form should be completed. Forms can be found in the Accident Report Folder in the clubhouse.

Fair Play

All members will respect the rules of tennis and bridge and address disputes with dignity, respect and appropriate language.

Club Reputation

All members will endeavour to enhance and protect the Club's reputation. The Club is situated in a residential area and it is important that all members are polite and courteous to our neighbours. Noise levels should be kept down whilst in the clubhouse, on the courts and when leaving the premises.

Care of the Clubhouse

All members have a responsibility to keep the clubhouse clean and tidy. Everyone needs to wash up after themselves and ensure that things are put away.

Lights, taps and electrical appliances need to be switched off.

The clubhouse needs to be kept secure. Members must ensure that all external doors are locked and the main gates padlocked if they are the last to leave.

Members should keep the door and padlock codes secret.

No member should go behind the bar or into the stockroom unless they have the authority to do so.

Smoking and vaping are not permitted at the Club.

If there are maintenance issues, please report these to a Committee member.

Members should park considerately to ensure that as many cars as possible can use the car park. Bridge members have priority to use the right hand side of the car park on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings after 6 pm.

Tennis Members

Etiquette

Please do not walk behind players whilst a game, rally or coaching is in progress to avoid distracting other members and, more importantly, to avoid any potential accidents on court.

If crossing a court, please wait until you are invited and it is safe to do so.

If a stray ball comes onto your court, do not knock it back immediately but wait until the owners are ready and then hit it to the server's end.

Keep the amount and volume of conversation to a minimum whilst on court. Too much conversation can be disturbing to those playing nearby and can hold up play. Mobile phones should not be taken on to court as phones ringing or calls being taken are a distraction to other players.

Line calls can be problematic. Only call lines on your side of the net. If you are not absolutely certain or did not see the ball clearly then the ball is IN. If occasionally you have serious doubts as to your opponent's eye sight you should ask politely if they are certain. In social, friendly games there is some doubt over a line call then offer to play the point again rather than causing undue aggravation or wasting time. Remember playing is meant to be fun!

Do not criticise your partner or opponent, be positive and offer encouragement instead.

Clothing

Tennis members need to wear appropriate sports clothing when playing. It is essential that only non-marking flat soled tennis shoes are worn on court. No one should go onto the

courts if they are wearing ordinary shoes or AstroTurf shoes. We need to protect the court's surface.

Every tennis member must be wearing their shoe tag when on court to show they are a fully paid up member of the Club. If you are not wearing your shoe tag then you may not be allowed to play.

Care of the Courts and Equipment

No one should step on, jump over or lean on the nets or the low fence along Court 1.

Every effort should be made not to hit balls into neighbours' properties. Balls should be collected up at the end of play and put back into the clubhouse.

Chairs and glasses should not be taken onto court.

The times when the floodlights can be on is restricted by planning approval. The times are detailed in the clubhouse next to the floodlight metres. They automatically switch off at 9.30 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays; at 10 pm on Wednesdays and Fridays; and at 8pm on Sundays. The floodlights need to be switched off manually even if they have switched off automatically otherwise they will come on the following day.

Court Priority

Club matches, tournaments, group coaching sessions and Club open nights have priority over use of the courts. Weekly details of the times that the courts are in use are shown on the noticeboard in the clubhouse window or on the Club's website. Outside of these times on Mondays to Fridays the following have priority: school bookings before 4 pm; juniors/young juniors between 4 pm to 6 pm; and adults after 6 pm. Juniors may play up to 9 pm in the summer if the courts are free. For coaching and school bookings, a maximum of 3 courts may be used at any one time.

At Club nights, to ensure fairness and consistency in waiting time, the wooden peg system will operate. Each tennis member will have a wooden peg with their name written on it. Visitors will be given a visitor's peg for the duration of their visit.

Coaching

Only coaches who are providing group coaching as part of the Club's coaching programme may provide coaching for payment at the Club.

Visitors

Visitors wanting to play tennis must be signed in by a member and pay the relevant fee (currently £4 for adults and £3 for juniors/young juniors and students). Visitors are restricted to 6 visits a year. If they wish to play more tennis than this then they need to join the Club.

Members signing in visitors need to ensure that visitors comply with the Club's Code of Conduct and are responsible for their behaviour.

Bridge Members

Etiquette

Members are expected to conduct themselves in a civil and friendly manner. They should avoid conversing loudly and disrupting the play of others, and should never discuss hands in a way that might be overheard by players at other tables. The game of bridge stipulates that only 'authorised' information can legitimately be used to communicate information about the content and structure of hands. Authorised information includes Bids and Signals (for suit preference or quality). Players should do their utmost to avoid conveying information by making comments or using gestures of any kind, including exaggerated pauses in bidding or play.

The session Director should be called to adjudicate on any alleged infringement. In most cases such matters will be resolved by reference to the 'Yellow Book' ('Duplicate Bridge Rules Simplified'). More serious complaints should be handled by following the procedures set out in the Club's Complaints Policy document. This may include complaints about incidents occurring away from the bridge table and therefore not falling within the Director's remit.

Seating priority

For each session we will endeavour to accommodate everyone who turns up to play. If numbers exceed the Club's maximum number of tables, places will be assigned on a first come first served basis. All players are asked to arrive early enough to assist in making up boards and to be settled for a timely start of play.

On Thursdays we run a hosting system to enable players to turn up without a partner. On any given evening the host will have agreed to withdraw whenever there is an odd number of players present. Hosts are expected to keep a careful note of the date on which their responsibilities fall and to arrange in advance for someone else to step in if they are unable to attend their allocated session.

Visitors or Guests

Guests must be signed in by a member using the appropriate Guest or Prospective Member Book. Guests must pay the relevant table fee (currently £2 per person).

Membership

The annual membership fees are set at the AGM and cover 1 April to 31 March. If a member joins between October and December, the fee is 50% of the annual fee. If a member joins between January and March, the fee is 25% of the annual fee.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

Breaches of the Code of Conduct can lead to temporary or permanent suspension from the Club.

Complaints

The Club takes complaints about conduct and behaviour seriously. You may be unhappy that someone has behaved in a way which is unsafe, discriminatory, offensive or intimidating or you may feel that someone has broken the Club's rules or policies. The Club's procedures as to how we respond to these complaints or concerns are set out in the Club's Complaints Policy.