



Mid Somerset Camera Club

Disciplinary Policy

Purpose:

The disciplinary procedure is intended to provide a formal framework to deal with situations whereby a member's conduct falls below acceptable standards and to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all members in such circumstances.

The Club will ensure that any action taken will not be biased against individual characteristics and beliefs. Examples of these characteristics and beliefs include those related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity. All members will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against because of their individual characteristics.

In most cases where there has been a minor shortcoming in behaviour, it will be appropriate for a member of the Committee to discuss the matter with the individual member with a view to reaching agreement on the improvement required. If a problem persists or if the matter is more serious, it will be necessary to take action under the formal procedure.

Expected behaviour:

Members are expected to be respectful towards each other, visitors to the Club, members of public and anyone else that they may encounter when attending Club events. Breaches of expected behaviour may be relatively minor or could potentially be very serious. For this reason, individual breaches will be dealt with on their own merits.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour could include:

- Discourteous, crude or offensive behaviour at Club events,
- Conduct of an unsafe nature
- Disregard for equipment or property
- Dismissive or excessively critical comments on others' images

Or, more seriously:

- Physical violence or assault towards other persons at a Club event including serious threatening, intimidating or forceful behaviour,
- Use of abusive or threatening behaviour,
- Participating in events whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol,
- Lewd comments or behaviour,
- Reckless disregard of health and safety

Activity outside of Club events:

Members should be aware that their actions outside of Club events could have an effect on the Club and as such the Club has an interest in ensuring that any such actions are not detrimental to the Club. Anything that is detrimental may result in the disciplinary policy being



implemented. In particular, Club Members should be careful about their language, behaviour and content whilst operating within the Club's online presence – website, Facebook Group etc.

What members should do if they experience or witness unacceptable behaviour:

Members should report the incident of unacceptable behaviour to a member of the Committee present who will then decide what action is required. The Committee member will decide if immediate action is required e.g. to prevent further unacceptable behaviour during the event. If the matter can be resolved in an informal way the Committee member should take appropriate action and record the details of the action taken.

If they feel that the matter should be dealt with under the formal procedure, they should speak to the Club Secretary who will invoke the formal procedure.

Formal action:

Members have the following rights in relation to disciplinary action:

- to be informed of the allegations of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour to be addressed at any disciplinary meeting,
- to be accompanied by a fellow member of the Club in any meeting held as part of the formal procedure,
- to appeal against any disciplinary action.

The Club Secretary will be responsible for ensuring that all necessary evidence is gathered about the alleged incident and where necessary this may involve talking to other members who may have witnessed the incident. All evidence, including any witness statements should be put in writing.

If it is felt that the member should be suspended from the Club whilst the investigation is carried out, it should be explained that this is not a disciplinary penalty and does not imply guilt. Any period of suspension should be for no longer than is necessary to carry out the investigation.

The member who the allegations are about should be asked to provide a written statement of the incident.

If it is decided that formal action is required, the Club Secretary should then set up a panel consisting of two Committee members in addition to themselves and arrange a meeting to discuss the allegations with the member the allegations refer to.

In advance of the meeting the member should be provided with copies of the evidence and witness statements and be informed that they may be accompanied at the meeting by a fellow member of their choice.

The Club Secretary will normally chair the meeting and present the case, ensuring that all evidence is reviewed at the meeting. All questions should be addressed through the Club



Secretary. The companion can ask questions on behalf of the member, but they will not be permitted to answer questions put to the member.

Penalties:

Following the meeting the panel will apply the penalty that they feel is appropriate which will have immediate effect. Such penalties include:

- A verbal or written warning to the member,
- A temporary suspension of membership for a stated period,
- Permanent expulsion from the Club.

Any sanction should be confirmed in writing and in the case of a warning or temporary suspension the required improvements in behaviour will be set out along with further action that will be taken if there is no improvement by the member and the potential sanctions that may be imposed.

Right of appeal:

If the member wishes to appeal, they should inform the Club Secretary in writing setting out the grounds of the appeal. This should be within five days of receiving written confirmation of the disciplinary decision.

The Chair of the Committee will hear the appeal. The purpose of the appeal is to review the disciplinary penalty imposed although they will not increase the disciplinary penalty.

The decision of the Chair will be final.

Any sanction issued should be reported at the next Committee meeting and recorded in the minutes.