**GLTC Inclusion Statement**

Galway Lawn Tennis Club we are more than just a club, we are a community. As part of our commitment to that community we welcome members from many different walks of life, with many different abilities and we will always strive to create sporting environments that are Safe, Fun, Inclusive and conducted in the spirit of Fair Play.

**GLTC Disability Inclusion Policy**

**Policy Statement**

The Galway Lawn Tennis Club endorses the principle of sports equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in our sport & club, whether as casual participants, team members, volunteers, coaches, office-bearers or staff:

* has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, ethnic origin, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation or a member of the traveller community; and
* can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

**What we will do**

* Put people first, focus on what they can do and find out how they want to participate.
* Ask each individual – and their parents if the participant is a child – for their advice about what modifications would help them to participate.
* Where possible, make adjustments to our coaching, equipment, rules or playing environment and modifications to club premises (e.g. putting in a ramp).
* Be honest and explain if certain modifications or adjustments are not currently possible.
* Communicate with people and share club information in appropriate ways and formats.
* Expect all members of our club to accept and welcome people with disability.
* Make sure people of all abilities are included in our club's social activities and are recognised for their contribution and achievement.
* Have strong policies to ensure that people can play sport and participate in our club without discrimination, harassment or bullying.

**What we ask you to do**

If you have a disability:

* Tell us what we can do to help include you in our club
* Understand that we will do our best to make any necessary adjustments or modifications
* Talk to us if you have any concerns or ideas to help us make our club more inclusive.

**Legal obligations**

The Galway Lawn Tennis Club is committed to avoid and eliminate unfair discrimination of any kind in our club and will under no circumstances condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero-tolerance approach to harassment.

The introduction of the Disability Act 2005 and Equal Status Acts 2000 - 2012 has helped to progress the rights of people with disabilities in Ireland, but they still face many barriers in everyday life and taking part in physical activity and sport.

People with disabilities make up 13% of the population (600,000 of 4.5 million people) but their participation in sport and physical activity is significantly lower than people without disabilities. Having a greater awareness of some of the challenges that people with disabilities face will help you to be more confident when engaging with them and supporting people with disabilities to lead an active and healthy lifestyle by taking part in regular sport and physical activity.

In 2018, Ireland ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which commits to the equal treatment of people with disabilities when it comes to their participation in sport and physical activity. (For more information see appendix)

**Positive action**

The principle of Sports Equality goes further than simply complying with legislation. It entails taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers – whether real or perceived – that restrict the opportunity for all sections of the community to participate equally and fully.

Galway Lawn Tennis Club will therefore seek to support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access to our club and participation in associated activities by people from any group that is under-represented in the sport or has difficulty accessing it.

**Implementation**

The following steps will be taken to publicise this policy and promote equality in our club

* A copy of this document will be published on our website.
* The Chairman will take overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is observed.
* The Committee will take full account of the policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to activities of the Galway Tennis Club.
* The Galway lawn tennis Club will collaborate fully with any surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports equality in our sport
* The Galway tennis and Lawn club will provide access to training for all its Committee Members and staff to raise awareness of both collective and individual responsibilities. All club accredited and licensed coaches will be equality and diversity trained.

**Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Committee will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy.

The Committee will review all club activities and initiatives against the aims of the policy on an annual basis, and the Chairman will report formally on this issue at the AGM.

The Committee, or where appropriate a designated disability advocate, will review any measures or initiatives that Galway Lawn tennis Club may institute or take part in to promote and enhance our sports equality, and will report their findings formally to the AGM.

The Committee will review the policy itself at intervals of no more than three years, (or when necessary due to changes in legislation) and will report with recommendations to the AGM.

**Complaints and compliance**

Galway lawn Tennis Club regards all of the forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) behaviour described in the Appendix as unacceptable, and is concerned to ensure that

individuals feel able to raise any bona fide grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, member or volunteer who violates the Galway Lawn Tennis Club Code of Conduct.

Any person who believes that he or she has been treated in a way that they consider to be in breach of this Code of Contact by a member club, individual member or corporate member of Galway lawn Tennis Club, should first complain to that person or staff member. If this does not resolve the matter, the person may raise the matter by writing directly to the Chairman. Contact details are available through the website <https://gltc.ie/contact-us/>

The Chairman will investigate the complaint personally or appoint a committee member to do so. The investigation will be conducted impartially, confidentially, and without avoidable delay. Any person or organisation against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of what is alleged and given the opportunity to present their side of the matter.

The outcome of the investigation will be notified to the parties in writing and reported to the Galway Lawn Tennis Club Committee. If the investigation reveals unacceptable discriminatory behaviour on the part of an individual member, staff member, or member club the Committee may impose sanctions on that person in line with the Galway lawn Tennis Club Constitution. Sanctions may range from a written reminder concerning future conduct up to and including temporary or permanent expulsion from Galway lawn tennis Club membership. In deciding what sanction is appropriate in a particular case the Executive Committee will consider the severity of the matter and take account of any mitigating circumstances.

Where the violation of the Policy by way of harassment, victimisation or discrimination amount to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed.

In the event that an individual or organisation associated with Galway Lawn Tennis Club is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, the club committee will co-operate fully with any investigation carried out by the relevant lawful authorities and, subject to the outcome, may consider taking action as above in relation to the matter concerned.

Galway Lawn Tennis Club Executive Committee

DATE

APPENDIX – Relevant legislation and forms of unacceptable discrimination

**Equal Status Acts 2000 - 2012**

These acts protect people with a disability from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. An example would be if a sports organisation, club, fitness/leisure centre or association treats a person unfavourably due to their disability.

It is required by law to make ‘reasonable accommodation’ for people with a disability who may be users, employees or volunteers. For example, this could include physical changes to the building, including ramps for wheelchair users, automatic entrance doors, lowered counters at reception areas, induction/ hearing loops at reception areas and information in accessible formats e.g. larger font/audio/braille.

Reasonable accommodation’ means providing specific treatment or facilities to make sure that people with disabilities can avail of particular goods, services, housing, and so on. The following individuals and organisations must do all that is reasonable to meet the needs of a person with a disability:

* People and organisations selling goods or providing services
* People and organisations selling or letting accommodation or providing accommodation
* Schools, colleges and other educational institutions
* Clubs

**Disability Act 2005 :** places a statutory obligation on public service providers to support access to services and facilities for people with disabilities. Under the Act, people with disabilities are entitled to:

1. Have their health and educational needs assessed.

2. Have individual service statements drawn up, setting out what services they should get.

3. Access independent complaints and appeals procedures.

4. Access public buildings and public service employment.

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)** Article 30.5 states “With a view to enabling persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities, States shall take appropriate measures:

a. To encourage and promote the participation of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels.

b. To ensure that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to organise, develop and participate in disability-specific sporting and recreational activities and, to this end, encourage the provision, on an equal basis with others, of appropriate instruction, training and resources.

c. To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sporting, recreational and tourism venues.

d. To ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system.

e. To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to services from those involved in the organisation of recreational, tourism, leisure and sporting activities.”

**Discrimination refers** to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the ‘protected characteristics’. Under the Equal status acts 2000, the protected characteristics are defined as age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender), sexual orientation and a member of the traveller community.

Under the Equal Status Act 2000, states individuals are protected from discrimination ‘on grounds of’ a protected characteristic. This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or with someone who is assumed to have it.

Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

**Direct discrimination:** Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

**Indirect discrimination:** Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

**Discrimination arising from disability:** When a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified, this is unlawful. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

**Harassment:** Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

**Victimisation:** It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

**Bullying:** Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.