

## Bulletin No 20 Tennis Court

The tennis court is a great asset for the village, and we want it to be used as much as possible. We have received some comments about the condition of the court, so have had a close look at it, and investigated what can be done to improve it. The purpose of this bulletin is to explain what we have learnt so far, outline a number of options for its repair, and to consider its on-going maintenance.



The court was built by the developers about 25 years ago, and as far as we know, has had one new surface coating treatment since then, about 5 years ago. The court surface is now rather uneven and mossy, producing uncertain bounces, there was a hole through the surface on the far side (recently filled), the chain link fence has significant holes at the far end, and both the fence and posts are corroding.



We have looked at information about this type of surface from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), and a contractor has visited to discuss and quote for refurbishment. The LTA document can be seen [here](#). The uneven surface is caused by a process known as fretting. This is when the binder starts to break down, releasing the small pieces of grit. This is perfectly normal, and is expected to happen from about 12 years onwards. The only long term solution to this is to resurface the whole court.

Similarly, the fence is made from coated galvanised steel, but this too will only last a certain time before corrosion causes it to fail. Although it would be possible to repair the occasional failed wire, there comes a point when it is necessary to replace a complete section. It would obviously be sensible to repaint the fence posts etc, when the fence is down, allowing easy access.

We have considered various options, but it is clear that the only way we can return the court surface to a satisfactory condition is to employ a specialist tennis court contractor to resurface it completely. The quotes we have obtained so far suggest this will cost about £14,000.

The fence is perhaps something we could attempt ourselves, starting initially with the very poor end section. The new chain link fence and straining wires would cost about £500. One contractor has quoted £1,380 to replace the end fence and repaint the associated steelwork.

If we go ahead with the refurbishment, something we will have to organise is on-going maintenance. The LTA guidance is very clear that regular maintenance is essential to keep the court in the best condition possible, and to achieve the best life for the surface. This involves sweeping or vacuuming perhaps weekly, monthly moss treatment and annual washing – ideally by a specialist contractor – to avoid damage. Every 5 years or so the court should be repainted, in order to keep the playing surface in good condition, and to prevent early break down of the macadam beneath. We think the care of the court should be overseen by one of the tennis players.

There are also recommendations about how to look after the facility, for example by wearing correct footwear, and releasing the tension from the net when it is not being used. Again, we would like one of the tennis players to make sure all who use the court are familiar with the basic principles of court care, so that it will keep in good condition for as long as possible.



So that is where we are up to. We think the court is important for Crambeck Village, because if it is kept in good condition, more people will use it, and who knows, a future champion might begin playing here! But it would also be attractive to any people contemplating buying a house in the village. Clearly however, there are significant costs involved, not only for its refurbishment, but also for its on-going maintenance.

We would like to hear your views.

Best wishes

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12.9.16