



WEST END TENNIS CLUB – COURT OPENING

Court Renewal and Floodlighting Project

In early 2000's the Committee recognised the courts could not be rejuvenated indefinitely and the project to replace the courts began in 2003 with LTA consultant visits. Materials Science Consultants were able to state that the surface of courts was at end-of-life and must be replaced and that the court base had been subject to frost heave due to insufficient foundation. It was found that foundations of 50mm were used, not the recommended 250mm - the Club could not have planned for this! Ayrlect carried out a Floodlighting Survey and suggested that planning permission for floodlighting of the total area would be difficult and floodlighting three courts was recommended in order to attract LTA support.

From that point various consultations took place with Scottish Tennis and LTA representatives but the key to moving the project forward was when the services of a consulting civil engineer were engaged. This resulted in the production of a Tender Report (Design, Scope of Work and Cost Estimates). In summary the project was to replace the existing courts, which were assessed as unsuitable, install a base fit for purpose and with a 50 yr (min) life, install three artificial grass courts suited to the locality, floodlight three courts in accordance with LTA initiatives and install a macadam coaching court. (During the final stages of the project this last item changed to become an artificial grass coaching court.) The three plus one option was chosen to meet LTA layout requirements and avoid additional building costs to extend the playing area to add space between courts. The Tender Report estimated the project cost to be in the region of £190,000.

At this stage the land ownership and burdens were established, standard securities investigated and planning permission approved for the floodlighting design. In parallel interim court management included health and safety assessments of the existing courts and expensive repairs to the existing surface to maintain play were undertaken by the Club.

Various fund raising activities were undertaken by the Club and funding applications made to external funding agencies, the tennis governing bodies and numerous charitable trusts.

The conclusion of these fund raising efforts were that Gannochy Trust granted £20,000, SportsScotland granted £60,000, Tayside Tennis granted £2,000 and lent £4,000 and the LTA granted £35,000 and lent £30,000. At this point the Club then took the view that it would be able to make up the shortfall from its own savings and contributions from members. For the Club's Trustees this was a huge decision and one which was not taken lightly but with the support of the Consulting Engineer, Alasdair Macleod, and an understanding chosen supplier in Allsports it was agreed to go ahead. The plan was then to go ahead in late 2007 but this was delayed on the recommendations of the contractor and engineer to be spring of 2008. This time allowed the Club to put in place greater contingency funding from its own resources.

Construction began in March 2008 and some ten weeks later the works on the main courts were concluded with the coaching court to follow soon afterwards. West End Tennis Club is absolutely delighted with its new courts and floodlights. The same can be said for the visitors to the Club, including visiting teams. Everyone has commented positively on the courts and many have praised the courts as fantastic and that they rank with the best in the region.

Congratulations and thanks from West End go out to Alasdair Macleod, of Macleod Consulting as well as Allsports and their team who have been exceptionally professional in helping the Club through the planning, tendering, construction and completion phases of the project. Overall at a current cost estimate of some £175,000 it's a great result and the Club looks forward to working with Alasdair and Allsports in the future to help develop and maintain this wonderful facility.

Of course with the completion of the works the Club is now challenged with repaying the loans and delivering the tennis pay-back required by the governing bodies. These tennis pay-back goals include increasing over five years the Club's membership by 20%, the mini, junior and performance players by 30% and to increase the number of coaches to three. In summary the goal is to have a Club membership of some 300 in five years time and already the Club has seen a marked increase in membership in the short time that the new courts have been open and this is ahead of the planned coaching programmes getting into full swing!



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Background

The Club was established in 1900 and has been located at the current site since 1903. There have been many players of note including some who played at Wimbledon, Joyce Hume (Barclay), Anita Ellis and Alan Halley (Qualifying 2006). The Club has also hosted Scottish National Events.

Recent Developments

The Club faced significant challenges in the mid-90s with the loss of the Club Coach, changes in the Club's Committee and vandalism of the clubhouse and sports fencing. These challenges were met and in 1996 a new coach was appointed and trebled the membership. The club began to work with the local Sports Council and received comments such as "... your club has great potential to develop and obtain funding support". At this time the Club focused on erecting a security perimeter fence and coded access gate, renovating the courts and installing new nets, clearing the grounds and re-establishing the site and re-opening the clubhouse.

- 1998 – Coach Award for Services to Tennis (SLTA)
- 1999 – Security Fencing, Courts & Clubhouse (WELTC)
- 2000 – Short Tennis Programme (Awards for All)
- 2000 – Centenary Celebrations (LTA)
- 2001 – Scottish Club of the year 2000 (SLTA)
- 2002 – Dundee City Tennis Tournament (Awards for All)
- 2002 – Sports Fencing Renewal (North County)
- 2003 – Coach Award for Contributions to Sport (DCSC)
- 2004 – Club changing rooms (North County)
- 2005 – Junior Squad Coaching (Redwood Leisure)
- 2006 – Clubhouse Renovation (North County)
- 2006 – Mini Tennis Schools Programme (North County)

Current Development Status

The Club's constitution states that its aims are to promote, foster and encourage public participation in the game of tennis and other sports; and to promote, organise and carry out social and recreational activities with emphasis on family participation in connection therewith. The Club maintains a development plan and is a Volunteer Sports Club with Charity Status – Charity Number SC0376690. There are six Trustees and the Club plans to incorporate and therefore become liability limited by guarantee. The Club's approach is for coach led tennis development supported by team tennis, for more details see the Club's web site at www.westendtennis.org.uk.

The current Club Coach is Stewart Reid who is a licensed and qualified coach with many years experience. He runs coaching programmes with beginners & improvers, teams Squads, holiday Camps and individual Lessons.

West End Tennis Club is affiliated to Dundee City Sport Council, participates in the Dundee Tennis Development Group with Craigmuir, Broughty Ferry, Games Club and Nigel Watson's Tennis School. West End is also affiliated to Tennis Tayside and Tennis Scotland and therefore the LTA.

The Club takes part in the Dundee City Tennis Tournament, Dundee Confined, Scottish Cup, Tennis Tayside junior, gents, ladies and mixed leagues and the National League.

Future Steps – Clubhouse Renewal Project

Of course with the completion of the new courts and the installation of the floodlights many have asked when the clubhouse is to be renewed. The feeling of the Club and its Trustees was, and to some extent still is, that the main priority for a tennis club is to have good courts and that the current clubhouse is similar to, and in many ways better, than many in the County.

In recent years the clubhouse has been significantly upgraded, the ladies changing room and toilets were restored and the main clubhouse has been renovated with new windows fitted.

The clubhouse may be suitable for hosting coaching, competitions and social functions but of course being a progressive, developing Club with an ambitious membership we will endeavor to upgrade the clubhouse still further and to do so will be seeking funding and other support in near future – watch this space!