



Organisation Name	Lacey Green & Loosley Row Tennis Club
Project Name	Court Floodlighting
Funding Stream	Local Infrastructure
Total Cost of project	£12,844
Amount of Match Funding	£6,844 (contribution from Lacey Green PC £250 and the Tennis Club £6,594).
Amount being applied for	£6,000
Amount suggested	£6,000

### Project Summary

The Tennis Club urgently need to floodlight court 3 due to the growth of the club. The combination of improving the facilities, having a new full time coach and the impact of the Covid 19 has meant that the club has grown by some 65% in the past 12 months or so.

Currently they only have two out of three of their courts floodlit and there is an enormous strain in trying to satisfy tennis players requirements when there is no longer daylight. The project spec confirms the use of the latest Philip's LED floodlights which are very environmental. The power usage is just over 3kw compared to conventional floodlights which use double the electricity usage for the same luminance. The lights also have the advantage of instant light without the traditional warm up period associated with halogen floodlights.

An extra floodlit court would avoid the bottlenecks during the darker months; it would allow more people in the community to benefit from playing tennis as coaching could take place during the evenings. At the moment, if there is a competitive match on, coaching cannot take place as the match takes up two courts.

#### **The need for this project:**

Some 18 months ago, the Tennis Club placed an advert with the Lawn Tennis Association for a new coach. At the time the club only had 120 members and coaching was down to 6 hours per week.

Since then the new coach has expanded the coaching enormously and now coaches around 32 hours per week. He has introduced a full range of coaching for the juniors, from tots tennis right up to teenage players. The number of juniors receiving weekly coaching has risen from 12 in July 2019 to around 55 currently. During the darker months he relies on the floodlit courts to coach and this obviously restricts others in the community from playing.

For adults, he has introduced new group sessions to allow more people to benefit from tennis. This includes two beginners' classes per week, two mixed drills, one ladies session, one men's session and three cardio sessions.

Cardio tennis allows the community to get fit in a fun way by doing lots of running around with music playing in the background. This allows them to burn around 600 calories during a session which is fun and sociable.

The coached sessions are open to everyone in the community, you don't have to be a member. In addition, they offer pay and play for non members. This allows non members to book a court online and play tennis without being a member.

The coronavirus has focused peoples' minds on staying healthy and getting fit, and tennis has enormous advantages over other sports because it is non-contact, and anyone from the ages of 3- 80 can pick up a racket and enjoy a game.

The club have recently introduced walking tennis which is primarily aimed at the over 60s. This allows people in the community to carry on exercising and enjoying tennis where perhaps the traditional game is beyond their physical capabilities. There is no running or jumping and two bounces are permitted. They are the first club in Buckinghamshire to offer this.

In order to attract new players the club are very aware that they need to keep their website and social media channels current with lots of pictures and information. They track this information monthly and review their progress on both Facebook and Instagram. Over the past year the number of followers on Facebook has risen from 115 to 186 currently. On Instagram it has risen from 171 to 242. This measure provides tangible evidence that they have a growing base and a keen interest in their activities. Indeed, the number of followers that they achieve far exceeds the size of the club, when comparisons are made to similar sized organisations. The club were recently profiled nationally in the Lawn Tennis Association's (LTA) November Bulletin (see attached) which demonstrates how successful they have been in attracting new players. Also, they were recently highlighted in the Bucks LTA annual report as being a model club.

Normally, the majority of interest in the club comes during the warmer months of the year from April through to September. This year they have been very busy with new interest starting in February and running to the end of October up to the imposed lockdown in November. The community like the wide offering that the club provides. You don't have to be a member and if you do want to become a member the price is very low compared to other local clubs. For example, under sevens can join for just £5 per year, 7-11 £20 and over 11s is £30. For adults full membership is £105 some £40 less than other local clubs with similar facilities.

To encourage more juniors to play tennis, the club encourage the older teenage players to participate in the tennis leaders programme, which allows them to help the coach with junior group lessons. The younger juniors like to see the older juniors assisting and this helps engage them with tennis.

Further tangible evidence that the club needs this project is the expansion of the car park. When it was built some five years ago, parking for 10 cars was deemed to be sufficient. With the growth in coaching activities and playing hours, the car park was recently expanded so that it could accommodate 20 cars. Their coach also provides after school clubs and lunch clubs at six local schools and pre-schools. This helps to get interest in playing tennis and some of these juniors then come back to the club to participate in the main junior programmes. The club also offer two free tennis days every year, where anyone can play tennis and receive free coaching.

It should also be noted there is planned housing growth within the area, so members may well increase due to new families moving nearby.

#### How does the project address local priorities?

The Community Board agreed its priorities on 9 July which included a priority for **The Young and The Elderly**

This project will contribute to our objective around social isolation for older people, and the recommendations highlighted in the Community Boards Public Health report. The report confirms that it:

- Has a higher proportion of physically inactive adults (18.8%) compared with the County average (16.5%).
- Has a higher proportion of obese adults (32.1%) compared with the County average (31.4%).

Reducing smoking, adult obesity and physical inactivity are key areas for our community as they are major causes of preventable ill health and death. These are particularly relevant as they are all risk factors for dementia, and our community has a higher level of dementia than Buckinghamshire.

North West Chilterns has an older age profile and a higher proportion of residents with dementia compared with the County overall. Dementia-friendly initiatives therefore should be explored. Other interventions that should be considered are ones that promote and encourage physical activity amongst middle-aged people; the evidence shows physical activity reduces the risk of dementia.

Loneliness for people aged 65 years and older is a key area for parts of our board area. Programmes to build community cohesion or encourage befriending are required, and this project would contribute to this.

In addition, the Club's junior programme supports the health and wellbeing of young children/people as it allows them to get off their screens, get out and exercise in a fun and friendly environment. This helps to tackle weight issues, increases their fitness and improves their overall physical and mental health.

For adults, tennis is a great overall body workout which improves muscle strength, provides a cardio workout and improves mental health. As detailed above, their programmes range from very energetic cardio tennis to walking tennis for the less physically active.

There is also a social aspect to playing tennis which is as equally important. The community enjoy mixing together over a cup of coffee after playing and making new friends. The club holds various social activities which help bond the community together to raise spirits and improve wellbeing. Activities range from Xmas dinners, Gin & Fizz evenings, pub outings and family BBQs. These help to bond the community together and are offered to members and non-members.

All ages would benefit from this project. The Tennis Club are a very community minded organisation and try and make tennis accessible and affordable to all which is reflected in their prices.

#### How does the project align with the values, objectives and corporate priorities of Buckinghamshire Council?

This project seeks to achieve the corporate priorities around **Strengthening our Communities and Protecting the Vulnerable**.

**Strengthening our Communities:** Tennis allows the community to get fitter, improves physical and mental health and is also sociable. Over the past year the community has looked to this club for social interaction when other forms have not been available. The club also encourage the community to volunteer for projects which helps bring everyone together and improves happiness. For example, all maintenance work around the courts is carried out by volunteers, from lawn mowing, hedge cutting, weeding to tidying up rubbish. They also encourage the juniors to get involved too, and they like nothing better than for example, painting the exterior of their shed!

**Protecting the vulnerable:** The clubs new walking tennis allows the over 60s to get out and exercise in a safe environment which is outdoors. It also allows them to get fitter and mix socially with other people of their age. This is extremely important currently, as older people feel very vulnerable with the coronavirus. Studies have shown that tennis is very low risk and was rated one of the lowest risk for coronavirus.

#### How does the project achieve value for money?

The total cost of this project is £12,844. Lacey Green and Loosley Row Tennis Club will contribute £6,594, Lacey Green Parish Council £250, and are looking for the Community Board to fund £6,000.

This project would help the club to continue to reach out to people of all ages, to help them get fitter, to improve their mental and physical wellbeing, and strengthen their relationships within their community.

## Community Board Coordinator comments

This application has been fully assessed by the Young and The Elderly subgroup in line with the Community Board funding criteria, and based on this and the evidence above, it is recommended as a project which is suitable to receive funding from the North West Chilterns Community Board.

The funding applied for in this report (£6,000) can be accommodated within the North West Chilterns Community Board 2020/21 budget available. This takes into account monies already spent to date and also monies committed to projects formally approved by the Board, but not yet spent.

**The applicant will be required to agree to terms and conditions, which include a monitoring agreement, as discussed with the Community Board Coordinator before the fund will be formally awarded.**