

QUESTIONS RECEIVED SINCE RE CLAY COURT PRESENTATION 25/4/22

Name

Allan Kerr

Ask a question

Bagshot & Camberley appear to be generally larger enterprises than WSTC. According to their websites (which may be out of date) they each have 5 courts. Bagshot have kept 3 hard courts and Camberley 2 hard courts. As a smaller club with only 3 courts, we do not have the same flexibility. I agree that it makes sense to have the same surface for all courts, but we are not short of members and new members do not appear to be put off by the current court surfaces. Where is the benefit in putting all of the club's eggs/money into new clay courts? Apparently there will be no money left to do any of the previously proposed enhancements to the areas around the clubhouse?

ANSWER:

You make a very valid point. As you say most clubs with synthetic clay courts also have tarmac courts too, we haven't come across any with only clay but they may exist. The options for changing just one or two courts at West Surrey have been rejected for a variety of reasons and the decision was taken not to have that option on the vote. The most important reason was that it is 10 years since the courts were resurfaced, and they are still in a fit state to lay clay on top of them. If we wait much longer, we would be faced with the prohibitive cost of relaying tarmac and then the clay on top of that.

There is the risk, as you suggest, that the funds previously earmarked (£20,000) to complete the second phase of the paving and landscaping project will be refused by the golf club if the clay court conversion goes ahead. That decision will not be taken by the Golf Club until after the clay court vote is completed, and if and when that project gets their approval. In any event, the existing paving is unsightly and there are many broken and uneven slabs, so some remedial work must be done as the paving deteriorates further and becomes a health and safety hazard through the risk of trips and falls.

Regards

Malcolm Dillon

Name

Matthew Cushway

Ask a question

Is there an option to have 2 clay courts and 1 x hard court? To keep an option open.

ANSWER:

Name

Richard Slynn

Ask a question

Thank you very much for all the work that has gone into this. I just wanted to ask if the club envisaged any difficulty in finding a local maintenance contractor to perform these essential regular services for clay courts for around the specified estimated costs?

ANSWER: Hello Richard

Thanks for your enquiry.

A good question and one that has been of concern. It seems however, at this point that we have found someone who is interested in taking on the role. So fingers crossed.

We would otherwise be approaching local contractors wanting to do this type of work and be willing to be trained to do it.

Happy to discuss at the AGM

All the best

Louise

Ask a question

I understand that leaves, sap etc, from nearby trees will damage the surface. Should there be a plan and budget to cut back / remove nearby trees as part of the proposal?

Name

Julian Power

ANSWER:

Hi Julian, and thank you for your very pertinent question

"I understand that leaves, sap etc, from nearby trees will damage the surface. Should there be a plan and budget to cut back / remove nearby trees as part of the proposal?"

The cost and effort of maintenance required for the proposed clay surface is the single biggest issue we face, and as you have observed the proximity of trees around the courts is expected to cause problems. Although it would be a sad loss, the felling of the cherry tree by court 1 and the partial or complete felling of the oaks by court 3 would alleviate, but not totally remove the problem of seasonal tree debris on the courts which will need to be removed before play.

I estimate the cost for a tree surgeon to do the work would be between £1500 and £3000 depending on how much of the oak is removed. I don't believe that a budget to do that work has been discussed,

and a further issue will be our near neighbours who are very hostile to any form of tree work, including the removal last year of dead and fallen silver birch trees where the new patio is.

I hope that answers your question.

Regards

Malcolm Dillon

Name

Laura Wells

Ask a question

Is the material used as part of the clay court a type of plastic? Is there a risk that microplastics will be carried off the court by shoes and be washed into waterways, ingested by wildlife etc?

ANSWER:

My understanding is that the only plastic used in the construction of the courts is the carpet material which is infilled with sand. The sand level needs to be maintained approx 2mm above the level of the carpet which is then protected from wear. The sand itself is natural silica graded to a certain particle size. The terracotta colour is obtained by heating the sand rather than dyeing it and it should not stain clothing unlike natural clay courts based on clay and ground brick.

There is substantial loss of the sand which is carried off by wind, in shoes (both inside and out) as you suggest and losses due to cleaning and sieving and we have budgeted to replace up to half a ton per court per annum. My experience from other clubs is that the stuff does spread everywhere but it is harmless.

Regards,

Malcolm Dillon

Name

Doug Smit

Ask a question

It seems clay has lots of advantages in play. However, could you let me know who will be responsible for maintaining the courts on a day-to-day basis, apart from our regular members, some of whom, in my experience, are not that diligent. For example, will members take time to blow or sweep leaves off the courts?

ANSWER:

Good morning Doug

Thank you for your question.

Part of the conditions of changing to artificial clay is that we have a dedicated paid person to manage the courts. This person will report to our maintenance committee member, currently Malcolm. We believe that we have

someone who is interested in taking on this role. If not we will approach local contractors in order to get the right person. We have budgeted for this role.

Regarding the sweeping of the courts and general maintenance by the players, we will implement strict rules. These will have to be adhered to. As with any rules we have, if these are not followed then we will know who had booked the court and follow it up with a conversation with the culprit/s. Ultimate sanctions would presumably be removal of membership.

We would publish and be clear about these rules once we know the vote result.

I hope this has answered your questions.

Kind regards

Louise

Name

Catherine Keech

Ask a question

Who will be responsible for the weekly maintenance schedule? It's a lot to ask of volunteers but if we pay someone to do it, do we have someone/a company in mind and do we know the cost?

ANSWER:

Hi Catherine and thanks for your question

"Who will be responsible for the weekly maintenance schedule? It's a lot to ask of volunteers but if we pay someone to do it, do we have someone/a company in mind and do we know the cost?"

We plan to contract the work out to a garden maintenance company rather than an individual so we can guarantee someone will turn up every week. We don't know how long it will take but on average we think two to three hours per week. Rates per hour seem to be about £24 plus vat per hour so we're looking at approx £3000 per annum.

Whilst the members will be expected to drag the courts once each session to redistribute the sand we will not rely on them to do the routine weekly maintenance.

Regards,

Malcolm Dillon

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Name

Diana Hewitt

Ask a question

If there are problems with people slipping on white lines, surely we should not accept any finished court surface where this is still an issue. If tarmac courts are laid we would have funds to complete the landscaping and also place a simple barrier to make it impossible for anyone to walk behind court 1. Maybe remove hedge and replace with a fence/hedging a little further away to prevent so much frost. I find it difficult to believe that those who are unwilling to collect balls which have been hit out would be willing to drag and brush courts.

ANSWER: Hello Diana

I don't think there is an issue specifically with artificial clay courts of the lines being slippery.

I take on board your other comments re the landscaping this is part of our exploration and vote as to what we want to do.

The strict rules/guidelines would need to be adhered to by all members. It seems it is a minimal process to undertake to drag and brush the courts and a habit that we can quite easily adopt.

Name

John Kania

Ask a question

Has there been any consideration to a 'softer' hard court, that is, not just tarmac. I have played on a lot of 'hard' courts that have a compliant surface and need much less maintenance and cleaning up than artificial clay. I recently played on a surface called 'Tiger Turf', which was great, and is laid straight onto the existing surface.

ANSWER:

Hello John

This is a response from Paul Dudley who has been instrumental in doing our research into the clay court option:

Re Artificial Clay options, we did consider other options and there were 3 to consider – there is a lot more detail but in summary:

Advantage RedCourt manufactured by EDEL and fitted by Trevor May

- Competitively priced and cheaper than the Lano Grand clay
- The stability mat with the same in-fill has been fitted by TM for over 16 year so a long history of maintenance and wear and tear information
- Currently there are over 100 clubs they have fitted who have had the surface for over 10 years meaning evidence of durability
- There is evidence that the fibrillated yarn (designed to split deliberately over time) and its interaction with the in-fill provides a more stable feet for foot stability than other options
- But most importantly there is 16 years of evidence and assurance on in the interaction of the type of in-fill used by TM with the stability mat – providing members assurance on the porosity, feel and playing conditions alongside a maintenance program. Many clubs have not refitted for 16 years – so good evidence of use of long life
- Evidence of play from Bagshott and Camberley – the play-in sessions organised for members who played on the surface
- Lano Grand Clay fitted by 1st Surface and Chiltern Sports
- A monofilament stability mat costing materially more than Advantage RedCourt
- Newer surface less than RedCourt so less evidence on durability from the fitters – 1st Surface or Chiltern Sports
- The in-fill material used in many installations has over time switched to the in-fill used in Advantage RedCourt – so less evidence of the porosity, feel and playing conditions

- So less evidence of the play conditions of clubs using newer in-fill on Grand Clay for analysis of playing conditions
-
- Tiger Turf fitted by 1st Surface and Chiltern Sports
- Newer stability mat on the market (less than 5 years – with a new version on market for 2 years) so much less evidence on durability and use over a longer period - a key factor consideration
- Comparable cost to Advantage RedCourt for the Tiger Turf Clay (fitted by Chiltern - fibrillated)
- Materially more expensive for Tiger Turf Advantage – monofilament – see feedback on Lano
- Some issues with porosity potentially so hence newer mat product on market

A key aspect to consider is not necessarily the type of stability mat – but the type of in-fill and its **interaction** with the mat and evidence of resulting playing conditions. Players are not playing on the mat but the in-fill itself – contained within the matt and on top of it. The strong evidence over many years of long life, in-fill interaction with the EDEL mat for the Advantage RedCourt solution (at a lower price than Lano Grand Clay and Tiger Turf Advantage and with materially more evidence of playing conditions over Tiger Turf Clay) – means that the Advantage RedCourt would appear to be the best option available.

Name

Suzanne Read

Ask a question

Why is there such a short deadline for voting? At the present rate of counting votes for and against the court surfaces the numbers who have voted are not representative of the membership. Surely there should be at least a 75% vote figure for it to be fair.

ANSWER:

Hello Suzanne

The vote was opened on the 30th April, after the information session. All information was put on to the website for members to read and plenty of opportunity to ask questions. The vote closes on 23rd May – a few days after the AGM and any further questions discussed.

If members want to vote they will do so by the deadline. I believe we will have a 75% response.

Many thanks

Louise
