

**Teignbridge District Council**  
**Executive Committee**  
**4<sup>th</sup> April 2023**  
**Part i**

**Report Title**

Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and TDC Green Spaces Tennis Courts Refurbishment Project

**Purpose of Report**

To seek approval for the capital expenditure of £244,256 to refurbish council owned tennis courts in the following locations within the district – Teignmouth Den x 1; Newton Abbot Bakers Park x 3 and Forde Park x 3; Buckfastleigh Duckspound Rd, x 1.

**Recommendation(s)**

The Committee RESOLVES to:

- (1) Approve a total capital budget expenditure of £244,256 for refurbishment works to council owned tennis courts at the four green space sites detailed above. The expenditure to comprise of:
  - £100,475 Active Leisure S106 contributions
  - £4,000 capital receipts
  - £139,781 LTA grant
  
- (2) Approve the adoption of the low-cost affordable charging model as laid out at paragraphs 1.9, and 3, with concessionary and free provision integrated alongside it.

**Financial Implications**

The financial implications are detailed in section 4 below.

Martin Flitcroft, Chief Finance Officer & Head of Corporate Services

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**Legal Implications**

There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report save that the Council must ensure that its land is fit for the purpose for which it is used.

Paul Woodhead, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

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**Risk Assessment**

The risks are detailed in section 7.3 below.

Neil Blaney, Head of Place and Commercial Services

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## **Environmental/ Climate Change Implications**

The environmental/climate change implications are detailed in section 7.4 below

William Elliott, Climate Change Officer.

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## **Report Author**

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## **Executive Member**

Clr John Nutley, Executive Member for Sport Recreation and Culture.

## **Appendices/Background Papers**

### **1. Introduction/Background**

**1.1** In late in 2021, the Department for Media, Culture and Sports (DCMS) and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) announced a £30million fund to refurbish tennis courts in parks and green spaces. Teignbridge District Council (TDC) was identified as one of the UK local authorities to meet the criteria for this funding program opportunity. Namely, that the council owned courts are in poor condition in certain areas, and some courts are in areas where Indices of Multiple deprivation IMD 1-5 demographic classifications exist. IMD – indices of multiple deprivation are a UK government measure of the deprivation of a location in the UK on a scale of 1 to 10. 10 being high income areas and 1 being the lowest. The numbers for each site are established using a government website tool and the postcode of each location. [Click Here](#)

Buckfastleigh Courts (Duckspound Lane) – IMD 5

Forde Park – IMD 6

Bakers Park – IMD 3

The Den Teignmouth – IMD 2

The IMD numbers are drivers for the LTA deciding where to make investments. Teignbridge has 3 sites in IMD 1-5 and 1 site IMD 6, which broadly means that all sections and demographics have interest in playing tennis. Emphasising that the amount people earn, what job they do, does not impact interest in playing tennis. This is to dispel the concept that only wealthy people play / have interest in playing.

Investment would support provision of improved quality facilities to promote tennis and encourage equal opportunity participation in local communities and for visitors to the district. This aligns with the LTA strategic vision for ‘opening tennis up’ to everyone in the community.

**1.2 Research:** The LTA has carried out extensive research supporting the investment into tennis courts in parks. Ongoing wide-ranging research to understand how the public feel about tennis across the last seven years is summarised below. The research is primarily aimed at understanding the main barriers to accessing tennis and what the ‘customer base’ looks like in more detail. The Baseline Tracking Survey of 80,000 people over several years looked

at different types of playing environments (e.g., club, school, park), revealing key information about the importance courts in parks place in grass roots tennis participation.

- Around 5 million people pick up a racket once a year and play – a significant majority of this activity is in parks.
- 40% of tennis in the UK played by those aged 14+ is on parks. Significantly more than the 14% at clubs and the 22% at school venues.
- When looking at infrequent players (less than once a month) this % increases significantly, as it does for players in clubs playing more frequently.
- For those who don't play tennis but would like to, over 80% would go to a park court first. If there is no good quality park court available, this group are likely to choose other sports.
- For people who want to play tennis in parks, they are most dissatisfied with state and condition of courts, ease of booking and the number of courts available.
- Demand for tennis is amongst those who stopped playing in the last 5 years – but the age profile is wide ranging, from 14+ upwards the demand for tennis being played in parks in very strong.

In addition, through focus groups and online surveys with players, several 'fears' have been identified amongst users of park tennis courts. These fears are related to courts that are open without a booking or management system in place. These are summarised below:

- Fearful that the effort to get ready to play and travel to the court, only to find none are available and that time has been wasted.
- Fearful that on arrival at the site and courts are being used it is unclear how long you are allowed to play for.
- Fear of having to challenge other players on how long they have been playing to get your turn to play.
- Fear that in a public setting disagreement / confrontation could arise from disagreement over who gets to play.

**1.3** The strategic importance of tennis courts in parks has become clear. The role they play in supporting grass roots tennis participation is now fully understood. It is estimated that around 10,000 public tennis courts have been lost or re-purposed (e.g., Multi Use Games Areas) in the last 30 years. This fact and the research above underpin the need to invest and sustain as many of the existing court stock in parks as is possible, including those in Teignbridge.

**1.4** The investment programme supported by the DCMS aims to achieve a step change in the quality of provisions of tennis courts in public green spaces. This is to ensure that tennis and

its facilities play a key role in the physical health and wellbeing of residents in local authorities across the UK.

**1.5** Throughout 2022, Green Spaces Officers have worked in partnership with the LTA to discuss and scope out the potential to invest and deliver refurbished tennis courts in Teignbridge.

**1.6** TDC arranged an independent survey of all its courts regarding condition and found that work is required to bring them up to an acceptable standard as set out by the LTA for Local Authority courts. The necessary works identified were most significant at Forde Park where new surfacing, areas of court reconstruction, replacement of perimeter fencing, new posts and nets are needed. Additionally, at Forde Park an access path is required to make the courts accessible for all and a small power supply is required for the gate technology (see table in 4.1 page 11). For Duckponds, Buckfastleigh new surfacing, fencing, posts & nets requirements were identified. These two sites have been highlighted as the main driver / priority for the LTA to provide funding.

**1.7** For Bakers Park and The Den courts, court painting was the only identified need for works to the surface. The access gate technology can be retrofitted to the existing gates in Situ.

**1.8** Several authorities across the UK have completed similar investments to refurbish tennis courts in the last 7 years. There are now over 420 different venues that have installed access gate technology.

**1.9** Many LTA investment projects have introduced booking systems and gate access control technology to have a clear 'journey' for the public to book and play tennis. These systems replace the need for analogue methods to collect income (e.g., staffed sites) and this income sustains the facilities for the long term, without the need for external capital funds.

This is achieved through the most used low-cost affordable charging model, with free provision integrated alongside it. An Annual Household membership pass of £36.00 to provide access - subject to a suggested booking condition of 5 plays in any 7-day period) in Teignbridge for the whole household named on the pass (up to 10). It is designed to be flexible depending on what type of living scenario people are in. The price point and its affordability are set so that it can work for anyone. In practice, when someone buys a pass, they name a main contact who pays the fee. That main contact then adds the other names of the people in the household. They can all book under the pass terms, but in vast majority of examples the main contact will book the court and be the main user. The household annual pass concept and price point is compared to other authorities in the Southwest. For example, Plymouth (£35), Truro (£38), Bristol (£35), Bath (£40) and Cheltenham (£47).

An option for booking a court for £6 an hour booking fee sits alongside this for infrequent players or visitors to the district wishing to use the courts.

### *Integrating Concessionary Rates and Free Tennis into a charged operating model*

There are a variety of ways in which free tennis has been integrated into a charged model. There are three broad groups of options to do this, all of which are underpinned by the principle of local flexibility and clear targeted criteria for impactful free provision.

- 1) In-line with other authorities who have implemented concession pricing it is proposed that Teignbridge offer a £10.00 reduction to a pass for those on income support. This is done through a process where a member of the public presents evidence against set eligibility criteria. The extent to which a concession pass is free or charged needs to be considered to ensure the income that sustains the tennis court isn't detrimentally impacted.
- 2) The provision of free passes could be provided to defined key stakeholders. It is common for court operators to work with local groups and provide passes on the booking system at no charge. This would be hidden from public view and issued at the discretion of Green Spaces. This is most likely be a community group 'active in the park' where a free pass helps facilitate a relationship or an activity. E.g., a school uses Forde Park, and we provide a pass to access the courts for a term, or volunteers based at Forde Park Community Café.
- 3) Regular free tennis activities delivered and facilitated by local coaches or activators and community organisations. This is simply a session that people can book onto and turn up and give tennis a try being greeted by someone and given equipment where needed.

There is flexibility for local decisions around how free tennis looks in their different areas. For example, giving courts for free to children's tennis with local primary schools, particularly those that have limited access to sports facilities. There are also opportunities to provide fun skills sessions, social 'knockabouts', schools sessions, and family days at the discretion of the operator. These are all aimed at engaging the community and helping more people play and are fully supported by the local LTA participation teams.

Beyond these free tennis options, the LTA also has specific programmes to use alongside the park tennis courts (that have further resources) for young people in low-income groups (SERVES), those with impairments (Open Court) and support for teachers to deliver in schools (LTA Youth Schools).

These varied options of free tennis have been adopted by other local authorities across the UK as the best balance pricing for affordability, and accessibility, whilst ensuring income generated contributes toward a sinking fund that will protect the sustainability of the courts

in the future. TDC Green Spaces Officers have met with officers of the LTA and Plymouth City Council to see refurbished parks with gate technology in practice.

Conversations regarding concessions and encouraging participation by low-income users are continuing with the Executive Members.

**1.10** Tennis is well placed to support the Council Strategy 2020-30. Whilst at its heart a sport, tennis playing in park settings integrates physical activity and healthier lifestyles in vibrant green spaces. It provides local opportunities for people to participate in, aligning and contributing to the vision of making Teignbridge a healthy and desirable place where people want to live, work and visit.

**1.11** This investment project has been aligned with and supports Teignbridge strategic plan aims. For example, high quality tennis provision in public green spaces maps closely to the strands in the strategy. Namely: -

- by providing an opportunity for people to be 'out and about and active'.
- by providing 'quality facilities in walking or cycling distance' of residential areas.
- contributing towards Teignbridge being 'a great place to live and work'.
- by contributing towards Teignbridge being a 'vital viable council' for the future - by mapping sustainability plans to the tennis courts.
- by contributing towards 'stronger communities' - Using tennis to work in partnership locally with people.
- More specifically, tennis courts in parks aligns with the strategic streams of 'linking parks, open spaces, and green streets' that residents and visitors can enjoy.

**1.12** In addition to strategic alignment, the section below provides more detail into how tennis courts in parks fit within the local communities. As investments into park courts have taken shape over the last few years there have been several learnings about how tennis can fit into the parks and communities they are in:

- Tennis has worked strategically with other pitch sports (e.g., football) on plans for courts in parks and green spaces. Court developments are often part of a masterplan for a park or green space. Tennis is seen by customers as an available, accessible sport when in a park or green space.
- Tennis participation (and vice versa) is supported by locations with children play parks, Café, and other recreational sport opportunities.
- Projects are developed in partnership with community groups, friends' group and people living locally to the parks. They have a sense of pride towards tennis provision in their park or green space.

- Parks and green spaces teams at local authorities are central to the refurbishment of the courts and the subsequent decision to operate courts.
- Local authorities can choose to operate courts in house as is seen as a natural alignment with management of pitches and fees and charges in place for pitch sports.

**1.13** These precedents have been overlaid with the TDC tennis landscape in developing the project and provide an overall strategic basis for the investment and how the project could be shaped prior to opening to the public. For example, Forde Park and its community Café adjacent to the courts provides an excellent basis for refurbishing these courts and linking into community lifestyles e.g., play on the tennis courts, enjoy the green space with the option for refreshments. Tennis in parks reaches beyond the benefit of sport, demonstrating courts can become an integral part of the green space community and its local economy.

These elements reflect the principles of the Green Flag criteria which Teignbridge strives to maintain across all sites, not only the ones where green flags are awarded. Refurbishing Teignbridge tennis courts would benefit residents and visitors in providing good quality sporting facility in a public open space, reducing the need to travel to other facilities.

**1.14** There are currently 400 sites across the UK that have received some refurbishment and introduced booking and access systems to manage the courts. Whilst there is a mixture of models of operation, all have a planned maintenance requirement for the courts in place and most use an affordable charging model. Projects in other areas of Devon showcase practical examples of how investing and managing courts in this way has increased participation. Major conurbations in the Southwest with project operating or in discussion include Plymouth, Torbay, Taunton, and North Devon.

## **2. LTA ClubSpark and Smart Access Technology (Bookings & Payments)**

All TDC sites to install and use LTA ClubSpark online booking platform through Smart Access Gate technology where an electronic gate access system takes payment online and a code is created to gain entry. The code is issued via an email within 60 seconds of the booking and payment process being concluded.

**2.1** The use of LTA's ClubSpark online booking platform and Smart Access Gate technology has been utilised by local authorities to solve management challenges, improve the service to the public and create financially sustainable tennis facilities. The technology has been born out of a lack of an ability to staff sites and find cost-effective ways of managing and collect income from park tennis facilities. The key benefits of the booking and access technology are:

- Alleviates the 'fears' that players have about open and unmanaged courts.
- Facilitates income generation which supports sustaining the facility through a sinking fund 'ring fenced' for future court refurbishments.

- Allows remote and online administration for a court operator. the customer has flexibility to self-service and automate their own bookings and payments via a dedicated platform.
- Introduces a Revenue Stream where none exists currently. Longer term the impact of using the system to generate income reduce a risk / liability of future works to the courts.
- Allows flexibility to tailor the settings to Teignbridge residents and visitors - Access to preventative health gains, Inclusive tennis opportunities. Access for low-income families.
- The systems facilitate reporting tennis participation and court usage to inform future planning.
- The system addresses the major barrier that tennis players have by improving the 'customer journey' in terms of finding, booking, paying, and accessing courts.
- Low-cost membership packages/pay, and play/concession pricing are an affordable way for the public to access tennis and to sustain the tennis courts.
- The courts, once developed, increases opportunity for tennis to contribute to local authority public health aims by an easy, technology led process.
- Enables the use of coaching for mass introduction to the sport at a local level, including free events.

**2.2** Additionally, the ClubSpark booking software integrates with LTA Play, a UK wide court search tool. It simplifies the customer process, enabling people to find and pay for courts, group lessons, matches, or events, all on one platform. LTA Play is a valuable tool for increasing court usage within areas of high tourist footfall locations like Teignbridge. <https://www.lta.org.uk/play/book-a-tennis-court/>

**2.3** The Smart Access Gate Technology has a built-in keypad which works using a 3G sim card (Premium version – Forde Park) or random code generation (Lite version – Buckfastleigh, Bakers Park, Teignmouth Den). Each online booking made through the ClubSpark website or app generates a unique code which is used to open the gate at the required time. This removes the need for staff to take payment, allows customers to book, pay and access courts to suit them and maximises court utilisation and income. It also offers security for the facility with only those who have booked and paid able to unlock the gate.

**2.4** Allows Access for all to participate in sport locally instead of travelling to other locations.

### **3. Criteria for receiving this investment from the DCMS / LTA**

The criteria for receiving investment into these tennis courts is centered around the key themes of growing participation, modern operational processes and making tennis courts financially self-sustaining.

High-level items in the 'Terms and Conditions' document are:

- An operating model using Gate Access Technology and ClubSpark booking systems (as in place in Plymouth).



- The courts are registered with the LTA (this will not be charged initially due to the investment being made) and meet minimum safeguarding standards.
- A sustainable plan for future maintenance for the courts. The proposed affordable pricing, income generation model is designed to cover the to the running costs and create a sinking fund for the tennis courts' future maintenance requirements.
- Venues provide an element of free tennis (e.g., coaching schemes) and concession pricing model (free or discounted) to ensure the community of the lowest incomes can access the courts without barriers.
- The courts are integrated into LTA schemes such as 'Play' (court booking search) and Local Tennis Leagues (competition offer for players).
- The courts partner with local coaches and local community sport organizations to have a diverse range of coaching and activation exercises to engage a wide audience of people to tennis.
- Full terms and conditions (DCMS approved document): [Individual Grant Funding Agreement - Teignbridge.docx](#)

#### 4. Financial Implications

**4.1** The total project cost £244,256.00 is summarised in the table below. £139,781.00 LTA funding has been approved after their final Stage 2 Funding Request approval. Section 106 money is tied to specific projects or types of projects and locations, and expenditure is time bound with projects executed completed and launched by April 2024.

Site	Survey Cost	LTA / DCMS Funding Proposal	Match S106 from TDC	TDC capital receipts (no S106 available)
Ducksponds Rd, Buckfastleigh	£58,083	£54,083		£4,000
Forde Park, Newton Abbot	£146,218	£85,698	£60,520	
Bakers Park, Newton Abbot	£28,743		£28,743	
The Den, Teignmouth	£11,212		£11,212	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£244,256</b>	<b>£139,781</b>	<b>£100,475</b>	<b>£4,000</b>

#### 4.2 Financial Modelling for Teignbridge Courts

The LTA financial modelling is benchmarked based on a mix of actual performance of sites in similar IMD areas combined with the population that is likely to play tennis in a 10min walk of the sites. Following recent updates from HMRC around VAT on local authority leisure services, the TDC modelling for pricing now assumes that fees charged are outside the scope of VAT. The modelling is based the based on 336 households paying Annual Household membership of £36.00, generating £12,096.00 income in year 1. In addition, informal pay and play at £6.00 per court/per hour is forecast to generate £4,728.00 in year 1. Assuming 3% inflationary increases each year, the average total annual income is estimated at £19,286.83. The dual membership and pay and play approach have been adopted by other

local authorities across the UK as the best balance pricing for affordability and sustainability. We would review this after year 1, although it is anticipated that in the early years the project would yield less income than as an established offer in the community. (See 1.9)

**4.3** Under the terms of the agreement, the Council creates a ring-fenced sinking fund by setting aside £10,800.00 per annum towards future tennis courts maintenance. This should be covered by income from tennis courts usage and / or supported by green spaces budgets. Annual maintenance of the gates and transaction charges is forecast to average £3,697.15 with much of this amount directly linked to the number of bookings. i.e., the number of passes sold, and bookings made, the more transaction charges there will be.

**4.4** Modelling over ten years and assuming a 3% increase in charges annually suggests a small surplus, averaging £4,789.68 per annum after deducting the £10,800.00 sinking fund and gates maintenance costs. Lower uptake would reduce the sums available for the sinking fund. The LTA have indicated that under these circumstances, they would work with the council to agree best use of available funds and strategies to grow usage and income.

**4.5** The proposal is not 100% dependent on pay to play charges, although LTA advise this works best in precedent examples and has been seen to be the best way to run facilities and sustain them. The Council does retain an option to use the gate and booking and not to charge, however this model requires to the Council to formally agree to putting aside from its budgets a ringfenced amount per year to sustain the tennis courts (£10,800.00) and absorb the costs of maintaining the gates in addition to this.

**4.6** This is not normally possible with Council financial challenges and the most common model selected by far is the model above which is a mix between charging and free tennis to balance the sustainability need and ensuring tennis is accessible to all communities.

**4.7** In financial modelling terms: Buckfastleigh and Bakers make a small loss in isolation, which supports an authority wide model as the best way forward i.e., Projected surplus at Forde Park can underpin any losses at Bakers and Buckfastleigh. In practice this means one operator (Green Spaces) overseeing all courts and the software set up so that one 'annual pass' allows booking at any site across Teignbridge (Plymouth does it this way) with no extra charges.

**4.8** Recruitment of a coaching provider: The modelling income does not consider (as it is difficult to predict) revenue generating from recruiting a coach / coach provider to deliver on the tennis courts. A recruitment process has been mapped and would be conducted by Teignbridge Council with support and guidance from the LTA. Tennis Coaches are professional and would set up a programme of sessions / lessons that would have a charge to the user. As such, Teignbridge Council can generate an income from a coach's court hire to contribute to the sustainability. A recruited coach would take part in some free activities as a way of generating further business and contributing to community engagement activities.

**4.9** The Modelling exercises overall supports the basis that with the right investment, communication and marketing the tennis courts in Teignbridge can be financially sustainable. Most importantly this investment proposal creates a step change for the quality and access

to these facilities and provides a long-term plan for how these facilities will be used, enjoyed by the public and sustained. Without this project funding from the LTA, we will be unable to refurbish the council's tennis courts.

**4.10** If successful, the systems facilitate the generation of income, reducing the need for Council to find budget for facility maintenance in future years. The intended benefit of this is that it helps us plan and pay for bigger R&M planned works to keep the facilities in good condition for longer. There is currently no set or allocated budget for tennis courts. Repairs are undertaken on ad-hoc basis with costs met by general repairs and maintenance budget (£5,360.00 over the last 3 years).

## **5. Marketing and Promotion**

This will be through a phased campaign working in collaboration with the LTA and internally with Media and Communications. If successful, the project will enable us to make full use of tried and tested technology, marketing and promotion, and development programmes. In the absence of a Sports Development Officer, or an Active Leisure Officer this is a valuable support resource to engage with people and increase activity levels.

**5.1** Public Relations will mainly be focused on the 3 months preceding launch and the 6 months after launch. Careful attention and sensitivity will be given to how we communicate the step change in managing a booking process for our customers. We anticipate questions, and teething problems are expected as we roll out the programme. Customer support will be provided by Green Spaces and the LTA as the public get used to the new methods of accessing the courts.

**5.2** As part of the ongoing support to ensure high footfall and financial sustainability of park courts the LTA have a dedicated team who cover the S&SW region. A local Participation Development Partner will be the main point of contact to support TDC with longer term strategic planning and day to day enquiries.

**5.3** The LTA have a broad range of products and programmes that have been developed using an insight led approach to ensure successful implementation. These aim to support their vision of **Tennis Opened Up** to ultimately increase participation which is underpinned by their mission to make the sport more relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable for everyone.

**5.4** Examples of LTA support programmes and links:

- Disability & inclusion – [Open Court](#) – this includes adapted forms of tennis for a wide range of impairment groups. This includes training for coaches, adaptive equipment, lesson plans and the opportunity to apply for some small grants to get programmes started.
- Education – [LTA Youth Schools](#) – this is an offer open to all schools to do online training for teachers and receive a £250.00 voucher for equipment or using a coach.
- Community- [SERVES](#) – a sport for education programme focused on low-income groups. This include equipment bag and lesson plans and way to adapt tennis to be played in non-tennis spaces such as a community hall or religious building.

- Qualified & Accredited coaches – [LTA Find a Coach](#) – The project proposes advertising and recruiting a coach from the local area to work and deliver on the parks. The coach would meet minimum standards of qualification and safeguarding and be recruited based on having a community minded experiences and philosophy.
- Open Days – [Big Tennis Weekend](#) – This product is marketing resources that helps support an event or open day at the courts. It is free to the user.
- [Tennis For Free](#) – is a weekly programme run by a coach or activator that welcome people to the courts and try tennis for the first time. Equipment is supplied and courts set out with ages standards and different size rackets and ball to help people try tennis at a level comfortable for them.
- [Competition - Local Tennis Leagues](#) – whilst not the main driver for people who play tennis in parks overall, this product has been created for those players who do want to try competitions in a park and meet people to play against of a similar standard. Run by the LTA competitions team, leagues run year-round and usually have several groups of 5 people playing against each other in self-arranged matches at an equivalent level of play.

Teignbridge Council, with support from the LTA would be able to use these products as required to engage the community to activate the courts post launch. For example, a school could be invited to use the courts as part of the school taking up the training and £250.00 voucher provided by LTA Youth Schools. A local community group could use LTA SERVES in a community hall before being offered some court time in the parks to try tennis on a full-size court.

**5.5** Aspects of free tennis are important to establish as a criterion for the LTA investment and a TDC target so that all members of the community can access tennis in some form, without price being a barrier.

**5.6** Free and concessionary pricing can be provided by using the booking software. This can be managed using the booking software, with the customer providing some evidence of being on a form of income support. (See 1.9)

**5.7** It has been found in other projects that the barriers to participate in tennis can be multi-faceted and not solely based on price.

**5.8** In several other project examples, it has been found that ‘take up’ of facilitated / activated sessions has far greater impact on attracting people to play tennis from low-income communities, than simply offering free access.

**5.9** The reasoning behind this is multi layered but includes areas such as a person from that community welcoming people to the courts and the provision of rackets and balls and creating an informal environment.

**5.10** Projects vary from area to area. It is important to consider how some free tennis may be integrated such that all communities in Teignbridge can have an opportunity to access the tennis courts.

**5.11** We would work in collaboration with Leisure Services for cross selling and membership incentives. For example: two weeks free tennis when taking out annual leisure membership during an agreed promotion period. The project will remain a stand-alone software management system. We would also work closely with our colleagues in Teignbridge Community and Volunteer Services to ensure appropriate messaging to all communities. (See 5.6)

## 6. Timeline

Once on site we expect works to be around 10 -12 weeks and need to factor in how the contractor works with the four sites across the district and the travel and logistical issues this presents. We hope the contractor can start the works in the spring with launch subsequently. Beyond that the standard obligation period for retaining the tennis courts is 15 years.

**6.1** From officer perspective once the capitol phase is delivered the role reverts to oversight and management of the system for the public to enjoy (termed operator), marketing and promotion and managing the funds created for future court refurbishments.

### 6.2 Initial phases. Dates TBC

Contractors commence / Mobilisation period	April 2023
Recruit coaches	April – May 2023
Marketing and Promotion	April - Oct
Contractors Completion	July 2023
Test period into soft launch	June – July 2023
Formal launch – Activity programme & engagement commences	July – August 2023

**6.3 Ongoing tasks.** Once investment has taken place, the installation of booking and access systems requires Green Spaces dept to manage it. Whilst the systems process automatic payment and booking & issuing of codes to minimise customer contact, there are ongoing tasks to complete by Green Spaces and Grounds Maintenance:

- Marketing and promotion to encourage use e.g., social media posts.
- Minor maintenance of the courts e.g., periodic checks, sweeping leaves, rubbish, or debris.
- Monitoring and evaluation – reports on income, bookings, and unique users.
- Customer support – whilst low, once the project is up and running a contact point will be needed for any issues or reports from court users.
- Liaison with coaches, community groups to help courts to be activated to the wider community.

- Financial management – monitoring income and expenditure and setting aside funds for maintenance work.
- Engagement with local LTA officers to maximise offer to the public, court usage and income generation.
- Ensuring safeguarding standards are maintained at the courts.

## **7. Implications, Risk Management and Climate Change Impact.**

### **7.1 Financial implications**

See section 4 page 7. On average the project delivers a small surplus to the Council.

### **7.2 Risk Assessment**

A recent review highlighted the condition of the existing courts could create a potential negative reputational risk, and therefore have a significant impact on maintenance budgets going forward.

- Lack of maintenance exposing the council to increased accident reports, complaints, and civil claims.
- Without this investment the delivery of the project to refurbish council owned courts will not be possible.
- Lack of income due to low usage would impact on the accumulation of the sinking fund used for ongoing maintenance.

### **7.3 Environmental/Climate Change Impact**

- Good quality provision of sports facilities in the heart of communities reducing the need to travel further afield to access physical activity. By providing high quality tennis facilities an offer in easy walking / cycling distance of the community is established, reducing the need to use the car to access facilities further afield.
- As a result, high quality facilities for tennis on Teignbridge residents doorsteps contributes to the reduction in carbon footprint created by car travel to better facilities further afield.

### **Alternative Options**

- Continue with the courts as they are and accept that soon Forde Park and Duckponds will need significant investment to ensure they remain a usable and safe asset. Without such investment it is likely they will need to be closed on safety grounds. Whilst Bakers and The Den are in better condition now – these facilities will also decline to a state where capital investment is required to keep them usable in the future.

- Whilst the council has identified £104,475.00, this is only 42.7% of the costs required to refurbish the courts that were identified by independent technical surveys. There are no other current funding opportunities identified for the remaining 57.3% (£139,781.00) cost of refurbishing the tennis courts to the standard they have been highlighted to require.

## **Conclusion**

- There is sufficient budget from Section 106 contributions to add to the offer from the LTA and be able to refurbish the tennis courts to a high standard in line with the survey results.
- The proposal represents a very positive opportunity to enhance tennis court provision for 15 years as per funding obligation to LTA. There are no further costs identified outside of those accounted for in the sinking fund and operational costs in section 4.
- Provision of good quality of tennis courts across all council owned sites by developing and operating them in a more commercial way, while maintaining an element of free tennis and concession pricing to ensure all parts of the community have access
- Improved quality courts enhance opportunity and attract increased physical activity participation in communities.
- Provision for grass roots sports participation growth
- Builds on the scoping exercises to understand the challenges and opportunities to maintain tennis courts in a 'fit to play' state for the future.
- Use of local contractors encourages local economic sustainability and growth.