

Introduction to Barton Tennis Club

Welcome to Barton Tennis Club (officially named 'Barton Lawn Tennis Club'), a small but enthusiastic (and very friendly) club based at Holland Sports Club, a ground we share with cricket, football, rugby, netball and tug-of-war clubs.

There has been a tennis club in Barton since the 1920's. We moved to the current site in 1960 on which Holland Sports has changing facilities, a clubhouse with bar that is currently open every evening except Mondays, and in the afternoons at weekends as well.

Tennis facilities

The Tennis Club owns two tarmac courts. We also have use of the three astroturf courts adjacent to our courts which are owned by Holland Sports and which we have to share with other users. This surface is known as the 'Multi Use Games Area' or 'MUGA' and was upgraded to astroturf in 2019. Holland Sports hires out this facility but the Tennis Club has an arrangement that allows our members to use the MUGA whenever it's not in use by others but only when our own courts are full. This is known as the 'overflow' facility and is designed to allow Club members to play if the MUGA is empty whilst also ensuring that Holland Sports retains the right to hire it to other users. The Tennis Club currently hires the MUGA on Sunday mornings between 10:00am and 12:00pm (throughout the year) and Wednesday evenings from 7:00pm (summer only) for social sessions so that there is no competition from other users at those times.

Opportunities to play

Your membership fee allows you to play tennis throughout the year at no additional cost and subject to just a few restrictions as follows:

- Social tennis takes precedence during the Sunday morning and Wednesday evening hire. Everybody is welcome to join these sessions (more on this below) but private matches have to take the chance that there are free courts during these times.
- Team matches also take precedence. Barton runs eight league teams (see below) which normally play approximately 46-52 home matches between them on evenings between April and September. Matches take up both club courts so other games can only be played if the MUGA surface is free.
- For certain types of coaching the Club coach has precedence in booking the Club courts.

Other than the above, members are free to play whenever they wish. The courts have lights for evening games which are controlled by the ClubSpark system (the lights come on automatically at set times). The Club pays an annual fee to Holland Sports for use of these lights so, unlike most other tennis clubs, there is no charge to individual members.

Holland Sports Club

Potters Way, Barton under Needwood, Burton on Trent DE13 8BB



The gates to both the courts and the MUGA are automated and linked to the ClubSpark booking system (see below).

In addition, there are combination locks on the rear gate (the one that gives on to the rugby field) and on the gate from the club courts to the MUGA. Although most members rarely need to use these gates, the codes are the same as the code to the keybox for the tennis shed (next to the court). As a member you are entitled to know these codes but please keep this information confidential. Please ensure that every gate (and the shed) is locked if you are last to leave the courts.

For security purposes the codes are changed periodically.

Booking

The Club has adopted an online service, ClubSpark, to manage bookings. A separate document explaining this procedure is issued to all new members (and is also available under the 'Club Rules' tab of the Club's ClubSpark-hosted website).

In summary, to book courts members must be registered with ClubSpark which issues a unique PIN code to each user. You use that code to access the courts for each of the slots you book.

As noted above, ClubSpark also automatically switches on the lights at pre-set times.

To ensure fair access for all members, there are restrictions on the number of bookings that individuals can make and how far ahead bookings can be made. Priority is also given to social tennis, team matches, and some types of coaching. These rules are set out in more detail in the court booking procedures mentioned above.

The MUGA is generally free during the day so there is rarely problem with court availability at those times, but the MUGA is used by other sports on many evenings so tennis is restricted to the two club courts and we need to be considerate to other members:

- Please vacate a court if you have reached the end of your booked slot and there are others waiting with no other courts available.
- Conversely, if a game is still playing on a court when you arrive, please use another court if one is available rather than insist that other players move.

Holland Sports Club

Potters Way, Barton under Needwood, Burton on Trent DE13 8BB



Social tennis

Social tennis is on Sunday mornings between 10:00am and 12:00pm and Wednesday evenings from 7:00pm. Everyone, regardless of standard, is welcome and, indeed, encouraged to attend. There is no need to book in advance; just turn up if you fancy a game. It is a great way for new members to meet others. The play is informal and fun. We generally play a series of five-game doubles matches (typically 15-20 minutes each) with players mixing up after each match. Numbers attending vary. Sunny summer Sunday mornings can attract 20 or more people but even on wet, windy Wednesday evenings there is usually a small group of diehards who turn out for a game.

Social tennis usually ends with a trip to the Holland Sports bar.

The Club also holds various social events such as 'American' tournaments during the summer. We also host the occasional barbecue, quiz nights and a formal annual dinner at a local venue.

In addition to social tennis organised by the Club, there are various informal groups arranged around WhatsApp messaging. Most of these groups meet at regular times and many are on the lookout for new members either as cover or to expand the size of the groups. The best way to become involved is to attend the Club's social tennis sessions and start asking around!

Competitive tennis

The Club runs three mens', three ladies' and two mixed teams in the Burton League. We are always on the lookout for players who want to play competitively and there is ample opportunity for enthusiasts to play in matches. The number of teams in each division varies but is typically six or seven which (normally) equates to 5-6 home games each season and the same number of away fixtures. Each team has to put out two pairs per match.

In the past the league has required the home team to provide a meal after the match however, this obligation has been removed for the 2022 season and, if any post-match socialising does take place, it will likely be confined to drinks in the bar.

Coaching

Our approved coaches are all connected with a business called MicroSports. Our principal contact at MicroSports (and main coach) is Rich Seabrook (richseabrook@gmail.com), phone 07825 548045 who has an excellent reputation. He would be very pleased to hear from you if you want to improve your tennis. MicroSports also runs a variety of multi-player coaching events and junior coaching camps during school holidays.

Holland Sports Club

Potters Way, Barton under Needwood, Burton on Trent DE13 8BB



Club Bye-laws

The Club 'Bye-laws' cover general matters including visitors, conduct, disciplinary procedures and grievances. These are posted on the on the 'Club Rules' tab of the ClubSpark website.

Safeguarding

Similarly, the Club has a detailed Safeguarding Policy to protect children and vulnerable adults. This document is also available on the on the 'Club Rules' tab of the ClubSpark website and it imposes obligations on members to report any relevant suspicions. Please read and understand this policy which includes the procedures for making a disclosure including the contacts to whom a referral should be made.

Club management

The Club is run by a committee elected each year at the Annual General Meeting which all members are encouraged to attend. Like most similar organisations, we are always keen for volunteers to help with the management.

The Club's governance procedures are set out in the 'Rules' posted on the 'Club Rules' tab of the ClubSpark website. The Club chairman is Andy Buttress who can be contacted on petmates@hotmail.com or 07815 955353.

Andy intends to send out occasional emails to keep members abreast of developments. These emails (as well as other posts) will also be published on the Club's FaceBook site: 'Barton under Needwood Tennis Club'

Please feel free to call Andy if you have any questions or suggestions.

May 2022