



JANUARY 2022 FACILITIES NOTICE

Dear Members,

I am excited to let you know that at our first meeting of the year on Monday 10th January, your committee unanimously agreed i) to replace and upgrade our current court surfaces with a Tiger Turf artificial grass surface and ii) replace our aging metal halide floodlights with new LED floodlights. We are hugely grateful to the Ightham Parish Council who have kindly agreed to provide a 50% match towards our renovation costs up to £25,000. We hope to complete the work by the summer, if not sooner, and will keep our membership apprised as we finalize plans with our suppliers.

Court Surface

Over the last few months we had a number of recommended firms examine our courts and the consensus was that, while they are still in good condition, they are starting to deteriorate and if we wanted either to resurface them or lay a new carpet-like surface on them we would be better doing that sooner than later. Also, in our recent survey of members, 37% said they would prefer artificial grass to the existing surface, 14% wanted to remain with tarmac, and the rest were happy to go with the committee's decision.

Someone local, who recently had a Tiger Turf court laid, kindly let the committee and a couple of other members play on the surface to try it out. Feedback from that plus visits to other clubs highlighted the following benefits and differences compared to our existing surface:

- It is softer and much easier on the joints, and therefore provides health benefits especially for those of us who are getting older
- It is less slippery, especially in wet and damp conditions, and is playable even when there is a frost, thereby extending the time when we can play safely (and the frosty weather of the last week has reinforced the desirability of this type of surface)
- The surface is true with a good bounce. Compared to our current courts it is perhaps a little quicker with a slightly lower bounce that would favour

those with a strong slice. Like all new surfaces, it takes a little time to adjust to it

- Compared to other surfaces such as artificial clay, it is easy to maintain, and it is expected to last for 10-15 years, similar to a hard court surface

The installation of the Tiger Turf will take up to a fortnight to complete and we will be communicating with the membership as soon as possible regarding the specific dates the courts will be out of commission.



Image source: Tiger Turf

Floodlighting

Our current floodlights were first installed in 2000 and most recently upgraded in 2011. They use metal halide bulbs which are nearing the end of their life. They are increasingly hard to replace for environmental reasons, and we estimate they have lost up to 50% of their original brightness as they deteriorate over time. We have visited a number of other clubs, and concluded that we should continue to provide lighting at the recommended LTA level for recreational play using 'cool white' LEDs. The benefits of this would be:

- Restoring the lighting to something like its original brightness
- A more even spread of light, with much lower light spillage outside the courts
- Lower running costs – we estimate the costs will be at least 50% lower
- A longer life, as LEDs should last for about 60,000 hours compared to the metal halides that last for about 15,000 hours

It has been 40 years since the inaugural meeting of a committee that was formed to look at the prospect of building hard courts on the recreation ground. The original courts were completed in the autumn of 1983 when the Club opened to members, and it has flourished ever since. These new facilities will be an exciting new phase in the history of our Club that we hope will be appreciated by our existing members and will help us attract new members.

However, we recognise that this is also quite a significant change and as noted earlier, it will take a little time for players to become used to a new surface. If you have any questions or concerns, please do contact me or any other members of the committee and we will do our best to answer them.

Finally, I would like to thank Maria Gostynska and Mike Lehan for their magnificent effort in getting us to this stage. They have spent many hours researching court surfaces and lighting, meeting vendors and visiting other clubs. We are very grateful to them for their hard work.

Max Robinson

Chairman, Ightham Tennis Club

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP – [YOUR ITC COMMITTEE](#)



Ightham Tennis Club

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