



## CLUB SUCCESS STORY

# OLD TOWN RECREATION GROUND, EASTBOURNE

A local authority Opening Up Tennis to their local community by outsourcing park tennis operations to a local Community Interest Company

## SET THE SCENE

Old Town Recreation Ground is a four-court park tennis site based in Eastbourne, East Sussex. Eastbourne has a population of circa 105,000 people with a total of five parks tennis venues.

In 2015 the site received investment from Eastbourne Borough Council and the LTA to improve court surfaces and fencing but crucially a sustainable operational model was not found post-renovation, meaning the site soon began to fall into disrepair with minimal utilisation over five years.





# ACTIONS

- In 2020, Eastbourne Borough Council agreed an improved operational model which created a hybrid-approach between paid-for and free court bookings/activity.
- EBC ran an open tender process for which a local Community Interest Company (Old Town Hub CIC) consisting of a local coaching provider, members of the Friends of Old Town Rec group and the local ward councilor applied to operate the courts using a sustainable operational model that met the criteria of the tender process.
- A hybrid approach to operation was established which provided paid for opportunities such as:
  1. An annual household Season Ticket for £40 per year
  2. Pay & play court bookings from £5 per hour
  3. A wide range of coaching activity for juniors and adults
- There are also year-round free opportunities too, such as:
  1. Free weekly court booking slots
  2. Free weekly family coaching sessions, every Saturday
- An online booking system (via Clubspark management system) was implemented with two lite (battery operated) gate access systems to ensure a smooth customer journey to court and activity.



# MORE INFO

Find out more info and follow Old Town Recreation Ground using the links below:

 [oldtownhub](#)  [facebook.com/OldTownHub](#)



# RESULTS

- The venue exceeded their year one sustainability target (of 57) selling 105 season tickets with a total of 201 registered users under the annual household season ticket offer, this number continues to grow.
- Old Town Hub have accumulated a database of 402 unique users from 13 months of play, which includes season ticket holders or participants who have booked pay & play and free courts.
- The coaching programme, led by Set2Win coaching, has grown from 0 to 250 participants with a wide range of offers including LTA Youth, Cardio Tennis and junior holiday camps.
- A total of 58 attendees (27 households) have attend the free weekly family coaching offer and 95% have now signed up to the household season ticket offer.
- With the income generated from year one, Old Town Hub were able to re-invest the surplus monies into re-painting all four courts (see images) ensuring the courts continue to remain playable for the long term.
- Old Town Hub CIC have also now acquired a lease for a near-by ancillary building which they plan to convert into a café for the benefit of all park users including tennis players and parents.
- Old Town Hub was voted Tennis Sussex 'Parks & Community Venue of the Year 2022'.

# FOLLOW US FOR MORE

LTA, The National Tennis Centre  
100 Priory Lane, Roehampton  
London SW15 5JQ

T: 020 8487 7000  
E: [info@lta.org.uk](mailto:info@lta.org.uk)  
[www.lta.org.uk](http://www.lta.org.uk)

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