

CLUB SUCCESS STORIES

FIVE WELSH CLUBS SMASHING SUSTAINABILITY

Climate change, sustainability and the energy crisis are discussion points infiltrating UK tennis clubs and venues. Faced with rising energy costs, clubs may be concerned for their future viability as well as the planet's.

Now is the time to act, and progressive clubs in Wales are proving to be efficient in more ways than one! Stow Park LTC, Rhondda LTC, Swansea TC, Cowbridge LTC and Ruthin LTC have undertaken projects to improve energy efficiency and reduce environmental impact, leading to lower energy bills and improved member/player experience.



RESULTS

In 2023/24, club committees and associates investigated relevant grant schemes and submitted successful applications. Energy Saving Grants from Sport Wales enabled the clubs to implement the following:

Stow Park Lawn Tennis Club
£25,000 towards energy efficient windows and doors, LED lighting and a new heating system.

Rhondda Lawn Tennis Club
£22,569 to install solar panels.

Swansea Tennis Centre
£25,000 to install LED lights with motion sensors throughout the building.

Cowbridge Lawn Tennis Club
£2,261 to install a contactless Intec reader system that allows club members to pay for the court floodlights by debit or credit card, preventing unnecessary floodlight use.

LOWER BILLS, HIGHER ENGAGEMENT

Sustainability projects have significant return on investment (ROI). By reducing energy consumption and bills, clubs can spend their budget on more profitable and exciting initiatives.

Savings can be passed onto members, reducing membership fees and making tennis more accessible. Improvements such as high-performance floodlights raise the club's profile in terms of sustainability and tennis provision.



The club was concerned that big electricity price rises had made winter tennis too expensive for some members, but ours is a year-round club. Replacing lights on six courts was beyond our resources, so grant funding was critical.

With four 10m posts per court, achieving uniform light distribution is difficult, and on a preliminary trial we obtained less than 30% of LTA recommended light levels. With our new lights we were able to meet LTA specification, with a 64% reduction in power consumption and reduced glare. The warm 2700K light meets Dark Skies requirements and has proved popular with players. Members now enjoy affordable tennis with better lighting, and we know our impact on the environment has been reduced so everyone benefits. Many thanks to everyone involved.

Steve Blunt – Chair, Ruthin LTC

RESULTS

Ruthin LTC sourced new lights with four key features:

- **Low light spill** to reduce ambient light around the courts
- **Low temperature light spectrum** (less impact on insects and bats)
- **Less than 38% of the power consumption** of the old lights to improve carbon footprint and running costs
- **High-performance lighting**, within LTA specifications to allow competitive tennis.

Part of the Dark Skies project, coordinated by Gwenno Jones, Denbighshire Countryside Project Officer, the lights were largely funded by the Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm Grant fund.

Rod Bowden coordinated the grant application on behalf of the LCACIO.



TAKE ACTION

These proactive Welsh clubs have demonstrated how energy costs can be managed and reduced by exploring grant/funding opportunities.

A top tip is to appoint a person or team in your club community to research potential funding. Local councils, energy charities, utility companies, community energy projects, local businesses with strong CSR (corporate and social responsibility), government grants and private trusts are great starting points. Maximise all contacts and influencers you may have in your community – ask around.

ENERGY SAVING IDEAS TO CONSIDER

- Solar panels
- Improving insulation, heating and hot water systems
- Energy efficient LED lighting and motion sensors
- Sustainable water sourcing, such as recycling rainwater



Environmental sustainability is a strategic priority for Tennis Wales, and we are delighted to see the progress our venues are making. Massive congratulations to Cowbridge, Rhondda, Ruthin, Stow Park and Swansea Tennis Centre for their commitment and achievements.

It is crucial that our sport takes responsibility for its environmental impact, but the clubs highlighted have also experienced economic benefits through their efforts. Developments such as LED floodlight upgrades and solar panel installation enable them to future-proof themselves in more ways than one. We have commenced work on our first environmental sustainability plan for Welsh Tennis which we hope to complete and launch in early 2025 to help all clubs navigate sustainability.

Jamie Clewer, Head of Participation, Tennis Wales

The LTA is committed to securing a lasting future for tennis in Britain.

As part of this, a range of resources and support have been developed for tennis venues, which are available through our [Venue Support Toolkit](#).