



CLUB SUCCESS STORY

COMMITTED TO CONSERVATION

How Hoole is making a difference in the community with a green agenda

Hoole LTC, Chester

BACKGROUND

Hoole LTC is based in Mickle Trafford, Chester, and won LTA Club of the Year in 2020. Innovative and progressive, the club built a new venue and clubhouse through the sale of their previous site, LTA loans and club funds. Hoole opens up tennis to a range of ages and abilities and takes pride in making a positive impact on the wider community. Establishing a 'green agenda' is now one of their strategic priorities, and various projects are already making a difference in the community.



TOP TIPS FOR CLUBS

Building and maintaining positive links with the local community is key. Hoole has joined forces with many local 'green' bodies to advance the club's environmental agenda, so consider joining yours or starting one!

- Hoole is a member of their local neighbourhood plan. This nationwide initiative is a new way for communities to have a say in the future of the places where they live and work. Housing, business and leisure are key priorities for development
- Hoole is also a member of the Greener group; variations of this network exist all over the UK where the community collaborates to discuss green initiatives.



PROJECTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- A tree planting programme to improve biodiversity, create a food source for existing and new wildlife species, and provide a local school and pre-school with a site for outdoor lessons. Hoole is working closely with Mersey Forest and has secured £4k in grants, planting 350 trees out of the target of 500 already. Increasing tree cover (especially in built-up areas) by 10% helps keep surface temperatures at present levels, despite climate change*
- Creation of a hedgerow barrier between the club and neighbouring houses, prioritising wildlife conservation. Originally part of the planning application for their site, the hedge serves as a thriving and attractive wildlife corridor
- As custodians of 1 ½ acres of ancient woodland which they help conserve, Hoole recently funded a bat survey to ensure local bat populations are unaffected by the club's presence and activities
- Development of a pleasant pathway through the woodland which is very popular with walkers and dog walkers. The woodland features a bug hotel, bird boxes and feeders and encourages social interaction between local neighbours (often bringing food to the bird feeders) and club members/officials. This is nurturing a real connection between the club and community
- The club donated a strip of land on the edge of the woodland to a member looking to grow vegetables. This modest allotment is helping non-playing members stay active outdoors.

*Source: Mersey Forest

TOP TIPS!

- Does environmental sustainability feature in your venue's strategy or plans? Is the topic discussed at your management committee meetings?
- Do you have a sub-committee focusing on your venues environmental impact?
- Do you have the skill set on your management committee? If not, consider some skills-based recruitment. It could already exist within your membership. Ask!
- What networks exist locally? Seek out local green groups via social media, your Local Authority or start your own!
- Join the **LTA Buying Group**, who could support you to significantly reduce your running costs, its free and is another excellent benefit of LTA Venue Registration.

WORKING TOWARDS A GREENER FUTURE

Always striving for continuous improvement, Hoole has the following plans in the pipeline:

- Switching to LED floodlighting on four courts as soon as possible. The club is currently exploring funding options, including Local Authority grants. Advantages include energy efficiency, lower costs, longer lifespan and reduced heat emissions
- Investigating alternative sources of energy, including solar panels and ground source heating
- After a fundraising hiatus due to Covid restrictions, the club is imminently opening their café to the community every weekend. Serving refreshments and food, there are plans for an open day in conjunction with celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.



Hoole is part of the green space in our village, and we feel it is our duty to conserve it and encourage the community to enjoy it, whilst building people's connection with the club. I believe that everybody can do something positive, however big or small a project, at their club too."

Anthony Wilding,
Chair, Hoole LTC

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