

Rolvenden Parish Council APM – April 2025

Rolvenden Lawn Tennis Club – Update

Rolvenden Lawn Tennis Club has been an integral part of the village community for at least 97 years. While the exact founding date is unknown, the first recorded competition took place in 1928. The original trophy from that event is still proudly displayed in the clubhouse today. It's likely the club was active even before that time.

Originally starting with just a single grass court, the club has evolved over the years into its current form, featuring two hard courts. Despite this change, the word "Lawn" remains in the club's name as a nod to its historic roots. The most recent and significant improvement has been the construction of a new clubhouse, made possible through generous contributions from the R.W.M.T., the Basil Russell Trust, and a small allocation from Section 106 funds.

Like many community sports clubs, Rolvenden LTC is owned by its members. It operates through members' subscriptions, which fund ongoing maintenance and allow for future development. While the new clubhouse is a huge step forward, it has introduced additional operational costs such as building insurance, electricity, water, and wastewater services.

Membership fees cover these running costs, as well as regular court maintenance to ensure safety and playability. Any surplus funds are added to club reserves to help support larger capital projects. For example, the perimeter fencing on the lower court will soon need replacement, and court resurfacing will eventually be necessary—both of which exceed annual income from subscriptions. For such projects, the club typically seeks additional funding through grants, donations, or interest-free loans. A recent request has been submitted to the Parish Council to access any remaining Section 106 funds to support these improvements.

The club primarily serves residents from Rolvenden and nearby areas. It's a small, friendly club that welcomes new members of all ages and abilities—including beginners. Open club sessions are held on Monday afternoons, and Wednesday and Saturday mornings. All are welcome to come along and give it a go.

We host two BBQ & Fun Days each year. The next one will be held on Saturday May 17th and is open to both members and non-members. Everyone is welcome—whether you're playing or just coming along to see what the club is about. There is a small fee for tournament players, but spectators can attend free of charge.

In response to the growing popularity of Pickleball in the village, we will soon be introducing four Pickleball courts on the top tennis court (nearest the clubhouse). These will initially be taped before being permanently marked. We hope this will help increase membership and meet rising demand for this popular sport.

Interestingly, our membership grew during the COVID years but has since returned to pre-pandemic levels—currently around 55 members.

Upcoming Priorities and Planned Projects

As funds allow, we are aiming to:

- Repaint and re-line the lower tennis court
- Mark out 4 Pickleball courts on the top court
- Replace the lower court perimeter fencing
- Install an electricity meter

Membership Costs

- Family: £140
- Individual: £70
- Junior: £10
- Junior + Parent (parent can only play with child): £20