

Our four courts were surrounded by 180 metres of chain-link fence - a few decades old, some of it rusted, some sections warped. In Spring 24, we spoke to Courtstall and Alphafence (based near Newport), and contracted the latter as Bernard gave a much more thorough and detailed quote having visited the site.

- We went for a major upgrade to last for a generation, involving replacing the entire perimeter with stronger twin wire fencing, adding a third gate, timber base boards and raising the height with netting in several areas. It required new posts all the way round, with deeper foundations.
- Cost was a little over £40k + VAT which we were able to fund out of reserves.
- We contracted them to work over the winter when courts are quieter. They began at the end of October 2024. Projected schedule was 4 weeks, but it ended up taking 7 weeks, due to the complexities of the layout of one end of the courts.
- Alphafence were diligent and cooperative, and ensured minimum disruption. They erected temporary fencing so we could play during works, and we didn't lose any tennis. We would recommend them.
- A couple of problems:
 - We had a complaint from a neighbour who owns the land adjoining the courts that the workmen had damaged his 'nature reserve'. We spoke to him and resolved amicably.
 - When we started playing, we discovered that balls could much more readily get through the twin wire fencing than the old chainlink, if they were struck hard directly at it (e.g. serving practice), and that the bounce off the fences was more random, resulting in more 'ball chaos' during busy club times.

This has been remedied by adding windbreak around along the fences (which was always the plan) and by adding a metre high run of chicken wire behind the windbreak, which reduces the random bounce.

- Inevitably there were complaints from members to begin with because of the bounce issues. But overall, we're very happy with the new fences: they're much more robust, more secure, higher and look great.



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