

'The Astleys' Today

S.B.C.I. moved to 'The Astleys' in 1921. The ground, purchased from Leonard Clay after various fund-raising efforts raised £2000, was placed in the ownership of 'Trustees of the Ellison Memorial School' in a deed dated 8 December 1922.

A further £500 was spent on perimeter fencing, laying a pitch and a pavilion – an ex-army (Nissen) hut purchased from Squires Gate – which was sited on the bottom boundary. Two tennis courts were added later.

Neglected for five years when the club, losing players to the forces, disbanded in 1941, it took a great deal of work to make it playable again in 1946.

Levelling work was carried out in the winter of 1959-60 at a cost of £300, a bulldozer pushing soil from the top to the bottom of the slope, 'smoothing out humps and hollows'.

To celebrate winning the Parish Cup in 1964, a timber pavilion was purchased with the aid of a £200 grant from the Department of Education and Science and sited on the top boundary.

A mains water supply was installed in 1984 and, a year later, an extension of two changing rooms and scoreboard was completed. In 1993 electricity mains were installed to the pavilion and – as a centenary commitment – the stone pavilion project was started.

The pavilion and three artificial practice pitches were completed in 1999 thanks to grants of £160 985 from the Lottery, £30 000 from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts and almost £40 000 raised by the club. The previous pavilion is still in use as the groundsman's garage.

Today facilities at the Astleys are as good as they have ever been, full vindication of the efforts of the club's dedicated and enterprising committee.