

CASE STUDY

MAKING YOUR LTA BIG TENNIS WEEKEND INCLUSIVE



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Did you know that approximately 20% of people in Britain have a long-standing disability or illness? This is a significant amount of people you could be promoting your LTA Big Tennis Weekends to in your local area!

A great way to promote your open days more inclusively is by communicating with local organisations that support people with a disability. For example, why not invite along your local special school or adult day care centre?

To help you find local organisations that support people with a disability, see below four routes to discovering what is local to you:

- Every local authority has an online tool called The Local Offer. Using this will give your club insight into which organisations support children and young people with a disability in your area.
- Take a look at the Charity Commission website to see which disability charities are local to your venue.
- Use search engines. By using keywords like 'disability', 'day care centres', 'special schools' and the area you are looking at will give you a whole host of local organisations you can start promoting your LTA Big Tennis Weekends to.
- Ask your club members about their professional or voluntary roles outside of the club. There could be a natural link!

Making those few extra steps to promote your BTW open days more widely could be the start of something completely new for your club. Or it could even help promote any disability specific sessions on your coaching programme already running. Either way, the LTA's Disability Development and Regional Teams are here to support! Drop us an email via disabilitytennis@lta.org.uk if you would like further support with how to make your LTA Big Tennis Weekends inclusive to people with a disability.

FIND OUT HOW GRANTHAM TENNIS CLUB MADE THEIR LTA BIG TENNIS WEEKENDS MORE INCLUSIVE:

WHAT WAS YOUR APPROACH TO ENGAGE WITH MORE DISABLED PEOPLE AT YOUR LTA BIG TENNIS WEEKENDS?

We went out to other disability groups within the community and invited them to the LTA Big Tennis Weekend. To do this we, researched what disability organisations were local to us and contacted (via email and phone calls) those we thought might be interested in trying out tennis. We also put posters up in doctor's surgeries and in the local hospital.

We also already have a number of disabled people at our club so we used these groups to help spread the word about the event. In some instances, we offered the organisations a free taster session on their premises before the event to overcome any initial anxieties about not being able to play tennis.

WHAT WERE YOU AIMING TO ACHIEVE THROUGH LINKING WITH THESE GROUPS/ORGANISATIONS?

The aim was to engage with more disabled people in the local community so they could enjoy the many benefits tennis brings to everyone at our club. We also see our approach to inclusion as a great opportunity to increase the number of people on our coaching programmes (mainstream and disability specific) and becoming members.

HOW DID IT LOOK ON COURT?

It looked great on court! We had people with various impairments taking part in inclusive tennis activity with non-disabled people and some activity specifically for disabled people where we thought it would be more appropriate for their ability level. We also made sure we had plenty of volunteers on the day to feed balls and support players 1-to-1 where necessary.

WHAT WAS THE IMPACT?

Overall, we had 12 disabled people attend whom we had never engaged with before. Of these, 4 are now playing regularly in our coaching programmes (mainstream and disability-specific). As a result, the individuals that have joined the coaching programme are now more active than they were and are looking at becoming members via our discounted membership package for people with a disability.

WHAT LESSONS DID YOU LEARN?

We wanted even more disabled people to attend our BTW open day, and I think if we had planned further in advance we could have engaged with more of the relevant local organisations and encouraged them to come along and take part.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THIS YEAR?

We are planning to do the same again this year, with some more advanced planning. We will also be targeting those organisations where we need growth on our disability specific programmes and ensuring we have enough volunteers on the day to support with the sessions.