



Press Release

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For immediate release

LTA to inspire, engage and open up tennis through British grass-court season

With the British grass-court season providing a shop-window to British tennis each summer, the major events season presents a significant opportunity to engage tennis and sports fans, but also the wider British public, and inspire them to become more involved in the sport.

The LTA is implementing a wide programme of activity across the summer's major events to ensure the legacy of each event extends beyond the action on court. Many areas of work will be on display at the 2023 major events, or activities planned in the wider communities surrounding event venues, particularly around the key themes of parks tennis, LTA Youth and the LTA Tennis Foundation.

More information on key activations can be found below:

Parks

The LTA is delivering £30million of LTA Tennis Foundation and UK Government investment to transform tennis courts across Britain. [Work is well underway](#) at parks across Great Britain, with hundreds of courts already refurbished, and many more scheduled to relaunch over the coming months. Activity is planned in conjunction with local authorities to celebrate the re-opening of park tennis courts that have received investment local to event venues with spectators encouraged to find their local park courts, pick up a racket and play. The draw for the cinch Championships was conducted at the recently completed Roehampton Playing Fields courts, with British No.1 **Cam Norrie** taking part in a Q&A and on-court coaching session with more than 20 local children.

LTA Youth

[LTA Youth](#) is the innovative junior programme created to help more children aged 4-18 enjoy playing tennis. The "Tennisables" mascots, six new colourful tennis ball characters, will be a constant present at events, with local schools attending all provided with resources to get even more kids of all ages playing tennis and having fun.

Each of the six Tennisables, **Ace**, **Slice**, **Spin**, **Dash**, **Smash** and **Bounce**, have a specific tennis component and individual personality trait. Bounce, who was born deaf will be voiced by actress, **Rose Ayling-Ellis**, known for her role in Eastenders and being the first deaf contestant on Strictly Come Dancing, which she won in 2021. 55,000 physical tennis balls designed as the six characters will be distributed to schoolchildren across the UK through our school outreach programme, supported by a six-episode YouTube series to teach children the basic skills of tennis.



The Schools Tennis Festival at the Rothesay Open Nottingham saw 2000 primary school children from 40 local schools attending the tournament, taking part in LTA Youth sessions with players and Tennisables mascots on hand to inspire and entertain. Similar activity will be replicated across the Rothesay Birmingham Classic and Rothesay International Eastbourne.

LTA Tennis Foundation

The LTA Tennis Foundation is the LTA's new tennis charity that partners with brilliant people and organisations to improve lives through tennis. Donations can help make this happen – people on site can donate via one tap or scan of a QR code, or those watching from home can visit the Foundation's website. The [LTA Tennis Foundation Charity Challenge](#), hosted on Sunday 18 June, saw a special exhibition hosted at the cinch Championships which featured some of the top singles and doubles players from the draws with proceeds donated to the Foundation. Over 200 tickets have also been provided to affiliated charity partners over the major events season.

Main areas of focus for the LTA:

Disability Tennis

The LTA's [Open Court](#) programme actively promotes and delivers opportunities for disabled people to get involved in tennis, partnered with and jointly funded by Sport England. In addition to wheelchair tennis, other disability specific disciplines are continuing to grow and develop, including learning disability tennis, visually impaired tennis and deaf tennis which will all be focused on at an event at the cinch Championships on Friday 23 June. Have-a-go sessions at Nottingham have run for many years, at which **Abbie Breakwell**, the current British No.3 female wheelchair tennis player, was first introduced to the sport.

LTA SERVES

[LTA SERVES](#) helps young people across Britain who might not normally play tennis get active and experience all the great benefits of the sport. There are over 495 LTA SERVES Venues across the country which see tennis delivered in lots of different places such as community centres, youth clubs and religious venues. Tickets have been provided to SERVES venues across our major events and a group of SERVES participants were treated to a behind-the-scenes experience at the Rothesay Classic Birmingham which included a meet and greet with **Venus Williams** and **Elena Svitolina**.

Friday Pride Days

Each Friday of our major tournaments will be dedicated '[Friday Pride Days](#)' raising awareness of LGBTQ+ communities and showing that tennis is a sport where everyone can feel accepted and welcomed. The Progress Pride flag will fly above centre courts across our events, while officials and ball kids will wear rainbow laces and wristbands on-court. For the first time this year, after agreement with the ATP, WTA and ITF, we are bringing more colour courtside, with umpires' chairs being decked with colour to support the days and give even more visibility to Pride.

Women and Girls

The LTA's [She Rallies](#) initiative aims to get more even women and girls involved in tennis. Activity is very closely linked with LTA Youth to encourage more girls to pick up a racket and stay in the sport. This is enhanced by the introduction of the [Prime Video LTA Youth Girls](#) programme which is training coaches to deliver beginner tennis courses developed specially designed for girls. This



year, the WTA celebrates its 50th anniversary, having been founded in London in June 1973. The occasion will be marked by the LTA at both the Rothesay Classic Birmingham and the cinch Championships. Targeted workshops for female coaches will also be run at Birmingham with attendees from LTA Coach Development Centres.

Environmental Sustainability

Sustainability is an important area of focus for the LTA. Whether it be the impact of extreme temperatures on our grass court events, or the risk of flooding that rising sea levels and severe weather pose for tennis venues around the country, it's vital that we act to secure a sustainable future for all. A number of measures have been introduced across our major events to minimise their environmental impact, further details can be [found here](#).

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For LTA media enquiries please contact:

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ABOUT THE LTA:

The LTA is the National Governing Body of tennis for Great Britain. We are here to govern and grow tennis, from grassroots participation through to the professional game. Our vision is "Tennis Opened Up" and we're on a mission to grow tennis by making it relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable. We work with schools, with volunteers, with coaches and with venues across the whole country. We also represent the interests of over 1,000,000 Members, men and women, girls and boys, playing on more than 23,000 courts. The LTA runs and supports a network of 11,500 approved tournaments for players of all ages, the four corner-stones of which are the premier grass-court events leading up to The Championships, Wimbledon: the Rothesay Open Nottingham, the Rothesay Classic Birmingham, the cinch Championships (at The Queen's Club, London) and the Rothesay International Eastbourne. For further information about the LTA and tennis in Britain, visit www.lta.org.uk or follow us on Twitter @the_LTA.

