



OUR PICKLEBALL JOURNEY: FROM LAUNCH TO A THRIVING PICKLEBALL COMMUNITY

BACKGROUND

Tunbridge Wells Lawn Tennis Club introduced Pickleball in May 2024, adding yellow lines to existing tarmac courts and equipping them with nets and balls.

They attracted immediate attention and quickly positioned Pickleball as a fresh, exciting complement to their established tennis programme.

TWLTC have from day one provided structured and accessible coaching, setting up coach-led mix-in sessions every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings—tailored for all skill levels, from beginners to experienced players.

By June, the club expanded into an indoor weekly session at Bennett Memorial Diocesan School on Mondays, offering year-round playing opportunities.

Sessions are priced at just £6–8 for members and £8–10 for non members—a smart, competitive pricing model.



Identifying a gap in court usage, our new Head Coach Adam Swan and I explored introducing Pickleball.

After extensive research, we brought in Darryl Curcher, a Level 1 Pickleball England Coach, who has been instrumental in launching and growing the programme. Darryl is now working towards his Level 2 qualification to expand our offer to intermediate players and beyond.

Irene Clark, Club Manager

From my perspective as Head Coach, introducing Pickleball into our programme was a straightforward and strategic decision. It opened the door to a more diverse audience, including those who may not have had access to tennis or who could no longer play it.

Adam Swan, Head Coach



MEMBERSHIP INNOVATION

TWLTC integrated Pickleball into its existing tennis membership at no extra cost, while also introducing a Pickleball Only membership, priced at £85/year, with the following benefits:

- Free court booking (board court 4) up to 5 days ahead
- £2 discount per group session
- Access to private lessons
- DUPR rating system membership
- Entry into club tournaments and leagues
- Private WhatsApp group + social events

Equipment rental (paddles for £3, balls sold at the bar) makes drop-in play easy and removes barriers to entry

Key Lessons and Takeaways

Leverage existing courts - saves cost and accelerates your launch

Coach-led and inclusive sessions – balance of development and fun

Membership and Pay & play options – caters for diverse needs and budgets

Social Engagement – build a community and aids retention



CLUB CULTURE & COMMUNITY

TWLTC developed inclusive social events, a members-only WhatsApp group, and integrated leagues to encourage camaraderie and regular play.

Pickleball courts now complement tennis courts seamlessly, maintaining dual-use without disrupting tennis schedules.

Through these measures, TWLTC has cultivated an energetic, cross-generational Pickleball community that supports both recreational and competitive play.

500

**PLAYERS
THROUGH THE
PROGRAMME IN
THE FIRST
YEAR!!!!**

THE FUTURE

TWLTC will continue to actively promote their entry-level Pickleball sessions to engage the local community, while simultaneously supporting the development of existing players.

By nurturing skills and encouraging progression through social play, competition, and tournaments, the club aims to create a sustainable Pickleball environment that balances welcoming new participants, retaining current members, and fostering long-term player development.

To follow Tunbridge Well's Pickleball journey, you can follow their pages [here](#):

PICKLEBALL | TUNBRIDGE WELLS LAWN TENNIS CLUB

LTA SUPPORT

The LTA is committed to securing a lasting future for tennis in Britain.

As part of this, a range of resources and support have been developed for tennis venues, which are available through our [Venue Support Toolkit](#).

For more information related to the principles of court utilisation and programming visit the LTA venue support toolkit [here](#).



We are actively introducing this new sport into schools across Kent for 2025 and other counties in the future.

Our aim by the end of 2027 is to have Pickleball in all schools in Kent and East Sussex and establish this in mainstream PE lessons.

Darryl Curcher

Director, Kent Pickleball Coaching

