



Press Release

For immediate release

TENNIS FOR KIDS RETURNS

**20,000 FREE COURSES AVAILABLE AS SIGN-UPS OPEN FOR THE SECOND
YEAR OF LTA TENNIS FOR KIDS INITIATIVE**

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) today opened sign-ups for Tennis for Kids 2017 – the second year of its biggest ever grass roots initiative, in partnership with Highland Spring.

After a hugely successful first year, the initiative will be bigger and better in 2017 with 20,000 free courses and rackets available to children aged five to eight years old all over the United Kingdom.

The *Tennis for Kids* initiative in 2016 aimed to inspire 10,000 children aged 5-8 to pick up a racket and play tennis for the first time. It was so successful that the 10,000 places were filled within a week, prompting the LTA to release a further 5,000 places. The fun, six week course also resulted in almost half of those who took part continuing to play after completing the lessons.

The course is aimed at children who have never played before, so focuses on fun and getting kids active, combining basic hand eye co-ordination with rudimentary tennis skills. Beyond the practical side of the sport, the sessions will be teaching children how to work with a partner, become a valuable member of a team and through our partnership with Highland Spring, establish healthy hydration habits – all in a fun and relaxed environment. Parents are also encouraged to join for the final session when 20,000 children will be gifted their first racket.

Tennis for Kids was launched after the historic victory of the Davis Cup team in 2015 to establish greater accessibility into tennis, with a view to creating a new generation of tennis loving children. The free six-week course is led by 1,000 specially trained coaches, who have been trained at sixteen sessions all over the UK by Davis Cup captain Leon Smith, former British number one's Greg Rusedski and Annabel Croft,



and 2016 Wimbledon Wheelchair Doubles champion Alfie Hewett. Local venues are in charge of their own timings, but courses will be running from April all the way through the summer.

To get involved in *Tennis for Kids*, parents can simply sign their kids up at their closest venue at: www.lta.org.uk/tennisforkids

Annabel Croft, Former British No.1, comments: “*It is fantastic that the Tennis for Kids initiative is back bigger and better for its second year. As a parent myself, seeing more and more children taking to the courts is great, and it is inspiring to see them enjoying tennis, having fun, learning a new skill and getting active from such a young age. Programmes such as this one are a brilliant way of encouraging children to pick up a racket for the first time, and fulfil the legacy of our current British Tennis talent.*”

Alastair Marks, LTA Director of Participation, adds: “*Following the fantastic success of Tennis for Kids in 2016 we’re thrilled to bring it back for a second year, even bigger and better. We were bowled over with the results last year and wanted to build on the legacy and provide even more children across the country the opportunity to pick up a racket and have fun playing tennis. Initiatives such as this are so important in introducing children to a sport they might not necessarily have tried and helping to drive increased participation in our sport. We’ve been working with our brilliant Tennis For Kids coaches to make sure we’re delivering a programme that engages, excites and inspires the kids and look forward to welcome the class of 2017 to the game we all love.*”

Les Montgomery, Chief Executive, Highland Spring, adds: “*Highland Spring is passionate about encouraging as many families as possible to get active, have some fun and make healthy hydration choices – helping them stay naturally hydrated throughout the day. That’s what our partnership with the LTA is all about. The Tennis for Kids initiative will continue to bring more children into tennis and empower families to get the water habit at the same time. We’re excited to see the results that year two will bring.*”

At the heart of the initiative is a commitment to encourage and inspire young people and their parents to take part in a sport that is sociable, accessible and affordable and can also be enjoyed throughout their lifetime.

Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDrWee1xW6w&feature=youtu.be> to watch the class of 2016 tell their stories of Tennis for Kids.

- Ends -

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Notes to Editors

About The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the National Governing Body for tennis in Great Britain, responsible for developing and promoting the sport with a mission to get more people playing tennis more often. It does this under the consumer brand of **British Tennis**, by working with a broad range of partners and over 25,000 volunteers, to grow the game in communities, clubs and schools. The LTA represents the interests of over 350,000 British Tennis Members, men and women, girls and boys across the country, 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 corner-stones of which are five grass court pro events leading up to Wimbledon, held in Nottingham (ATP & WTA), Birmingham (WTA), Queen's Club-London (ATP) and Eastbourne (WTA), all of which are title sponsored by Aegon, our lead Partner who is helping transform the sport in this country. The LTA works in partnership with its charitable entity, the Tennis Foundation, to provide a tennis provision for more than 20,000 schools, disadvantaged youth as well as promoting tennis as an inclusive sport for anyone with a disability. For further information about the LTA and British Tennis, and to review the British Tennis strategy for 2015 – 2018 visit www.lta.org.uk or follow us on Twitter @BritishTennis.

About Highland Spring Group

Highland Spring Group, parent company of the Highland Spring brand, is the leading producer of bottled water to the UK market. One in every five litres of bottled water consumed in the UK is produced by Highland Spring Group¹. The Highland Spring brand has been an active supporter of British tennis from grassroots to the professional ranks for 10 years and the partnership with the LTA provides us with the ideal platform to promote our commitment to healthy hydration. For further information visit HighlandSpring.com or follow us on Twitter @Highland_Spring.
