

**CLUB SUCCESS STORY**

# **'ENGAGING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WITH EASY ACCESS TO FANTASTIC TENNIS'**

*Cowbridge Tennis Club*

TENNIS WALES CYMRU





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Cowbridge Tennis Club is registered to Tennis Wales and LTA, located in the tennis section of Cowbridge & District Athletic Club. Tennis has been played on the site since the early 1900s and club activities run all year round including social and competitive tennis for all ages and standards.

## CLUB VISION

Cowbridge Tennis Club has defined goals to achieve its growth strategy:

- **Reach** – to grow from 175 to 300 members
- **Inclusion** – to ensure accessibility for anyone who wants to play tennis
- **Participation** – to make playing tennis easy and fun
- **Improvement** – to foster an ethos of wanting to improve amongst all players
- **Social** – to offer a welcoming off-court environment and programme

In order to achieve these goals, Cowbridge Tennis Club has focused on raising its profile and programme in the local community.



## ACTIVITIES

With the emphasis on participation, the club held two successful Nature Valley Big Tennis Weekend open days in the summer. It has also developed a coaching programme to attract families, with a range of memberships including tasters and winter offers. The marketing plan was developed by a community/club member who is a marketer, promoting tennis online and in local media.

Children’s tennis camps have been held during the holidays at Easter, May and in the summer, typically attracting over 100 children.

With a grant from the Vale of Glamorgan Council, the club installed a code access gate so that courts can be booked online by non-members at off-peak times for a low cost pay & play option. They also developed new signage and branding for the club to attract people who walk past daily, promoting the pay & play initiative with a clear call to action.

# SUCCESSES

The club has seen people take up pay & play, trying tennis through TFK, and then progressing and joining as family members, a category that they were keen to develop.

- Club membership has grown from 174 to 245 in 12 months (+40%) with the junior membership doubling in 18 months
- Revenue has grown significantly from the pay & play, membership and coaching offer which appeals to more local people than membership alone

At both Nature Valley Big Tennis Weekends held in May and July, the club promoted membership offers and captured attendee data via the GBTW app with iPads loaned by Tennis Wales. As a result, they filled two Tennis for Kids courses (plus a waiting list!) and many of these children subsequently took out club membership. The adult take-up of coaching has also been encouraging.

Cardio tennis proved so popular during the open days that the club now runs a successful weekly cardio session.

The access gate and online booking system was rated the most appreciated recent improvement by the club community. Over four months, 84 bookings have generated income for the club when courts would otherwise be idle.



*“We have been made very welcome by Cowbridge Tennis Club and amongst the other beginners and improvers I have found some great new friends in my town.”*

Local Cowbridge resident

# TOP TIPS for Open Days

- Organise a series of on-court activities such as TFK activities for children and cardio tennis, TennisXpress, serve speed challenge and ITN challenge for adults
- Advertise widely including social media, posters, ClubSpark website and local paper, radio and community events. Email invitations to current members encouraging them to bring friends
- Supply iPads/tablets for volunteers so they can use the GBTW app to record visitor details
- Promote membership offers
- Sell refreshments to raise extra funds
- Ensure there are plenty of volunteers to engage with visitors, including a first aider
- Optimise outdoor branding so locals know there is a great tennis club on their doorstep!

# 40%

## MEMBERSHIP INCREASE

in just 12 months

## FOLLOW US FOR MORE

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