

Seniors Tennis Programme 2017

Venue Experience and Impact of the programme on Participation



(The City of Peterborough Tennis Club)

Seniors Tennis Programme Report November 2017

Introduction

This year Seniors Tennis GB in partnership with the LTA financially supported over 80 venues in organising a 'Seniors' Tennis Programme', an increase from 50 venues last year. The programme, now in its third year, is aimed at 35+ year olds in order to drive participation. Venues are able to apply for a grant for which they develop a plan that focuses on encouraging take-up of tennis by adults over the age of 35. This year 140 applications were received (up from 105 last year) with £23,600 being awarded to help them put their plans into action. Positively, this year applications were received from across England, Scotland and Wales from nearly all Counties (33). A number of Counties also assisted with funding.

Venue Experience

Below is a list of the venues that took part and responded to the survey, 71 (up from 40 last year):

Alderney Tennis Club	Knighton Tennis Centre
Aslockton Tennis Club	La Mare Tennis Club, Guernsey
Backwell Tennis Club	Lanchester Lawn Tennis Club
Billesley Indoor Tennis Centre	Lee-on-the-Solent Tennis Club
Bohemians Tennis Club, Newcastle Upon Tyne	lilleshall Village Tennis Club
Boston Spa Tennis Club & Tadcaster Tennis Club	Long Marston Tennis Club
Bramhall Queensgate TC	Loughborough Lawn Tennis Club
Bromley tennis centre	Madley Tennis Club Herefordshire
Cambourne tennis club	Manydown Tennis
Caunton Tennis Club	Milford Tennis and Squash Club
Cawood Tennis Club	Montpellier Gardens
Chard tennis club	Newman Collard tennis Club
Chatsworth tennis club	Nottingham Tennis Centre
Church Broughton Tennis Club	Ormskirk Tennis Club
Copmanthorpe Tennis Club	Papworth Tennis Club
Cromer Lawn Tennis & Squash Club	Perran Tennis
Cuddington and Sandiway Tenins Club	Plympton Lawn Tennis Club
Downton Tennis Club	Port Sunlight LTC
Droitwich Tennis Club	Raskelf Tennis Club
East Glos Tennis Club	Riding Mill Tennis Club
Elstree Lawn Tennis Club	Riverside Tennis Club, Salisbury
Farnham Common Tennis Club	Rothbury Lawn Tennis Club
Girton Tennis Club	Sale Tennis Club
Glenrothes Tennis Club	Shotley & Benfieldside Tennis Club
Goodrich Tennis Club	Sodbury Tennis Club
Grayshott Tennis Club	South Petherton Tennis Club
Great Sankey Leisure Center	Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre
Haslingfield Lawn Tennis Club	Stourbridge Lawn Tennis and Squash Club
Hemingfords LTC	Sundridge Park Tennis Club
Hereford Squash Tennis & Racketball Club	The City of Peterborough Tennis Club
Hill Lane Tennis Club, Plymouth	The Deanes Sports Centre/LTC
Huntingdon Tennis Club	Trowbridge Westbourne Tennis Club - Wiltshire
Hythe LTC	West Kilbride tennis club

Kings Hill Community Tennis Club
Kirkhill Lawn Tennis Club
Knebworth Tennis Club

Wollaton Village Tennis Club
Woodbridge Tennis Club

How venues heard about the Seniors Tennis initiative

22 venues ran a seniors' tennis programme last year, 13 of these were funded and 9 were not. The majority of venues however found out about it through a variety of channels including email contact from the LTA / Seniors Tennis GB or content within the LTA Newsletter or LTA Website. Some venues also told us they were made aware of the initiative by their regional LTA representatives.

What the grant money was spent on

The grant money was used to fund a wide range of activation within clubs. The majority of clubs spent money on the following areas:

- Coaching time
- Equipment (racquet and balls, touchtennis kits)
- Block booking of courts at venues
- Advertising (Local newspapers, Facebook and social media, leaflets, posters and flyers)
- Subsidising courses like Tennis Xpress and Rusty Racquets

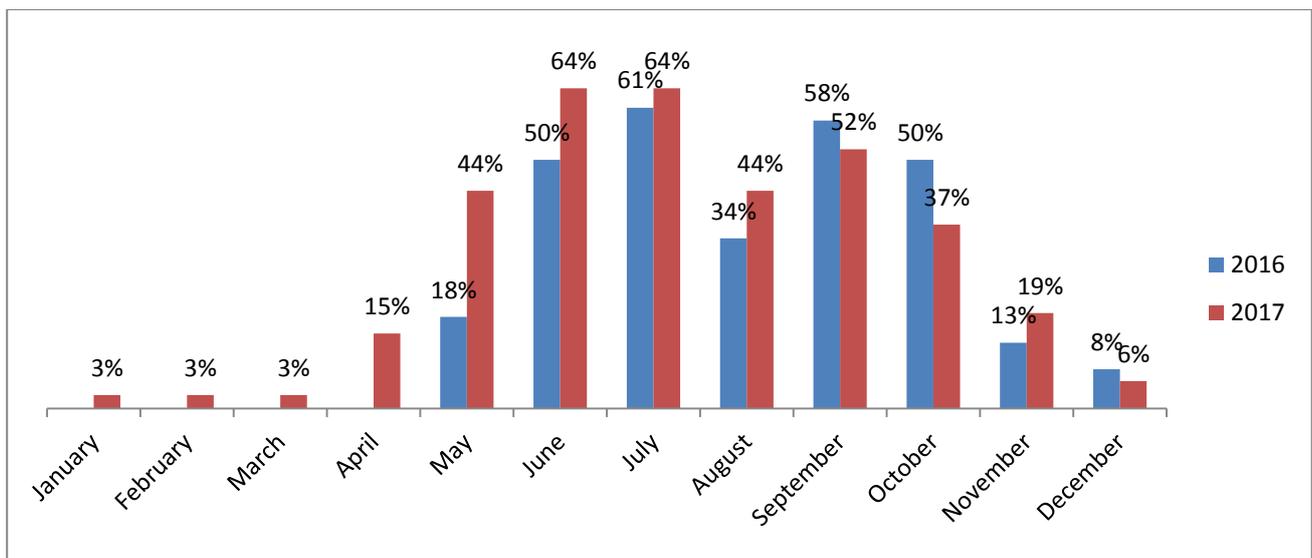
"The money was spent on Tennis sessions - Tennis express course and rusty rackets course. Both were run for 10 weeks aiming at slightly different target markets. The money also supported converting the senior to become members of the club program."

"We spent the money on outreach work, paying the coach for his time and for the flyers and posters. We also put the money towards funding the lessons so that we could offer a cheap price to the customers to make the deal more appealing."

Some funding was also matched though by venues and sponsors or participants contributing a small fee, enabling the grant to go further.

"Coaching costs although the coach worked with only 50% pay from the grant and 50% in kind toward the completion of the project. Balls and prizes paid for by the coach or sourced from sponsor."

What months of the year the Seniors' Tennis Programme took place



Last year senior tennis programmes launched in May and mainly ran during the months of June to October, with a slight dip in programmes running in August, however this year a seniors' tennis programme ran all year, peaking in the months of June, July and September.

Impact of the Seniors' Tennis Programme (to November)

Venues told us the exact numbers of people taking part in the sessions and also how many were already members. They told us how many signed up to further lessons, how many became members of the venue (where membership is offered) and also who became BTM's (although many were not aware of this number):

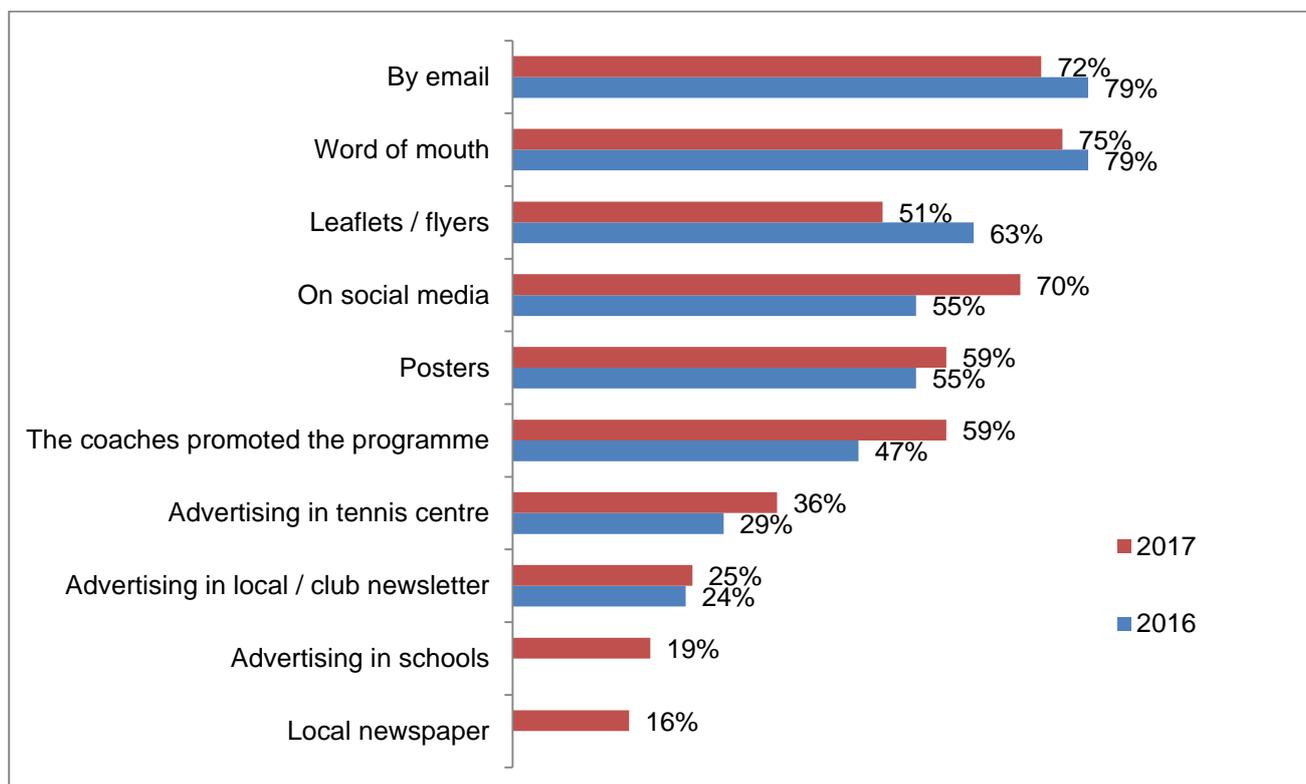
	How many people took part?	Average Number of people per venue	How many were already members?	How many have signed up to lessons?	How many have become members?	How many have become BTM members?*
2017	1273	19	280	468	337	93
2016	836	17	198	232	214	70
2015	517	17	86	227	152	86

*Over half of venues were unsure about the BTM status of course attendees.

From the venues who responded, this year the seniors' tennis programme introduced tennis to over 1,200 people above the age of 35 years old. This has led to over 450 people signing up to further lessons after the course, with over 300 signing up to club membership.

Goodrich tennis club told us: *"Eight seniors signed up to club membership, which represents over 15% of our total membership – as a small village club with a limited catchment area, your money helped us considerable, so a massive thank you!"*

How venues raised awareness and targeted people for the programme



Like last year, venues used a wide variety of channels to promote their seniors' tennis programme. Email and word of mouth were still the most popular, similar to last year. This year, however there was much more promotion via the social media channels, particularly Facebook.

Venues specifically targeted the parents of junior players. This was done through a number of channels like parents attending coaching or other programmes like a Great British Tennis Weekend or Tennis 4 Kids. They also sent flyers and leaflets home with them from school.

One club said they targeted *"parents of children having coaching. Parents at the local school during pick up/drop off. Flyers sent home with children from the local school."*

Another said, *"we spoke to parents when their children were playing. We also advertised at the schools where we run our school to club links."*

Several venues used local libraries, village halls, pubs and newsagents to put up posters advertising their programme.

"Via local shops and businesses, clear descriptors on promotional material regarding target age groups and running during evenings and weekends to allow for work commitments"

Social media channels were used effectively this year, particularly Facebook.

"I used a Facebook boost, this way we are able to target specific age group, demographics, postcodes to be really specific with our marketing. Also the older generation are really pro-active in social media so really helps."

How much venues charged for their sessions

	2016	2017
Did not charge	47%	59%
£1 - £3	24%	23%
£4 - £6	21%	14%
£7 - £9	3%	1%
£10+	5%	1%
Don't know	0%	1%

More venues than last year ran their programmes for free, with the remainder that did charge, only charging a small amount (less than £6).

Are venues running follow up offers?

57% of the venues we spoke to said they are running discounts or offers for the participants of the seniors tennis programme (this figure was similar to last year). Follow on offers included discounts on club membership or further coaching, and for some venues this was up to 50% off.

"A discount was made on first course they joined and further discount if became members."

"The first 6-8 sessions were half price after which the session reverted to full price. The sessions are now continuing at full price. All participants were offered half price membership for 2017/18."

How successful was the Seniors' Tennis Programme?

The seniors tennis programme was hugely successful with 93% of venues who ran a programme saying it was successful (slightly up on 90% in 2016). Only one club said it was unsuccessful due to the lack of numbers attending the introductory session (N.B. they are running another session in March 2018).

Success to the venues meant getting a new audience on court, or at least an audience that had not played in a long time. They were also able to keep many of these people in the game.

"We were able to get parents playing tennis who would have before not played. We also managed to keep them engaged and continuing after the programme had ended."

"It was fantastic to hear people saying things like 'I haven't had a racquet in my hand for over 20 years' and to see them really enjoying playing tennis."

Some venues told us that the programme was also good at promoting their tennis venue. One venue said, *"Great publicity for the Club to be seen to be offering free coaching programmes for seniors, and also raised awareness of the Club in our community and its desire to be more open and accessible to all."*

Participants were also incredibly enthusiastic with the programme and enjoyed their experience. *"The players really enjoyed the coaching sessions and made new friends who they are now keen to practice with"*.

Positively, many venues commented that they would not have been able to run a seniors tennis programme without the support from this grant. *"By having the funding provided we were able to expand our messaging and reach to draw in people apart from the usual members. Your support is greatly appreciated. Thanks!"*

What venues are planning on doing in the future to retain players over the age of 35

Venues tell us they are doing a number of things to retain players over the age of 35:

- Continuing with the current seniors tennis programme!
- Putting on new sessions for beginner / improvers to ensure they cater for a variety of standards such as 50+, ladies social, cardio tennis to encourage players.
- Reviewing sessions to ensure non-members have a chance to 'pay & play'.
- Entering adult teams into the local doubles leagues to get competition going.
- Clubs will put on more coaching sessions to the over 35's.
- Some clubs are aiming to create more links with some local schools to start cardio tennis for parents at the school.
- One club is planning on introducing monthly payments rather than requesting a full year's fee in March (or pro-rata payment if they join later) they are also introducing a new family membership rate to encourage parents to join when their children do at little extra cost.
- Aim to create a better environment for seniors so they can get to know each other more easily.

What venues suggested could improve the seniors tennis programme in the future

Many venues said that they didn't have any further suggestions to improve the seniors tennis programme.

"Carry on what you are doing. A small grant is often the catalyst to help initiate a new session."

Some venues did say that they would like further support on the promotional side of things, so they can keep a *'professional look when promoting'*, and getting the message out there.

Outlining case studies of successful seniors' tennis programmes from around the country so they can tap into other clubs success model.

A number of clubs requested training in social media (Facebook targeting) as this was such an effective channel of recruitment for some clubs.

On a practical front one venue said it would be good to let those applying know that grants range (from £200-£500) for the project, and that proposals *'may need to be flexible enough to change completely to respond to changing budgets'*.

Very positively though, all venues apart from one, told us that they would like to run a seniors' tennis programme next year (nine venues didn't know yet however).

Photos of the seniors' tennis programme in action

Several venues sent through photos of their programmes in action!



(From Jilly Broadbent)



(From Natalie Grintor)



(From Richard Whichello (Director of Coaching) Sundridge Park LTC)



(Nicky – Raskelf Tennis Club)

NEW JOINERS'
2017 PROMOTION
FOR SENIORS (35+)
FREE PROFESSIONAL
COACHING*

(RE) DISCOVER
TENNIS
AT LA MARE
 RUE DE GALAAD, CASTEL

ALL levels
 FRIENDLY / Sociable
 NO joining fees
 ONLY £60 (adult) membership pa
 SUMMER Club Mon & Wed Evenings
 FUN Tournaments and Weekend Mixed / Singles
 LEAGUES Organised All Year Round
 WIMBLEDON Tickets Draw

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 by SENIORS TENNIS GB/LTA
 Coaching sessions
 subject to
 limited availability)



(La Mare Tennis, Guernsey)



(Steve Luck – Perran Tennis)