

ENJOY TENNIS: Creating a New Group

Enjoy Tennis is a Tennis Ireland programme that provides the opportunity for players with a sensory, physical or intellectual disability to benefit from learning and enjoy playing the game of tennis in clubs around Ireland.

Enjoy Tennis helps the clubs and local services/schools to connect with each other.

It funds the initial 10 weeks of professional coaching by the tennis coach in the club.

It provides support and training to the club volunteers who participate.

This is an ambitious programme that has grown rapidly thanks to the Tennis Ireland clubs, coaches, members and our partners. The core principle is that we offer long term opportunities to our players – who may become integrated into and members of our clubs.

The Club;

- Offers the opportunity to play tennis to a local organisation that provides services to people with a disability.
- Chooses an off-peak time when courts are available.
- Commits to an initial 10 weeks with an openness to a long term arrangement.
- Recruits 4/5 club members as hitting partners who apply for garda vetting.
- Chooses the coach from their coaching team who must be a Tennis Ireland licensed coach.
- The club, service provider partner and the Enjoy Tennis Development officer need to consider early on how they can continue to fund the coaching after the initial 10 weeks. Options that clubs to-date have used are the following;
 - The service provider funds the coaching
 - The players fund the coaching
 - The club funds it
 - Local Authority sports grants, or Local Sports Partnership support can help fund it.
 - Local businesses can sponsor it.
 - Or a combination of the above.

The Service Provider/Partner

- Decides they want to provide the opportunities to play tennis for their service users/learners/pupils.
- Subject to the player's response see this as something they would like to put in place for the long term
- The service provider staff are on court with the coach and club volunteers, bringing their knowledge of disability and the players

- The Service Provider's insurance covers the players and service provider staff while at the club.
- The service provider staff have free access to Tennis Ireland's Coaching Assistant qualification – details on the tennis Ireland website.
- The service provider will contribute/cover the cost of the coach beyond the initial 10 weeks(which is fully funded by Enjoy Tennis/tennis Ireland) if possible.

The Coach

- Wants to coach an Enjoy Tennis group.
- Chooses a time that fits with their coaching schedule
- Meets the service provider in advance
- Visits an existing Enjoy tennis group led by one of the experienced coaches in the area to get experience and confidence in the area. This senior coach remains available as a mentor to the coach.
- The coach will attend the appropriate CPD training as available.
- The coach is remunerated at 35 euros per hour for the 10 week programme.

The club volunteers

- Play an important role as hitting partners supporting the coach, and are critical to the long term continuation of Enjoy Tennis in the club
- They are provided with disability awareness training and free access to the TI play and stay coach assistant training.

Players

Enjoy Tennis has been designed in five different strands:.

Players with an Intellectual Disability

Blind or with a vision impairment

On the Autism spectrum

Acquired Brain Injury/Spinal Injury (Nat.Rehab Hosp)

Wheelchair Tennis

Enjoy Tennis/Tennis Ireland

For more information contact your Enjoy Tennis Regional Development Officer.