



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 ambition is to have Enjoy Tennis in every club in the country

The Club;

- Offers the opportunity to play tennis to a local organisation that provides services to people with a disability/ special schools/ autism units in mainstream schools.
- 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 (through Tennis Ireland)
- Chooses the coach from their coaching team who must be a Tennis Ireland licensed coach or must be Tennis Ireland qualified and willing to gain Enjoy Tennis CPD points to become Enjoy Tennis licensed.
- 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;
 - o The service provider/school funds the coaching.
 - o The players fund the coaching.
 - o The club funds it.
 - o Local Authority sports grants, or Local Sports Partnership support can help fund it.
 - o Local businesses can sponsor it.
 - o Or a combination of the above.

The Service Provider/Partner/School

- 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/school staff are on court with the coach and club volunteers, bringing their knowledge of disability and the players.
- The service provider's/schools insurance covers the players and service provider staff while at the club.
- The service provider /school staff have free access to Tennis Ireland's Play and Stay qualification (a coaching assistant course, not a coaching qualification)– details on the Tennis Ireland website.
- The service provider/school will contribute/cover the cost of the coach beyond the initial 10 weeks (which is fully funded by Enjoy Tennis/Tennis Ireland) if possible or look at other ways of funding as mentioned above.

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 gain 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 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. (This is not a coaching qualification, but will give a level of knowledge and confidence to assist the coach in the programme).

Players

Enjoy Tennis has been designed in nine different strands:

Players with an Intellectual Disability

Blind or with a vision impairment

Deaf or with a hearing impairment

On the Autism spectrum

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

Wheelchair Tennis

Players who have cerebral palsy

Players who have dementia

Players experiencing mental health issues

Enjoy Tennis/Tennis Ireland

For more information contact your Enjoy Tennis Regional Development Officer (details available on the Tennis Ireland website).