



TENNIS IRELAND  
RESOURCES

# RAISING FUNDS for YOUR CLUB

## RATIONALE

Improving services and facilities at the club should be a constant on the Agenda of the Executive Committee. The standards demanded by tennis club members are constantly rising. Ongoing improvements require outlay which may not be feasible solely from the income generated by membership. This means that it's important for a club to look at means of raising funds. Some fund-raising events can also involve social events, which are a useful addition to a club's annual schedule. They can also serve to bring non-members to the club, which in turn provides an opportunity to sign up new members. Below we look at some fund-raising events that will work in the context of tennis clubs in Ireland.

## INCREASE YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Members' annual fees will naturally generate most of the income of a tennis club. If a club requires extra income, the first thing to look at is: can membership numbers be increased? As well as raising income, this obviously contributes to the long-term wellbeing of the club. Run Open Days and liaise with local schools and Parks Tennis venues. Appoint a 'business person' to go out and find new members. He or she receives a percentage of the fees from each new member they bring to the club, and possibly a smaller percentage of fees if the new member signs up again for a second year's membership. Essentially the club is appointing an 'agent' who operates on commission.

## GOVERNMENT GRANTS

The Sports Capital Grants Scheme provides major funding to tennis clubs – over 5 million euro in 2022. It should be your first port of call if you are looking at big developments at the club – new courts, replacing floodlighting, extending the clubhouse etc. For details go to [sportscapitalprogramme.ie](http://sportscapitalprogramme.ie).

## OTHER GRANT SCHEMES

Local Sports Partnerships provide grants for specific programmes that might be run at the club. It's well worth regularly checking the website of your LSP. You can find contact details of LSPs at [sportireland.ie](http://sportireland.ie).



### IN PREPARATION...

Before you run any events at the club, it's vital that you ensure that licenses (for raffles or draws) are sorted. The correct insurance needs to be in place. And adequate supervision must be organized, taking Vetting requirements into account.

## PLANNING

Detailed advance planning makes success more likely in any activity, and club fundraising is no exception.



Develop an annual schedule well in advance. A sub-committee should be formed solely to look after this aspect of the club's business.

### SHARED ACCESS

Tennis Ireland works with Shared Access, which leases space at tennis clubs for wireless communication infrastructure (e.g. placing equipment on lighting poles). For details – contact Tennis Ireland.



*"The additional investment from our relationship with Shared Access has helped fund the addition of an indoor dome with three courts. Like most clubs, we're always looking at different options to develop our revenue streams – and certainly Shared Access investment has made a difference to our club"*

Templeogue LTC.

*"Shared Access investment at Brookfield has been pivotal in enabling us to continually improve facilities at the club over the years. Our next target is to renew our court surfaces...The Investment from our agreement with Shared Access will help drive this new project..."*

Brookfield LTC.

## 20 IDEAS FOR RAISING FUNDS

- Does your club have a hall/meeting room that could be hired out for junior discos, fashion shows, musical bingo, to the local bridge club or Active Retirement Association?
- Could you make the club facilities available to a charity to raise money for the organization? This will generate media coverage and get some new people on the courts, who can be targeted for membership.



- Organize a raffle/draw around the area, with a free family membership as the main prize. Get the contact details of everyone who enters the draw, and invite them to the prizegiving at the club, which then becomes an enrolment opportunity.

- Sell life membership (or alternatively a ten-year membership) for a multiple of the regular annual fee.
- Contact your local supermarket/s, and ask to be allowed to do a till collection to raise money for the club.
- Develop a range of good quality club-branded clothing, which can be sold to members at a profit.
- If your club website and/or Facebook page is heavily visited, could you sell advertising space to local businesses?
- Tennis balls are the game's biggest consumable. Make it easy for players to have good tennis balls to hand by selling them at the club.
- Organise an Open Tournaments at your club. It will bring in entry fees, and provide opportunities to raise funds through the sale of food and drink, raffles and social nights.
- Organise an exhibition match at the club with BJK/Davis Cup players. Sell tickets to the tennis, and have a 'Meet the Players' ticketed social event after the tennis.



- Instead of 'court number 1', name the court after a local business which is prepared to pay an annual fee.
- Organise an annual club dinner, where you present prizes to members and run a raffle.
- A table quiz can raise significant funds, while also providing a social event for members. Members should be encouraged to invite non-members – another recruitment opportunity.
- Sign up with a local sports shop for a voucher/discount scheme. When a member shows their discount card at the shop, they receive a 5% discount, and the club receives 5% of the value of the sale.



- Run a tennis marathon to raise funds – could be a themed fancy-dress event, or old-style tennis clothing and racquets.
- Windbreaks provide great opportunities to sell advertising. There are companies that will supply and print windbreaks to your specification.

- Do some research into the history of your club. Many of those who were members 40 or 50 years ago will now be grandparents. Given their great memories of the club in “the old days”, would they ‘gift’ membership of the club to their grandchildren, so that the new generation can experience the joys of tennis?



- Seek donations towards the running of the club. Past members may have moved away, but retain fond memories of the club and would love to provide practical support – but have never been asked or provided with a simple method. Crowd-funding sites makes setting this up easier than ever.
- Is a niche corporate membership a possibility? Corporate members could be given the right to play at certain times when the club is not busy. Some companies might pay for membership for their staff as an employee incentive. If the club is always quiet at lunchtime, and there are offices and factories nearby, this could be a way to boost club income.
- Sponsors will support certain events such as the club championships. Publicity on banners, seats, scoreboards and notice boards can all be used to entice a sponsor to work with the club. There is a possibility for some tennis clubs to take this to another level - an overall sponsor for the club, such as a nearby large-scale business which will invest a considerable sum of money in order to have ‘naming rights’ at the club grounds. If your club borders a busy road, the year-round advertising possibilities alone may be enough to attract a big business, if you can secure the necessary permits.

### FINALLY...

Be creative. What might seem like an off-the-wall idea can turn out to be very successful:

*I came up with what I thought was a pretty crazy idea that I also thought everyone would dismiss. I was wrong! They loved it!*

*We call it “**The Running of the Balls**”. We got 500 tennis balls and got the kids to number them from 1 to 500, then we ‘sold’ the balls (or their numbers) for \$5 each! On the day of the ‘raffle’ draw, we tipped the tennis balls out from the back of a small truck down a hill with barricades along the side and the first ball to cross the line won \$500, 2<sup>nd</sup> won \$200 and 3<sup>rd</sup> won \$100.*

*We had no trouble selling the tickets because it was novel and intrigued people.*

### NEED FURTHER GUIDANCE?

**Get in touch with your Provincial Branch**

**Leinster:** 01 269 6024  
**Ulster:** 028 9038 3808  
**Munster:** 087 706 1230  
**Connacht:** 086 351 4123