



TENNIS
FOR BRITAIN



ON-COURT RECRUITMENT IN PARKS

Over 2 million people a year play in parks across Great Britain. With more than 3,000 park tennis courts being refurbished by the end of 2024, there has never been a better time to recruit coaches and activators to drive your tennis programme growth and revenue.

WHAT ARE THE TYPICAL ON-COURT ROLES NEEDED FOR A THRIVING PARK TENNIS FACILITY?

There are three roles that are most critical to enable a thriving park facility. Exactly how many of each role you need will depend on your programme size and ambition.

1 HEAD COACH

Manages a team of coaches, designs the programme and promotes the programme.

2 COACH

Delivers programmed group coaching sessions on-court. Also delivers private lessons.

3 VOLUNTEER ACTIVATOR

Delivers Barclays Free Park Tennis – free sessions for players of all ages and skill levels designed to be accessible to everyone, attracting players who are unable to pay for coaching or court bookings. Can also organise other activities at the park.



Opening tennis up is the LTA's vision and park venues plays a huge part in making tennis accessible to all."

Julie Porter, LTA COO



Coaches are understandably wary about the risks of taking on a new opportunity in a park. We have found it helps to advertise roles which provide some certainty. When we offered some employed or guaranteed hours within the role, we got more applications."

Park operator

To find out more about relevant training, qualifications and the LTA's professional membership scheme for coaches, [click here](#).

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF DELIVERING TENNIS IN A PARK?

To be successful, tennis operators looking to recruit new talent need to understand how coaches perceive coaching opportunities in parks. Some common barriers include seasonality, perceptions of dilapidated facilities, limited parking, poor storage, an isolated role and safety concerns where public lighting is poor. However, after recent investment in over 200 local authorities, park tennis now presents a great opportunity to the UK workforce.

The opportunities and benefits you can promote include:



We found that it was hard to attract coaches to Head Coach roles in a park – they were wary of leaving the safety of their club. However, when we shifted focus to giving coaches a first opportunity at a Head Coach role, we were more successful.”

Park operator

FLEXIBILITY

Coaches can build their role around their other work and life commitments.

FACILITIES

Promote the quality of any recent facility investments. Invite people down to see the site.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

An opportunity to bring new people from the community into tennis who don't have sport or physical activity in their lives.

ENTREPRENEURIAL

Coaches can build a business, a brand and employ others when they expand. More opportunities for progression exist when compared to traditional club settings.



You can get stuck as a coach in a traditional members club – park tennis has opened a whole new career up for me. I now work for the local authority in a Sport Development role.”

Former park Head Coach



STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL ON-COURT RECRUITMENT FOR A PARK SITE

A CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE A COACH OR ACTIVATOR WOULD WANT TO WORK/VOLUNTEER

- Promote the recently refurbished courts and or improved accessibility
- Provide good ancillary facilities e.g. benches, chairs, storage for coach equipment
- Work towards providing a well-lit safe environment at, and around, the courts
- Ensure there are places to socialise or relax that are on-site, or signpost to ones nearby
- Develop a team environment with other coaches and wider local authority team



Park operators with the most success in attracting and retaining on-court workforce (coaches and activators) develop roles that are attractive, feel part of a team, and work hard to address challenges of delivering tennis in a park.”

Merlin Van de Braam,
LTA Head of Coach Development

B DEVELOP ROLES THAT PEOPLE WILL WANT

HEAD COACH

- Include some employed hours or guaranteed hours for management tasks
- Offer additional incentives such as profit share, income split, commission
- Specify that coaches applying for a first Head Coach role will be considered
- Include projects in the role that connect to wider objectives in sport and physical activity e.g. Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programmes
- Mention potential progression e.g. to a local authority role, expansion to other sites, managing a larger team

[Click here](#) for an example job description

COACH

- Underwrite a minimum number of coaching hours to provide security
- Include incentivised business opportunities e.g. through private lessons or bonuses for class retention
- Ensure weekly team meetings
- Emphasise flexibility, where the coach will be able to build their role around other commitments
- Emphasise progression opportunities to Head Coach roles

[Click here](#) for an example job description

ACTIVATOR

- Emphasise the benefits with the role, such as free hoodie, equipment, free tennis
- Promote the availability of free online training through the LTA
- Ensure the role is supported with coaches buddying up for first few hours of delivery until confident
- Be clear and reasonable on the minimum requirement of hours each month or over a term
- Emphasise progression opportunities and support available e.g. funded coach qualifications

[Click here](#) for an example job description

C PROMOTE THE OPPORTUNITIES WHERE RELEVANT PEOPLE ARE LOOKING

National promotion routes:

- [LTA Find a Tennis Coaching Job](#)
- [UK Sport](#)
- [The Big Help Out](#)
- [Mumsnet](#)
- [DoIT](#)
- [CharityJob](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)

Local promotion routes:

- All roles can be advertised through the local LTA County [here](#)
- Find your local Active Partnership workforce development officer [here](#) to discuss the roles available. Ask for support in reaching people who may be interested
- Connect to the local University Tennis Programme or Student Unions
- Engage 'Friends of Park' groups and local authority volunteer databases
- Engage local clubs, leisure centres and sport venues
- Engage care partners, such as Parkinson's UK



A great example of successful recruitment in a park site has been where a coach with the right skills has stepped up to take on the Head Coach role, and then led a great team of coaches and volunteer activators to take on responsibility for the day-to-day programmed activity. All this combined, and you have a thriving programme, with thriving people.”

Paul Bennett,
LTA Head of Parks
Investment Delivery

