

Written evidence submitted by Tennis at Cattaway

DCMS Select Committee Inquiry - information needed

Submitted by Matthew Cattaway.

I run a tennis business from a public park in West Ealing (Tennis at Cattaway, Elthorne Park), I rent the courts from Ealing Council and report to the council. I am also a partner in the business that runs the Will to Win business that is based in Pitshanger Park (tennis, netball, football, café).

What has been the immediate impact of Covid-19 on the sector?

All tennis and other sports activity stopped at the beginning of the current lockdown. Ealing Council issued directions that courts should be locked. I locked both sites down with padlocks. No tennis or other sport has been played at either Pitshanger or Elthorne Park. Our regular users have been communicated to by way of email, text and WhatsApp groups, keeping them up to date with the present status of the courts. As a tennis coach, the tennis federation (LTA) has responded well with guidance and support centrally. The tennis community has continued social media to keep people engaged

How effectively has the support provided by DCMS, other Government departments and arms-length bodies addressed the sector's needs?

The government guidelines about social distancing has been clear. The park courts closing have been a consequence of the lockdown, the income from the courts that I would expect to generate is now not being realised. The HMRC support will fill some of the gap.

What will the likely long-term impacts of Covid-19 be on the sector, and what support is needed to deal with those?

Once the present lockdown is withdrawn, I believe tennis might be at an advantage in the short term as it is a good activity to provide health benefits whilst maintaining social distancing. The sector may see a drop in the amount of activity short-term as people will have less money.

What lessons can be learnt from how DCMS, arms-length bodies and the sector have dealt with Covid-19?

Use the benefit of hindsight to learn the lessons of this life-changing period.

How might the sector evolve after Covid-19, and how can DCMS support such innovation to deal with future challenges?

Publish the learnings and circulate.