

LTA – Supplementary written evidence (NPS0157)

LTA YOUTH SCHOOLS OPENING UP SCHOOL FACILITIES PILOT

Through a pilot extension of the new LTA Youth Schools programme, the LTA is committed to supporting Government's ambition to help schools open up their sports facilities, outside of the school day during evenings, weekends and school holidays, for local community use.

Sport England data shows that schools operate, or own, 39% of available sports facilities and a recent survey showed that 91% of schools would be prepared to open their facilities for community use when COVID-19 related restrictions are lifted, despite the fact only 52% have been able to at any point over the last year¹.

However, the LTA recognises there are longstanding, operational challenges and perceptions to break around the practicalities of schools doing this for the first time, such as concerns around additional staffing requirements, physical access issues and safeguarding. The LTA believes it has the solution to overcome these issues.

GATE ACCESS TECHNOLOGY AND LTA RALLY

The LTA has developed and delivered gate access technology to around 200 park sites over the last few years, which allows local authorities to control access to their courts remotely, take payment for court bookings where a court hire fee is in place, track usage and secure their facilities. Gate access systems help to streamline the process for booking through to getting on court, without the need for on-site staff. The gate access system can even control floodlights, removing the need for players to buy tokens or use meters.

Gate access technology links with the LTA's online booking and venue management system, ClubSpark, as well as LTA Rally, the LTA's digital platform which is intended to make it easier for people to find and book a court, coaching and other tennis activities. ClubSpark is a flexible, scalable and simple venue management platform with multiple products and applications to help venues, local authorities and coaches manage their sport.

In those parks where gate access technology has been installed, local authorities have been able to better track court usage, and seen an increase in registered users. The average number of players at gated venues rose by 30% between 2019 -2020 to over 300 players. The average pay and play booking income at a gated venue rose to over £7,100 by the end of 2020. The average number of court bookings rose by 52% to 3629 in 2020. Where a court hire fee is in place, this has also helped to begin to develop a revenue stream and sinking fund for local authorities, for future court development and maintenance.

PILOTING IN SCHOOLS

¹ <https://www.sportengland.org/news/new-funding-help-schools-open-their-sports-facilities>

The LTA will grant fund and pilot the installation of the gate access and digital booking technology in circa 10 school sites during 2021-22. This will allow schools to open their facilities for community use outside of school hours, tackling some of the operational barriers to this, such as staffing considerations, and how to control access.

The LTA will also provide a bespoke modelling tool and regional staff time to support the schools with the initial stages of the project.

IDENTIFYING LOCATIONS

A long list of appropriate sites to approach will be identified by the LTA's regional teams and Tennis Wales and Tennis Scotland. This will cover:

- **South & South West**
- **Midlands**
- **London & South East**
- **North**
- **Central & East**
- **Wales**
- **Scotland**

Locations will be identified based on existing LTA local relationships and insight, with a focus on areas where there are currently limited community-accessible tennis facilities, and school facilities which would logistically lend themselves well to the model the LTA proposes.

The LTA will be seeking to make approaches to schools in summer 2021 with a view to installations being made in the autumn/spring terms of 2021-22, and sites being fully operational from summer 2022.

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