



CLUB SUCCESS STORY

HOW A CHELTENHAM CLUB CAPITALISED ON PADEL TENNIS POPULARITY

with support from the LTA Quick Access Loan Scheme



East Glos in Cheltenham is a well-utilised multi-sports club with a large tennis and squash membership. It is the biggest tennis club in the area, offering 17 floodlit tennis courts, 10 grass courts, four squash courts and a range of coaching programmes.

BACKGROUND

Until recently, East Glos was run as a members' club with limited opportunities for non-members. However, the management committee recognised the need to be more relevant to existing and potential players by enhancing facilities and accessibility for the local community.





INITIATIVES

With significant interest in Padel tennis coupled with land availability, the club decided to convert 1 disused grass court into three floodlit Padel tennis courts. One of the fastest growing sports across continental Europe, Padel tennis has gained increasing popularity over recent years.

It can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities as it is not power dominant. The project cost £250k, with 50% funded by the club and 50% secured via the LTA's interest-free Quick Access Loan Scheme.



HOW PADEL TENNIS WORKS AT EAST GLOS

Online bookings for Padel tennis are made through ClubSpark for non-members, on a Pay & Play basis for both peak and off-peak periods. It costs £20 per court per hour for non-members and £4 for existing members.

A coach has been appointed to drive Padel tennis participation, delivering adult and junior coaching, new member taster sessions and social sessions. Fun social tournaments take place monthly, with over 80 participants across mixed, ladies' and men's events. Padel tennis box leagues and teams have also been introduced.



SUCCESSES

Traditionally a club focussed on members, East Glos has opened its doors to the wider community through Pay & Play and seen the following benefits:

- 250 members attended Padel tennis taster sessions
- Over 200 new members joined the club in the first four months following the installation of the Padel tennis courts
- Court utilisation is already over 55% with a target of 60% in year 1 - at peak times, utilisation reaches 80%
- Annual court hire revenue is forecast to be around £20k
- Introduction of a 'rackets' membership to unite the tennis and squash communities
- Sponsorship opportunities and increase in hospitality and pro-shop sales



TOP TIPS for Padel tennis success

- Execute a mix of marketing including social media, videos, leaflet drops, web and external banners
- Provide fun taster sessions to drive engagement and interest
- Set up WhatsApp groups to help people find partners and opposition to play with
- Consider acoustics, ideally locating courts at least 30m away from residential properties

East Glos is a great example of a club enhancing the tennis provision for existing and potential members, opening up tennis to the community.

Visit lta.org.uk for information on adding Padel tennis courts to your venue and for details of the LTA Quick Access Loan Scheme offering interest-free loan funding.

“The introduction of Padel tennis at East Glos has had a fantastic impact, bringing the tennis and squash communities together and providing members with a new sport to enjoy. New members have joined from all age groups and demographics, some taking up the sport for the first time. Padel tennis has certainly created a buzz around the club, adding to the already thriving and active membership. The project has also acted as a catalyst for future facility enhancement.”

Darren Morris,
Club Manager

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