



The APPG on Scottish Sport

Scottish Tennis funding and establishing a Murray Legacy.

24th of April 2017

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Scottish Sport exists to discuss and advance issues of importance to Scottish sport by complementing the work of the Scottish government and all Scottish governing bodies.

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Introduction

- 1.1 During the first six months of 2016, the Chair of the APPG on Scottish Sport met with a number of Scottish national sports governing bodies to find out more about their work and the challenges that they currently face.
- 1.2 Following an initial report being presented to the APPG on Scottish Sport, which outlined the range of work and challenges facing certain national sporting governing bodies, it was decided that the APPG would conduct further research into the support provided to tennis in Scotland and the work being done to build on the success of the Murray brothers and others including Judy Murray and Leon Smith.
- 1.3 Members of the APPG on Scottish Sport outlined a plan of action to take forward this investigation and decided that an invitation to attend a future meeting would be extended to Judy Murray, Blane Dodds (Chair of Tennis Scotland), Michael Downey (CEO of The Lawn Tennis Association) and Stewart Harris (CEO of **sportscotland**).

The role of Tennis Scotland, The LTA and sportscotland

- 2.1 The LTA is the national governing body for tennis in Great Britain, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. It is responsible for developing and promoting the sport with a strategic mission to get more people playing tennis more often. The LTA represent over 570,000 British Tennis Members across the country, playing on more than 23,000 courts.
- 2.2 In their 2015 annual report, they state that ‘as participation in tennis continues to decline, the LTA’s role is to support and improve the long-term health of the game, driving participation at the grassroots.’
- 2.3 Tennis Scotland is the governing body for tennis in Scotland. In partnership with the LTA, sportscotland and others their work involves promoting and developing the sport across the country – ‘from grassroots in clubs, schools and parks through to providing the best coaching and facilities for the next generation of Scottish tennis stars.’ Tennis Scotland firmly states that they are a partner national body to the LTA and not one of its recently-formed English regions. However, during the evidence session from Michael Downey he referred to Scotland as a region which is served by the LTA and Tennis Scotland. It is important that all relevant authorities recognise the specific set of circumstances facing Scottish tennis, recognising the success of the sport in Scotland.
- 2.4 Within their 2015 annual report, Tennis Scotland underline the importance of their ‘strong working relationships’ with the LTA and **sportscotland**. With both relationships being vital in helping to develop tennis across Scotland.

- 2.5 Tennis Scotland are building for the future and as well as being in the process of appointing a new Chief Executive, they are developing an ambitious long term strategy which has the goal of ‘delivering world class facilities, programmes and outcomes’ to help capitalise on the growth of Scottish tennis.
- 2.6 **sportscotland** is the national agency for sport in Scotland. Across the country, **sportscotland** works closely with partners to improve the links between schools, clubs and performance sport as they ‘continue to build a world class sporting system’.

Funding for Tennis Scotland

- 3.1 Tennis Scotland’s Annual Report for 2015 provides details of its income from the LTA, **sportscotland**, and other sources. The annual report states that turnover for Tennis Scotland in the Financial Year ending in 2015 was £1.704m – an increase of £129,644 from the previous year. Below is some further analysis of the income of Tennis Scotland:

Income	2016 <small>(15 month period)</small>	2015 <small>(12 month period)</small>	2014 <small>(12 month period)</small>
LTA/Tennis Foundation	£1,123,888	£794,679	£755,070
sportscotland	£496,000	£443,000	£425,515
Commercial	£146,118	£138,035	£102,500
Membership Fees	£114,779	£85,910	£81,305
Other	£258,061	£242,532	£210,122
Total Income	£2,138,846	£1,704,156	£1,574,512

- 3.2 The 2015 annual report outlines a number of areas where Tennis Scotland have allocated resources, including investing £5.4million in tennis facilities in Scotland over the past three years. **sportscotland** made a four year £5.8m investment in Tennis Scotland in 2013, aimed at capitalising on the success of the Murrays. During Judy Murray’s presentation she spoke about the importance of **sportscotland**’s facility fund in helping to support the activities and ambitions of Tennis Scotland. However, she also noted that tennis should be given far more support as a result of the success of the Murray brothers.
- 3.3 There has also been an agreement with the Lawn Tennis Association, which means £3.3m will be invested in all areas of Scottish tennis between 2015 and 2018. Michael Downey also states that the LTA have recently provided a 4-year funding commitment to Scotland. This prevents Tennis Scotland from having to submit annual applications to the LTA.
- 3.4 The Tennis Scotland annual report also outlines a number of other areas of their work, including:

- Working with the Tennis Foundation to provide tennis opportunities to young people and those with a disability. This also includes working closely with the Tennis For Free to assist with the development of park tennis through the provision of free coach led sessions and Judy Murray’s ‘Tennis on the Road’ programme. Tennis Scotland claim that the number of people with a disability playing tennis at a Place to Place had seen a 35% increase over the past 12 months.
- Partnering with Scottish Student Sport to provide coaching & playing opportunities to students.
- Continuing their work with **sportscotland** to deliver facility development work across Scotland.
- Forming partnerships with local authorities throughout Scotland to help increase tennis opportunities for people. This include Glasgow Tennis – a 25 free-to-use outdoor tennis court facility where participation has increased from 34,300 in 2013/14 to 45,300 from April 2015.
- Following a strategic review of Tennis Scotland’s performance operations, 2015 saw the introduction of a refocussed Player Development Programme tasked with supporting Tennis Scotland’s mission statement for performance: “...to identify and develop more world class Scottish tennis players as part of an integrated British pathway.” At a national level, clear criteria was established to identify the leading players for support through Tennis Scotland’s Individual Player Development Programme, delivered in partnership with the **sportscotland** institute of sport. To expose more players from across Scotland to the relevant performance standards, Tennis Scotland also introduced twice-weekly regional training sessions in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling for around 50 players.

The LTA and funding for tennis

4.1 The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) invests in tennis across Great Britain, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. In addition, Tennis Scotland, Tennis Wales and the County and Island Associations also invest in the game through LTA funding, commercial revenue and, as is the case with Tennis Scotland and Tennis Wales, through additional investment from Sport Scotland and Sport Wales.

4.2 The LTA’s finance and governance report for 2015 provides details of the LTA’s income. For the year ended 31 December 2015, the LTA Group’s revenue was £63.5 million.

An analysis of the LTA Group’s revenue is shown below:

	Year ended 31 Dec 2015 £000s	15 months ended 31 Dec 2014* £000s	Change £000s	Change %
Revenue from the Wimbledon Championships	37,139	41,665	(4,526)	(10.9%)
Commercial	8,681	7,918	763	9.6%
Major Events	12,122	8,083	4,039	50.0%
Sport England Revenue Grant	3,409	4,060	(651)	(16.0%)
Other Revenue	2,164	2,619	(455)	(17.3%)
Total LTA revenue	63,515	64,345	(830)	(1.3%)

- 4.3** The LTA annual report also states that £11 million was invested in 68 projects which will help deliver 231 new or refurbished courts.
- 4.4** In response to criticism the LTA fails to provide Tennis Scotland with a population-share of funding, only receiving 1.3% of funding from the LTA despite having 8.3% of the UK's population, Michael Downey defended this approach by stating that a number of services are delivered centrally by the LTA and which benefit Tennis Scotland and that delivering a population share of the LTA's revenue to Scotland, or any part of the UK, was not possible. Such services include, marketing campaigns, organising Davis Cup games and supporting tennis programmes like Judy Murray's 'Tennis on the Road'.
- 4.5** The recently published Tennis Scotland Annual Report for 2016 provides the most up-to-date analysis of the LTA's contribution to Tennis Scotland. This report notes that Tennis Scotland moved to a 15 month reporting period, bringing the organisation into line with the LTA's financial year-end. This means that for comparative purposes the table above shows that a fifteen month period is being compared to a twelve month one. After liaising with Tennis Scotland it was suggested that from 2015 to 2016 funding from the LTA to Tennis Scotland has remained broadly the same.

Increasing the level of support to Tennis Scotland

- 5.1** There have been numerous reports which have questioned the level of funding awarded to Tennis Scotland from the LTA with Jamie Murray previously calling the level of funding awarded to promote the sport in Scotland 'disappointing'.
- 5.2** During Blane Dodds' presentation to the APPG on the 07/12/2017 he spoke about the internal change that Tennis Scotland has been going through over the past year. This includes beginning the process of appointing a new chief executive who will be able to deliver on the ambitious plans that many within Scotland have for tennis.
- 5.3** Judy Murray praised the internal changes that Tennis Scotland have made recently, in particular welcoming the appointment of Blane Dodds as Chair of Tennis Scotland.
- 5.4** Mr Dodds expressed that in the past, Tennis Scotland have failed to effectively articulate their vision for tennis in Scotland. This is of particular importance due to the success of the Murray brothers and the point made by Michael Downey during his evidence session when he stated that the sport is growing in Scotland from both a participation and spectator point-of-view.
- 5.5** However, despite the success of Scottish tennis and in particular the Murray brothers there has been criticism that not enough is being done by the appropriate authorities to capitalise on this

for the benefit of future generations. Judy Murray has regularly criticised tennis authorities for their lack of action on this, recently stating that they have failed to deliver on the success of Andy and Jamie Murray. In addition, Andy Murray has strongly criticised the LTA claiming that they are failing to nurture young talent in Britain.

- 5.6 Judy Murray expanded on this during her presentation to the APPG, expressing her ‘utter disbelief’ over the fact that tennis authorities are failing to capitalise on the success of the Murray brothers. She spoke about the urgent need for more accessible, publicly-owned indoor tennis facilities, stating that the majority of the UK’s indoor courts are privately owned and inaccessible to a large number of people. Judy Murray also warned about the time sensitive nature of this and how action must be taken soon or the country will lose the opportunity to build on the success of Andy and Jamie Murray.
- 5.7 Blane Dodds expanded on the lack of indoor tennis courts in Scotland, suggesting that there’s only one indoor court for every 48,000 people.
- 5.8 Michael Downey from the LTA agreed about the significant shortage of indoor tennis courts, stating that the lack of indoor courts is an issue facing the sport in Scotland. He confirmed that there’s 110 indoor courts in Scotland compared to 1,600 across the UK. In addition, 7% of all the tennis courts in the UK are based indoor. This compared to 30% of all tennis courts in Europe being based indoors.

The majority of the courts in Britain are in the Clubs and are outdoors

Total Number of Tennis Courts in Britain

Total Tennis Courts in Britain*: 23,175



Source: LTA Facilities Team (data from Registration of Venues and audits) excludes data from Educational venues and Leisure Centres because of data quality/inaccuracy

5.9 The graph on the previous page from the LTA Facilities Team highlights the paucity of indoor tennis courts in the UK which, due to our climate, makes it difficult for people to play tennis throughout the year.

5.10 It also highlights that over three quarters of the total number of tennis courts in the UK are based in private clubs compared to 31% of all clubs being based in publicly owned parks. The cost for an adult having an annual membership to be able to access quality tennis courts in private clubs can range from £113.40 to £241.50, and this prevents individuals from being able to access quality tennis facilities. All of those who spoke at the two APPG meetings stressed the importance of Tennis Scotland working with local partners to help deliver accessible high quality tennis facilities. The above graph confirms this point that local authorities have an important role to play in helping to identify areas where a lack of tennis facilities exist, and also supporting projects to enable tennis facilities to be built in their local area.

	Total GB pop	Monthly tennis players	Yearly tennis players
ABC1	55%	57%	51%
C2DE	45%	43%	49%

5.11 The above chart helps explain the demographics of those playing tennis on a monthly basis. The table above, which has been collected by the LTA, highlights that monthly tennis players are slightly more likely to be from higher (ABC1) SEG but there is no significant difference within yearly players.

5.12 Michael spoke about the efforts that the LTA are making to build on the success and growth of tennis in Scotland. Michael highlighted the recent £15 million commitment that the LTA and **sportscotland** have made to Tennis Scotland. After a significant mapping exercise it is expected that this investment will double the number of indoor tennis courts in Scotland, with these courts being spread throughout Scotland. Michael Downey believes that this model will prove to be more effective than allocating resources towards national tennis academies which are centred in more urban areas.

5.13 It was explained by the LTA that there could be further funding for Tennis Scotland to access, however, this may be dependent on them securing a chief executive who could deliver an ambitious long term plan for the sport in Scotland. It was noted that Tennis Scotland have not had a chief executive in place since last September.

5.14 The LTA, Tennis Scotland and **sportscotland** all spoke about the importance of having local partners on board to help realise the vision for tennis in Scotland. There is a shared desire to secure funding from local authorities and work in partnership with other national sporting organisations to create multi-purpose sporting facilities.

Recommendations

- 6.1** All those who presented at the two meetings of the APPG acknowledged that Scottish tennis has a strong claim to receive further funds to help increase the opportunities for individuals to play tennis throughout Scotland. In order to capitalise on future opportunities, it's vitally important that Tennis Scotland recruit an ambitious forward thinking Chief Executive who can capitalise on the success of Scottish tennis.
- 6.2** The evidence session from Judy Murray and Blane Dodds highlighted that Scotland is severely lacking in high quality accessible tennis facilities, particularly indoor tennis courts and Michael Downey confirmed that only 110 indoor tennis courts exist in Scotland. In contrast, across Europe, 30% of all tennis courts are based indoors, allowing tennis to be played through the year in all climates. Due to the climate in Scotland not being favourable for yearlong outdoor tennis, it is clear that further investment is required to support the growth in Scottish tennis.
- 6.3** The recent £15 million funding announcement from the LTA and **sportscotland** is to be welcomed alongside whatever local funding can be leveraged alongside it. This commitment will help fill the gap that exists in Scotland in providing good public indoor facilities, however, it's clear that this funding will only go so far and additional LTA funding is required to support tennis in Scotland. As no public indoor courts have been built in Scotland in the past 10 years, it is extremely unfortunate, that it's taken the LTA this long to increase its level of support for Tennis Scotland. The APPG on Scottish Sport is still mindful of the comments of Judy Murray that we cannot miss this 'golden opportunity' to build on the success of Andy Murray. As such, and based on Michael Downey's own assessment that the sport in Scotland is growing, it's important that funding is allocated quickly and strategically to help support the growth of the sport.
- 6.4** It remains unclear why the LTA have been dogmatic in their approach to supporting the growth of tennis in Scotland despite the importance that Scottish tennis has on the sport in a UK wide context. Over the past number of years, Scottish tennis, through the Murray's and Leon Smith, has achieved an overwhelming level of success but has received a paltry return on that this success from the game itself. The £7.5M commitment from the LTA for infrastructure over the next 5-10 years across Scotland is to be welcomed, but it's not so significant when you consider that the LTA's revenue income over this timeframe, in addition to the last 10 year while Andy Murray has been in the World's top 5, will be around £1BN. Michael Downey's claim that it would be unreasonable for Scotland to expect a share of the LTA's revenue commensurate with the country's population share when considering the LTA's central costs, including tournaments, is perhaps fair – but only to a point. These stark numbers speak for themselves and are quite frankly indefensible.
- 6.5** Judy Murray's point about Scotland recruiting quality full-time tennis coaches is also of extreme importance. Her family's personal experience about being forced to move abroad to access high-quality tennis facilities and to receive effective coaching is a common occurrence and proper

attention is required should be paid to how Scotland produces and retains coaching staff that can help nurture the next generation of tennis stars.

6.6 Andy Murray has secured 67 single titles and is the current world No. 1 in the ATP rankings. In addition to Jamie Murray also being in the World's top 10 in doubles, Gordon Reid is also achieving a significant amount of success, having recently won the Australian Open and Wimbledon in 2016 and sitting at world number 2 in wheelchair tennis. However, despite this overwhelming level of Scottish success, particularly from the Murray brothers, very little is being done to capitalise on their success for the benefit of future generations. In the meetings that the APPG for Scottish Sport held, it was accepted by all contributors that Tennis Scotland – in addition to resources - had perhaps lacked the appropriate leadership in the past to drive forward a strategy to establish a Murray legacy. However, while the APPG accepts this point it feels that the LTA cannot wash its hands of responsibility for this. The LTA have the overarching remit to oversee tennis across the UK and it holds the game's purse strings and should have been more pro-active in trying to cement a Murray Legacy. As such, the fears which have been expressed by the Murrays that Scotland may miss the opportunity to capitalise on this success are very real and substantial. It's clear that firm plans are required, and required quickly, to ensure that this does not happen. The LTA for many years failed Scottish tennis, but although late in the day, they still have an opportunity to snatch success from the jaws of failure. In addition to local partners, and with the support of the LTA, **sportscotland** and the Scottish Government, Tennis Scotland should lead on the work to establish a Murray legacy that will help ensure that Scotland can build on their success for the benefit of future generations.