

## **ITEM 6 Tennis Cornwall Strategic Plan 2026 - 28**

The Tennis Cornwall Strategic Plan 2026 -28 sets a medium term timeline for strengthening tennis delivery within the county.

Tennis Cornwall is required to submit its plan and budget for 2026 to the LTA by the end of November 2025, which is derived from our medium term strategic plan.

The Strategic Plan is informed by our Annual Customer survey, an updating of our SWOT analysis, a board evaluation, the delivery of our work to date and broader listening and learning locally and from further afield.

The budget for 2025 has overrun and there is particular pressure on the county teams budget. Consideration should be given in the forthcoming County Selection criteria review to either giving all teams less support, reducing the number of teams to allow more support or increasing the budget from reserves.

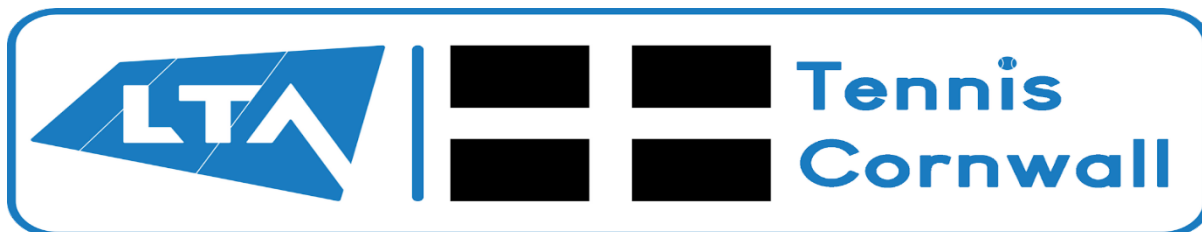
There will be a short presentation to introduce this item

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is RECOMMENDED that the committee consider the content of the strategy, amending as required and identifying the appropriate priorities and budget for the 2026 annual plan and budget.

**M Thomas**  
**Chair**  
**Tennis Cornwall**

**November 2025**



## Tennis Cornwall strategic plan 2026 -28

**A game of tennis enjoyed together makes everyone feel better!**



# Tennis Cornwall strategic plan 2026 -28

## CONTENTS

Introduction

Vision, Mission and Values

Core Role 2026

Operations

Participation

Competition

Performance

Measurement

The way we work

Realising our strategy

Appendices

## Introduction

**How are we doing?** – the results of our recent survey which was open to everyone in our tennis community received 43 responses. There are a number of positive responses and we can point to areas of good progress during the past 12 months. A majority of our customers feel we have clear improvements to make and these are highlighted in each of the sections of the Core Role below.

Opening thoughts .....

1. The majority of survey respondents said they only understood a little of what we do. This is a area for improvement.
2. We must at every turn look to add value for our tennis community of players, coaches, parents, volunteers and venues. This is the way we create more supporters for the work we do.
3. We must try to understand cause and effect.

For example, if the quality of players in a group have widely varying abilities, is this because our recruitment is not picking up all talented players or that the players are not being developed in the clubs?

4. We must use our resources wisely to focus on our priorities

With the knowledge that our customers think we have made some progress, there is an exciting three years ahead.

# Cornwall the Place

Cornwall's demographics from 2025–2030 show **slow growth, an ageing population, and reliance on migration for stability**. This creates both opportunities (retirement economy, cultural influx) and challenges (labour shortages, healthcare demand).

## Vision, Mission and values

Our vision for the future of tennis in Cornwall is to 'Grow the game and inspire the next generation' as part of our ultimate mission to 'Open up tennis by making it accessible, welcoming and enjoyable for one and all (Onen hag oll)

We try hard to be an organisation led by our values of Teamwork, Integrity, Passion, Excellence and Inclusion to guide our day to day activities.

## Core Role 2026

Tennis Cornwall is funded by the LTA to strengthen local tennis delivery, enabling County and Island Associations to focus on the areas where they can have the greatest impact, working in close partnership with the LTA and its delivery team. The Core Role consist of Operations, Participation, Competition and Performance. A further breakdown of the Core Role tasks can be seen at APPENDIX A at the end of the document.

Key changes to the core role for 2026;

- Strengthen the County's role in the 10U Performance Pathway - sharpen the focus on developing talent at the earliest stages, while recognising that 11+ training supports retention but is not a driver of national performance outcomes.
- Include padel as part of the County offer - create an inclusive framework that works for all Counties, regardless of current readiness, drawing on lessons from tennis.
- Evolve County competitions, adapting delivery to meet future needs - ensure investment into county competition activity is aligned to and supporting delivery of the LTA Competitions Plan.

Additional areas of progress for 2026

- Work together on strategic investment - maximise impact through joint initiatives (e.g. grants and loans) and make the most of shared strengths, resources, and knowledge.
- Take account of excess reserves in funding - ensure a fairer, more transparent approach, with reserves directed where relevant into activity that supports Tennis Opened Up.
- Set impact-focused targets on County dashboards - measure progress more effectively, strengthen decision-making & better demonstrate return on investment to shape future funding.

In summary, the next cycle is about building on success, providing stability, and giving Associations the resources and confidence to keep tennis and padel thriving in local communities.

Since 2022, adult participation across English Counties has increased by an average of 51%, prompting a review and update of the banding thresholds. These have been adjusted accordingly, with rounding applied for simplicity:

- Band 1 <114,999k This includes Cornwall
- Band 2 115,000k – 224,999k
- Band 3 >225,000k

Data Source: Adult Participation Tracker (YouGov) in place since 2016.

**What band does each County & Island Association fall within for 2026?**

**BANDINGS – RANKED IN ORDER OF PARTICIPATION**

Band 1	Band 1 cont.	Band 2	Band 3
Devon	Bedfordshire	Staffordshire	Middlesex
Leicestershire	Northamptonshire	Hampshire & IOW	Essex
Northumberland	Suffolk	Cheshire	Yorkshire
Derbyshire	Wiltshire	Sussex	Lancashire
Avon	Oxfordshire	Durham & Cleveland	Surrey
Nottinghamshire	Hereford & Worcester	Hertfordshire	Kent
Lincolnshire	Cornwall		Warwickshire
Gloucestershire	Somerset		
Norfolk	Shropshire		
Berkshire	Cumbria		
Cambridgeshire			
Buckinghamshire	<b>Islands</b>		
Dorset	IOM		
	Channel Islands		



For a Band 1 county like Cornwall we will receive £73,240 in 2026 (£69,752 in 2025) apportioned as follows;

Operations 2%	£1,500
Participation 23%	£16,840
Competition 60%	£43,900
Performance 15%	£11,000

**Operations** – (this section previously called volunteering) includes Governance and Management/ Commercial Partnerships/ Safeguarding.

Operations are an important function for the work of the management committee.

**Activity** – compliance with UK Code of Sports Governance achieved / new cttee members recruited/ CIO in progress/ Involved in LTA Commercial partnerships trial / budget information and tracking improved with Quickbooks software / Cornwall BIG tennis survey

results to be analysed to inform future planning / Board self assessment analysis to inform Cttee operations

**Survey results** – Respondents particularly noted that we had done well with marketing and communications, including social media and the newsletter. The Awards evening was well regarded. One comment noted that we had raised the standards of the county association and tennis in Cornwall, made it more structured and more professional. Another noted that we had managed to navigate through a tricky time in terms of coaching and leadership.

Most respondents said they understood only a little of what we do, which is important to address. There were a couple of references to us being too Newquay Centric in our activities and our people.

**Challenges** – recruitment of Financial Lead remains a key gap / number of active committee members is low, so a few people have to carry the bulk of the work, which is not sustainable in the medium term. Two additional committee members have been co-opted to ensure that meetings are quorate and there are different opinions and inputs into our decision making process.

While over the past few years the common perception of a ‘closed shop’ approach has reduced to a large extent, it remains difficult to recruit volunteers and indeed retain volunteers. The forthcoming CIO will be used as the opportunity for a concerted recruitment drive of trustees to carry the next stage of Tennis Cornwall development.

The core of the Tennis Cornwall role is to join and work as a team across the county both with members clubs and in the development of county representative teams.

Development of a wider network of people to assist with the tasks of the Core Role

**Future actions** – wider trustee recruitment upon becoming a charity may prove more attractive for the appointment of a Finance Lead and other trustees. / Charity status possibly helpful in securing external grants / Governance tasks need to be tackled on an ongoing basis to retain compliance and make future assessments less onerous / Improve understanding of what we do – future website development is important to achieve this

**Participation** – Open Court programme/ with the Workforce Development Centre (WDC) Rocket Padel grow and diversify coach and official workforce/organise coach network events/LTA Awards/ Connect and engage with local clubs/ Comms and marketing. Note that our member clubs are increasingly introducing Pickleball and Padel into their programmes.

**Activity** -Open Court Lead recruited/ Padel Ambassador recruited / Coach Conference / Coach Forum (poorly attended) / coaching bursaries granted / working hard to increase LTA Awards in 2025 / Marketing and Communications Lead added to the team (June 2025)

**Survey Results** - Communication from committee very good. Knowledgeable staff who take the time to answer queries and suggest improvement opportunities.

Comments suggest we could do more for older players, improve the number of girls playing, have more involvement with clubs and make them feel like a team

**Challenges** – Attracting young players to the game is challenging as other activities led by football, surf lifesaving, cricket, rugby and netball etc compete for the engagement of young players. Tennis is primarily an individual sport, though our county remit is focussed on teams and this is something we need to raise the importance and profile of. Tennis is also at a distinct disadvantage in terms of the cost of participation due to a culture of paid coaches in direct contrast to other sports. How we overcome these challenges is important for us to consider.

**Future actions** – we might consider a number of possible solutions to our participation challenges;

Tennis Cornwall to Build stronger relationships with its member organisations by agreeing tasks which add joint value

Helping member clubs to make tennis easy and affordable to start as our contribution to an active community

**Competition** – Appoint Competition Lead/ Develop County Competition plan/ support increased provision of Grade 4,5,6 comps with a focus on junior competition/ Transparent team selection and management/ Oversee team management and safeguarding standards/ co-ordinate and quality assure 11+ programme/ PYWTW/County Championships/County Leagues/ LTA National League/Disability competitions

**Activity** – in the past 12 months TC has increased the financial support for its senior teams / costs for accommodation have increased / support for men's and ladies teams our most expensive teams has been poor value for money as there is a low level of interest in team practice even when the county has subsidized this.

**Survey Results** – divides opinion. On the one hand there is a feeling that there is a good range of competitions and that we have supported county teams at all ages.

**Challenges** – no youth league in the county / increased cost of supporting county teams/ varying level of support for the preparation of county teams/ varying levels of players for some teams /

**Future actions** - Annual Review of Selection Criteria / Appoint Competition Lead/ Submit County Competition plan (end December 25)

**An innovative organisation** might consider a number of possible solutions to its challenges;

Increased in county competition for junior players as a priority

Increased competition for older players which also helps to foster inter club relationships. e.g Booth cup reimaged as a team event with teams chosen on the day.

Senior County teams are supported and selected depending on the level of added value they provide to the county by way of competition and commitment for each team.

## **Performance**

**Activity** – mini festivals, pathway booklet, indoor training, performance and development groups, new coaches introduced, termly booking, published selection criteria

**Survey Results** – done well at organizing county training, county cup support, moving training indoors, encouraging young players, more structure, improved training.

Not so well; The lack of aspiration is compounded by the fact the juniors don't know what they are striving for/ wide ability range / need to provide More info regarding selection/ training for county cup / standard of coaching

**Challenges** – low numbers and the varied standard of players coming through to county training

**Future actions** – Implement 10U County Performance Pathway / appoint 10U County Performance Lead / appoint 11-18 County Performance Lead /

10U County Performance Pathway
Responsible for appointing a County Performance Lead (CPL), aligned to the CPL role description
Responsible for creating and delivering a 10U County Performance Action Plan, and actively engaging in its review with the LTA
Responsible for creating positive relationships with venues & coaches, to ensure they are engaged in nominating the appropriate players for County activity
Responsible for identifying and tracking emerging talent using the Talent Characteristics through regular observations at training and competition
Responsible for ensuring coaches are aware of the aspirational standards and use the Talent Characteristics when nominating players for County activity
Responsible for nominating players for Regional Performance Camps based on their alignment with the Talent Characteristics
Responsible for coordinating & ensuring quality delivery of the 10U County Performance Programme - in line with National 10U County Performance Framework
Responsible for understanding and, where appropriate, influencing the weekly training and termly competition schedules of all 10&U county training players, in line with the aspirational standards recommendations
Responsible for supporting the development of the performance pathway by engaging in LTA–County Lead development days & following up on agreed actions

**Measurement** – we will continue to develop meaningful measurements of our activities to ensure a common understanding of how we are progressing.

### The way we work

We value **working together** with every action considered against 'how does this add value to tennis in Cornwall' We have identified a wider leadership group who should be consulted on our 2026 plans in order to get their views.

It is worth noting here that Tennis Cornwall works closely with the LTA and understanding the relationship is important. We are occasionally asked about our support for individual players. This can often be emotive, when there are dreams of young people at stake. Tennis as professional sport is unforgiving and Tennis Cornwall operates at some distance from the professional game. Our role in performance is to run county squads to bring our best players together to improve on a regular basis and develop teams to compete in county cup events. Our further role is to identify 10U talent and potential and to recommend players for regional training camps as the next step on their tennis journey.

We intend to make our **Communications** in a timely way that is relevant to the recipient. The direct to customer Tennis Cornwall newsletter via mailchimp is after 15 editions reaching over 300 and we are no longer solely reliant on 22 Club Chairs to broadcast our message.

**Good governance** – with a fit for purpose governance structure – CIO submitted. Two new members to the committee recruited as intended / drafting of a complaints procedure / Player Pathway document. We will establish an ongoing process of addressing our governance requirements.

**Listening and Learning** – to, with and from the Cornwall Tennis Community. We have arranged get togethers, surveys, club visits and informal conversations which all contribute to our learning. This should be ongoing and never stop. If you keep doing the same things we will keep getting the same results, we will not be afraid to change and we will not be afraid to fail in the quest to improve tennis in Cornwall.

**Realising our strategy** – we have a clear sense of direction for the next three years and a more detailed year one plan and budget, which brings the strategic direction to life. We will review and update our plan on an annual basis. We will report our progress on a quarterly basis to our management committee and within our meeting minutes.

Tennis is a great sport and we will try and add value in all that we do.

As we like to say;

**A game of tennis enjoyed together makes everyone feel better**

**APPENDIX A – Core Role key areas of responsibility**

Core Area	Description of activity ①
Compliance	+ Governance & Management
Compliance	+ Commercial Partnerships
Participation	+ Facility Investment - Tennis & Padel
Participation	+ Disability Development - Tennis & Padel
Participation	+ Workforce Development & Support - Tennis & Padel
Participation	+ LTA Awards
Participation	+ Club Engagement & Support
Participation	+ Customer Engagement & Support
Participation	+ Communication & Marketing
Competition	+ County Competition Provision
Competition	+ County Cup & Finals - 8U, 9U, 10U
Competition	+ County Training, County Cup & Finals - 11U, 12U, 14U, 18U
Competition	+ County Cup - Open Tennis
Competition	+ County Cup - Open Padel
Competition	+ County Cup - 35+, 40+ Tennis
Competition	+ Play Your Way to Wimbledon 14U, 18U, Open
Competition	+ County Championships - Tennis
Competition	+ County Championships - Padel
Competition	+ County Leagues - Tennis
Competition	+ County Leagues - Padel
Competition	+ LTA National League - Tennis
Competition	+ Disability Competitions
Performance	+ 10U County Performance Pathway