



Middlesex
Tennis

Inclusive Tennis in Middlesex: Empowering Communities Through Sport



Welcome from Our Chair



It is a pleasure to introduce our ongoing commitment to Inclusive Tennis - a core part of Middlesex Tennis's vision to make our sport accessible, welcoming, and inspiring for all.

Inclusion is not a standalone project; it is central to everything we do. From grassroots programmes in parks and their partner parks and schools, to competitive and performance pathways, we are dedicated to ensuring that people of all backgrounds, abilities and circumstances can engage and thrive through tennis and padel.

Middlesex Tennis is over 100 years old and in 2024 we proudly became a registered charity. Our commitment, however, goes far beyond any single initiative and thanks to the passion of our clubs and parks, coaches, volunteers, professional staff, and Inclusion Mentors, we are helping to build stronger and more connected communities across Middlesex.

As we look to the future, we invite you to join us in shaping our inclusive approach in north and west London, where tennis is truly a sport for everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Phil Veasey'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Phil' and last name 'Veasey' clearly distinguishable.

Phil Veasey
Chair

About Us

Middlesex Tennis is a modern, forward-thinking organisation with a proud history of promoting tennis and padel since 1895. Covering north and west London, we are one of the largest counties in Great Britain, working with over 160 clubs, parks, and schools to grow participation, develop talent, and strengthen our tennis community.

In 2024, we became a registered charity, expanding our ability to make a meaningful impact across our communities. We support players at every level - from beginners enjoying social play to those competing at national and international levels, including Wimbledon.

We are equally committed to developing the people who make our sport thrive – coaches, officials, volunteers, and community leaders – many of whom have received national recognition for their contribution to the game.

Our Vision

Tennis and padel that welcomes and inspires everyone.

We believe in the power of sport to bring people together, break down barriers, and create a true sense of belonging – where everyone, whatever their background or ability, can participate and thrive.

Our Mission

To support, promote, and grow tennis and padel across Middlesex by making it safe, enjoyable, accessible, and welcoming – reflecting and celebrating the diversity of our communities at every level of the game.



Why Inclusion Matters

Inclusion in sport matters because it transforms lives far beyond the court. Tennis and padel offer powerful pathways to physical wellbeing, mental health, social connection, and personal resilience. Yet too many people still face barriers to participation.

By building genuinely inclusive programmes and communities, we can unlock the benefits of sport for all – strengthening confidence, reducing isolation, promoting equity, and helping individuals and communities to thrive.

At Middlesex Tennis, we believe that when we widen the doors to our sport, we don't just create more players – we build stronger, healthier, and more connected communities.

Our Commitment and Alignment with the LTA's Vision

Our work aligns directly with the LTA's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) vision to "open tennis up" to everyone, everywhere.

We share the LTA's commitment to removing barriers, increasing diversity at all levels of the game, and creating welcoming environments where everyone feels they belong.

Through initiatives such as our Inclusive Hotspots programme, our network of Inclusion Mentors, and the development of inclusive competitions and venues, we are helping to turn this vision into a reality across Middlesex and beyond.

Our Strategic Goals for Inclusion

At Middlesex Tennis, inclusion is woven into the fabric of everything we do. It is not a single programme or initiative – it is the foundation of how we support, promote, and drive the sport across the county.

Our Inclusive Tennis strategy reflects our ambition to create a real and lasting sense of belonging, where everyone, regardless of background or ability, can find their place and thrive.

1. Creating Welcoming and Inclusive Environments, Raising Awareness, and Improving Understanding

A welcoming environment is key to true belonging.

Our current network of 4 **Inclusion Mentors** provides expert support to Middlesex Tennis venues, helping them to deliver inclusive offers that reflect and serve their communities.

Through hands-on guidance – from developing inclusive sessions and adapting facilities, to supporting coach education and inclusive club practices – our Inclusion Mentors are helping clubs to grow as places where everyone feels recognised and supported.

Objectives and Key Results:

- Expand to 5 active Inclusion Mentors by 2026.
- Identify and support 40 venues by 2027 to develop or enhance their inclusive offers.



2. Addressing Inequalities and Championing Belonging

Recognising and rewarding excellence in inclusion is vital for long-term change.

Through the **John James Disability and Inclusion Awards**, presented in partnership with the Dan Maskell Tennis Trust, Middlesex Tennis celebrates and supports three venues each year that demonstrate outstanding commitment to inclusive delivery.

These awards not only highlight best practice but also provide practical backing for venues committed to creating lasting spaces of belonging for disabled players and underrepresented groups across the county.

Objectives and Key Results:

- Recognise 3 venues annually that show outstanding inclusive practice.
- Share award-winning case studies to inspire more clubs to adopt inclusive practices.



3. Embedding Inclusion Across the County

We want to see inclusion enabled at every level – starting with our venues.

Through the **Middlesex Venue Diversity and Inclusion Grants**, we are directly investing in clubs, parks, and community spaces that want to launch or grow inclusive programmes.

These grants help support small-scale facility adaptations, coach provision and education and the purchase of specialist equipment – providing practical resources that allow venues to deliver truly inclusive offers and open up their activities to a more diverse range of players, coaches, and volunteers.

Objectives and Key Results:

- Award a minimum of 25 grants by April 2027.



4. Inclusive Competition Opportunities

Our **Flagship County Championships** are a centrepiece of tennis in Middlesex. Importantly, the inclusion events within the championships – including wheelchair tennis, learning disability tennis, and visually impaired competitions – are delivered in partnership with Surrey Tennis, highlighting our commitment to making high-level competitive tennis welcoming and accessible to all.

We are proud of this leadership, and are exploring opportunities to expand these inclusive partnerships to work with additional counties, broadening the reach and impact of our championships.

Objectives and Key Results:

- Increase the number of inclusive player entries from 24 to 42 by 2027 (baseline 2024).
- Increase the number of inclusive categories from the current 3 - Learning Disability, Wheelchair and VI (Visually Impaired) - to include at least 4 categories by 2027.



5. Increasing Opportunities in the Performance Pathway

We want pathways to success to be open to all.

Our **Performance Foundation** provides targeted support to talented players across Middlesex who need additional assistance to pursue their tennis journey – whether due to financial barriers, disability, or other challenges.

By offering grants, equipment support, and development opportunities, the Foundation ensures that ability and ambition, not background or circumstance, determine who has the opportunity to excel.

Objectives and Key Results:

- Ensure that each year at least 30% of awarded players are from an inclusive background.

6. Partnering with The Queen's Club Foundation to Drive Sustainable Change

In 2025, Middlesex Tennis launched the **Inclusive Hotspots** programme in partnership with the **The Queen's Club Foundation** – a three-year, joint investment to break down barriers and create lasting community impact through tennis and padel.

Focusing on five priority groups – disadvantaged children, women refugees, homeless adults, visually impaired adults, and children with autism – the programme delivers free weekly sessions, holiday camps, and workforce development in Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea.

Alongside local delivery, the project will develop toolkits to help other London boroughs and regions replicate the model, extending the impact far beyond the initial sites.

Objectives and Key Results:

- Launch VI (Hotspot 1) and Disadvantaged Children (Hotspot 2) in 2025, growing to 5 by 2027.
- Across the first two Hotspots offer free weekly sessions and 2 free summer camps each.
- Across Hotspot 1 and 2 train 15 volunteers confident to support a tennis session and 26 tennis leaders that are given the opportunity to be involved in sessions.

Big or small, every bit of support helps us open up our sport to more people across Middlesex.

Player Spotlights & Case Studies

Naqi Rizvi: The Power of True Vision

Born in South Asia to a Pakistani father and Indian mother, Naqi Rizvi lost his sight by the age of seven due to congenital glaucoma. Despite early hardship and financial struggle, he was raised in a loving household that instilled in him a sense of resilience and purpose. After moving to London in 2014 and undergoing life-changing surgery, Naqi discovered visually impaired (VI) tennis – turning up to his first session in jeans and formal shoes. He hasn't looked back since.

Today, Naqi is one of the world's leading VI tennis players, holding World and European Championship titles in the B1 category. But his commitment goes far beyond medals. A gifted speaker and advocate, Naqi uses his platform to challenge perceptions, promote inclusion, and remind people that "disability is not the same as inability."

A valued figure in Middlesex Tennis and beyond, Naqi brings insight, humility and joy to everything he does – proving that real vision comes from within.





Lily Mills: Leading with Passion and Purpose

Lily Mills' journey into tennis began at a young age through local community initiatives supported by Middlesex Tennis. Her natural talent and infectious enthusiasm quickly set her apart. Lily found a passion not only for competition but for the sense of belonging that tennis provided. Embracing every opportunity to learn and improve, she became a shining example of what inclusive sport can achieve when barriers are removed and encouragement is given.

Lily's achievements are nothing short of inspiring. She is a three-time Special Olympics gold medallist and has proudly represented Great Britain at the Australian Open's Persons with Intellectual Impairments (PWII) competition – twice, in both 2024 and 2025. She has also represented GB at the Virtus Tennis World Championships in 2023, 2024, and 2025 – most recently bringing home two bronze medals from the 2025 edition held in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Beyond her competitive success, Lily is a cornerstone of the Middlesex Tennis community. She volunteers at coach forums, participates in events, and always shows up with her trademark smile and positive energy. Whether mentoring younger players or representing Middlesex at major events, Lily's commitment to giving back is unwavering. She embodies the values of inclusivity, excellence, and community spirit, and continues to inspire everyone around her.

Community Case Study: Inclusive Hotspots – Serving Up Equity Through Sport



In 2025, Middlesex Tennis and The Queen's Club Foundation launched Inclusive Hotspots – a three-year, jointly funded initiative designed to bring tennis and padel to communities that need it most. Backed by a £90,000 investment, the project focuses on two London boroughs with deep social challenges: **Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea**.

While these boroughs may appear affluent on the surface, they are home to some of London's starkest inequalities. Nearly 30% of children in Hammersmith and Fulham live in poverty, with even greater barriers faced by those with disabilities, refugee backgrounds, or experiences of homelessness. Access to affordable sport is limited, but Inclusive Hotspots is changing that – offering local people a way to connect, belong, and thrive.

What Makes Inclusive Hotspots Different?

At the heart of this project is **community-led delivery**, with each Hotspot designed around one or more of five priority groups: disadvantaged children, visually impaired adults, women refugees, homeless adults, and children with autism.

Through **free weekly sessions, holiday camps, and partnerships with schools and community organisations**, the programme offers more than just a chance to play – it builds lasting, welcoming spaces where people can feel part of something bigger.

Importantly, this isn't just a local project. By capturing what works and developing **practical toolkits**, Inclusive Hotspots is laying the groundwork for other boroughs and regions to follow, spreading the impact far beyond its original locations.

Real Stories, Real Change

From a young girl from a refugee background picking up a racket for the first time, to a blind adult inspired by World No.1 **Naqi Rizvi** stepping onto court with confidence – these stories are already happening. They show what's possible when communities are supported to lead their own change.

Building a Lasting Legacy

By **training local coaches and volunteers, embedding activity in schools and clubs, and creating progression pathways** from beginner to leader, Inclusive Hotspots is designed to create a legacy that lasts long after the funding ends.

It's about more than sport. It's about serving up opportunity, connection, and equity – through tennis, for everyone.

Community Case Study: Serving Support and Connection – Dementia-Friendly Tennis in Uxbridge



At Uxbridge Lawn Tennis Club, a quiet but powerful initiative is changing lives every Tuesday afternoon. For over three years, **Dementia-Friendly Tennis** has been offering movement, connection, and joy to people living with early-onset dementia and their families.

Funded by **Hillingdon Council** and delivered by **Stuart Wilkinson**, one of Middlesex Tennis's Inclusion Mentors, this weekly session brings together players aged from their 50s to over 90. Supported by three dedicated club volunteers, the session creates a welcoming environment where ability is never a barrier.

What the Session Offers

Each session starts with fun warm-ups focused on balance and coordination, followed by simple tennis drills – forehands, backhands, and movement-based games designed to keep everyone active and engaged.

While participants enjoy the activity, carers and partners take the opportunity to connect with each other on the sidelines, finding support, conversation, and moments of respite.

With around **15 participants each year** and seven regular weekly players, the session has become a valued part of life for many in the community – providing not just physical activity, but also social interaction and a much-needed sense of normality.

Building an Inclusive Community

This programme is part of a wider network of free, dementia-friendly activities offered across Hillingdon – from swimming and walking football to art and boccia. Together, these initiatives demonstrate the power of sport to create inclusive spaces where everyone can belong, no matter their age or health condition.

Lasting Impact

What makes this session special is its simplicity and consistency. By offering a safe, social, and supportive environment, Uxbridge Lawn Tennis Club is showing how tennis can bring people together, improve wellbeing, and make a real difference – one Tuesday at a time.

Sponsorship & CSR – Let's Make a Difference Together

At Middlesex Tennis, we believe sport is one of the best tools for building healthier, more connected communities. But not everyone has the same opportunities to take part. That's where you come in.

By partnering with us, your organisation can play a real part in making tennis accessible to those who need it most – from children growing up in disadvantaged areas to adults living with disabilities, isolation, or homelessness.

Whether it's supporting our Inclusive Hotspots, helping us fund equipment or venue adaptations, or backing our volunteers and community coaches, your support will help us change lives through sport – right here in London.

We can also offer volunteering experiences for teams who want to get involved on the ground, supporting community events or inclusive sessions alongside our dedicated workforce.

If your organisation is looking to make a meaningful difference – we'd love to hear from you.

How to Get Involved

We're always looking to grow our network of supporters, partners, and volunteers. Here are just a few of the ways you can get involved:

- **Become a Partner**

Work with us to deliver community projects that leave a lasting impact.

- **Sponsor a Programme or Event**

Help us expand our reach by supporting new activities, venues, or player pathways.

- **Volunteer Your Time or Expertise**

Join us at community sessions, share your skills, or support our events.

- **Help Spread the Word**

Tell your networks about the work we're doing and help us reach more people.

Who to Contact

If you'd like to explore how to get involved or simply find out more about what we do – we'd love to hear from you.



Martin Etheridge

Inclusion Lead

Martin works with clubs, coaches, and community partners across Middlesex to make tennis and padel more inclusive and accessible for all.

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Pia Forsman-Colas

Sponsorship & Content Manager

Pia looks after our partnerships and communications, helping organisations and supporters connect with our work in meaningful ways.

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Andrew Lewandowski

Tennis Manager

Andrew leads our tennis development work, supporting players, coaches, and venues across Middlesex to grow and thrive at every level.

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*We don't just play tennis.
We build belonging.*

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