

## Middlesex LTA Chair's report – 11 December 2023

I would like to welcome you all tonight to our AGM.

I really like our AGMs - as for us its more than just a governance 'must do'.

We also use it as a chance to reflect on the fantastic tennis year we have had – so once we get the governance/protocols items completed - Andrew and the professional staff team will take a moment to take us on a tour of the past 12 months - plus we have some very special guests this year!

And then some presentations!

Then we can finish with a drink!

Firstly – each year I receive a [set of slides from the LTA](#) summing up the year across the UK – there are 14 slides which we will share with all attendees after the meeting – the highlight for me is the continued growth in tennis participation:

- We now have over 5.5 million adults playing annually, over 2.5 million adults playing monthly and over 700,000 children playing weekly.
- That's a growth of 43% in adult annual participation since December 2018
- And ... Tennis is one of the few sports to have increased children's participation numbers compared to 2018/19

In terms of Tennis in Middlesex - I want to start my report with a salute to John James who passed away this past summer. John was our President and a much loved figure – quite literally – across the tennis world.

John will be sorely missed and we will be working in partnership with the Dan Maskell Trust in 2024 to create some form of award or event that will be a fitting memorial to John to add to the work on diversity and inclusion that he loved so much.

I now want to say 3 thank yous!

Firstly - I want to say thank you to the professional staff – Andrew, Sangeeta, Mark and Katie - you all work so hard – and you do it with such big smiles on your faces – the passion and the dedication you demonstrate in your roles makes me feel so pleased that you work for Middlesex Tennis!

Secondly – a big thank you to all of our board members in 2023 – we have a dynamic board, full of members who are not just strategic, but also play 'doing roles' to compliment the work of the professional team.

Thirdly – thanks to all of our venues – our 160 clubs and parks, the coaches, the volunteers, officials and players – all members of what I like to call the Middlesex Tennis family - for making the County such a vibrant tennis community!

I am only going to dwell one of my highlights of this past year as Andrew will pick them all up shortly.

I want to say congratulations to Fran and Corina for guiding the women's County Cup team to winning promotion to Group 1 in both the summer and winter events for 2024 – that's amazing!

Unusually for a Chairs report – I want to quickly look ahead to 3 things in 2024!

**Firstly** - we have identified 4 areas of transformational change for 2024. These are areas of work that we really want to get stuck into.

- **Diversity and inclusion** – due to Mark's work we are leading the way across tennis counties in the UK but we want to do more! We are just about to appoint 4 diversity and inclusion mentors to work with 40 of our venues over the next 3 years to develop projects that the clubs and parks want to work on.
- **Coaching** - a project to identify, recruit and deploy potential leaders and coaches into Middlesex Venues.
- **Officiating** – how do we grow and develop a workforce to support our competitions programme and all of the hard work that Sangeeta undertakes?
- **Performance** – how do we maximise the chances of success for our Men's and Women's County Cup teams?

**Secondly** – we want to give our venues more notice of all of the support events such as the online forums and the in person coffee mornings that we run. Watch out for the 'Spring Swing' events coming your way between January and Easter. The amazing schedule will feature our first ever deep dive into environmental sustainability and tennis on the 29 January – book your places now!

**Thirdly** – we are heading towards incorporation – and Matt is going to quickly sum up where we are in the process and our next steps as we head towards charitable status.

PV 11/12/23