

# **Tennis in London**

A report by the London Assembly's Economic Development and Planning Committee

January 2005



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### **Greater London Authority**

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Junior Programme at Westway © Westway Sports Centre, 2004

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## Foreword



Earlier this year, the London Assembly's Culture Sport and Tourism Committee met with Sport England and the LTA to discuss tennis in London.

Using the Wimbledon Championships as our starting point, the Committee investigated how this world famous tournament can help to promote tennis at a grass roots level within the capital.

We also considered access to tennis courts in London, highlighted projects which encourage young people to get involved in tennis (such as the Westway Tennis centre), and examined how the Mayor, Sport England and the LTA can encourage more Londoners to pick up a racquet.

At present, this year's Wimbledon Championships seem a long way away. However, as this report points out, planning needs to start now if we are to translate the excitement of the annual Wimbledon Championships into greater opportunities for Londoners to get more active. And with support for London's 2012 Olympic bid building, London needs to demonstrate active encouragement for grassroots participation in tennis.

Responsibility for investigating issues associated with sport in London has now passed to the Economic Development and Planning Committee. On behalf of my colleagues from the former Culture Sport and Tourism Committee, I commend this short report.

I trust that it will form part of the Economic Development and Planning Committee's broader desire to improve sporting opportunities in London.

**Angie Bray AM** 

Deputy Chair of the former Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee and Member of the Economic Development and Planning Committee

January 2005

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#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Every June, the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club hosts the world's most famous tennis tournament. Half a million spectators and an estimated 1.8 billion television viewers watch the world's best players battle it out on Wimbledon's courts.
- 1.2 Inevitably, the attention for this fortnight is on the matches, on the British chances of success and on the personalities and fashion.
- 1.3 This short paper looks at the relationship between the Wimbledon Championships and London during the other 50 weeks of the year. London is very fortunate to host such a prestigious competition and the Wimbledon Championships draw significant numbers of tourists every year.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.4 However, as with the bid for the 2012 Olympics,<sup>2</sup> the London Assembly's Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee were as interested in the benefits that such a major event can bring to London.
- 1.5 In particular, we wanted to know:
  - What is being done, and what more should be done, by sporting bodies and local authorities to capitalise on the enthusiasm Wimbledon generates to increase all year round tennis participation?
  - How much is spent on tennis facilities, coaching, promotion and outreach in London?
  - What are the barriers (real and perceived) to playing tennis in London?
- 1.6 To answer these questions the Committee invited the governing body of British tennis, the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and Sport England to attend its meeting on 12 May 2004. We also contacted all London boroughs to ask about the number of tennis courts in their area and their policy for hiring courts.<sup>3</sup>

AELTC claims that at least 60,000 visitors from overseas were attracted to the event in 2003.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See *Bidding for the 2012 Olympics: A contribution from the London Assembly, GLA, November* 2003

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Responses received from 27 local authorities. Telephone interviews conducted with leisure officers in each borough.

#### Tennis in London: key figures

- ➤ The LTA estimates that 441,000 people play tennis in London 137,000 of them playing regularly.<sup>4</sup>
- ➤ London Tennis Ltd, a private company which organises tennis competitions in the Capital, states that there are 2,000 tennis courts in total in Greater London
- ➤ Of these 2,000 courts, approximately 1,000 are owned by clubs<sup>5</sup> and 1,000 are owned by local authorities.
- ➤ LTA estimates are that two-thirds of local authority courts nationally are in a state of disrepair.
- ➤ The cost of hiring local authority courts is between £2-6 per hour for adults. 6
- ➤ However, eight local authorities appear to operate a policy of free tennis courts<sup>7</sup> and three others told us that fees mostly go uncollected.<sup>8</sup>
- ➤ In 2003, Sport England spent approximately £18.7 million on tennis facilities, coaching and promotion and outreach in London

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> LTA estimates that 441,000 people play tennis in London on an infrequent basis. Submission from LTA

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> London has 200 LTA affiliated tennis clubs in London, which provide over 800 courts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Corporation of London charges £10.50 per hour at peak; £6.50 off peak.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Barking and Dagenham, Ealing (most courts), Enfield, Hillingdon (except professional training), Newham, Redbridge, Southwark (except Dulwich Park) and Sutton. Committee research (unpublished).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Harrow, Havering and Croydon. Committee research (unpublished)

### 2. Capitalising on the Wimbledon experience

- 2.1 In an earlier report we discussed in detail the benefits that participation in sport can bring for young Londoners not just for their health and wellbeing but also for connecting young people to education, employment and self-development opportunities. Of course, tennis is only one of the many sports that Londoners can play. However, given that the world's most famous tennis tournament is played in London and tennis is one of Sport England's 10 priority sports, we were interested in exploring how LTA and Sport England exploit the Wimbledon Championships to encourage more Londoners to be active.
- 2.2 Roger Draper, Chief Executive of Sport England, told us that 'Wimbledon is absolutely key to our strategy for sport in London.' His counterpart at LTA, John Crowther, agreed that 'Wimbledon does provide us with an unparalleled opportunity to promote tennis.'
- 2.3 The most immediate benefit from the Wimbledon Championships is the revenue generated by the event. The 2003 competition brought in £25.8 million (net income) which was invested back into tennis initiatives nationally.<sup>12</sup>
- 2.4 In addition, the LTA outlined several ways in which it attempts to translate the enthusiasm generated by the Wimbledon Championships each year into lasting benefit. For example:
  - ➤ A sponsored campaign, Play Tennis, which offers free tennis lessons with LTA coaches in April/May 2004. Last year, 8,000 Londoners participated in the scheme on average, a third joined their local tennis clubs after playing.<sup>13</sup>
  - ➤ Ariel Tennis Ace campaign a 'talent search' for young players, the winner of which receives coaching with John McEnroe during the Wimbledon Championships;
  - ➤ A Tennis Show in April 2004 which was linked with the Fitness Show offering free coaching, access to clubs and information;
  - ➤ The Wimbledon Kid's Zone during the Championships, a kid's area is established to introduce children to tennis (eg. mini-tennis). Last year, 6,000 children attended; and
  - ➤ 'The Road to Wimbledon' initiative for young players uses the event's allure to encourage promising young players. Winners of the competition play at Wimbledon in August.
- 2.5 When asked what the Mayor of London could do to enhance the impact of Wimbledon, both the LTA and Sport England drew comparisons with New York City's approach to the US Open. They noted that in London, 'Wimbledon is too often seen as part of the summer social circuit as opposed to a major sporting event.' In contrast, we heard that 'New York during the US Open, [is] a city

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> A Sporting Chance, GLA, September 2003

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>12 &#</sup>x27;LTA invests in more players and better players', LTA Press Release, 24 November 2003

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> See submission from LTA and New Balls: LTA Annual Report 2003

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

obsessed with tennis' where big screens and exhibition matches are set up in public spaces.

2.6 Sport England commented that:

It is not just the London Borough of Merton trying their best with limited resources; it is the whole of New York. You go and get a tube map, and they have all been 'tennisised' with signposts to all the indoor courts, the free tennis clubs, the parks and so on. I think using the event on a London-wide basis, not just the London Borough of Merton opening its park courts and so on, is certainly a step in the right direction.<sup>15</sup>

- 2.7 The LTA stated that 'support from the GLA to do the same [as New York] in London would help exploit the fact that we are hosting the world's leading Grand Slam Tournament.' From our discussions, it appears that they are seeking support from the Mayor of London for the use of Trafalgar Square for screenings of matches and exhibition matches (mini-tennis and normal tennis), as well as the production of specific Tube maps which not only show how to get to Wimbledon but also the location of tennis courts and free tennis initiatives. The GLA's cultural events team told us that it would look positively on screening televised Wimbledon matches in Trafalgar Square in 2005. 17
- 2.8 During Wimbledon last year, American Express sponsored a five-day event next to Tower Bridge with larges screens televising Wimbledon matches, tennis training and a celebrity tennis night which raised money for the Sport Relief Charity. Private sponsorship for these kind of free public events is to be welcomed. In our view, there could be scope for the Mayor and Visit London to promote these tennis initiatives across the Capital.

#### Recommendation 1

Taking a lead from New York's celebrations during the US Open, the Mayor of London should work with Visit London and the LTA to promote tennis during the Wimbledon Championships 2005 (for example, by screening live televised matches in Trafalgar Square and hosting exhibition matches in prominent public spaces).

2.9 The 'Tennis for Free' campaign has also used the lead up to Wimbledon to lobby local authorities to provide their tennis courts for free. The campaign argues that making public tennis courts free will increase their usage, give value to council taxpayers, reduce vandalism and decrease the costs associated with enforcement and collection of fees. Campaign spokesperson, Tony Hawkes, explained that:

We want councils to let us become partners in running the courts; let us do them up, and provide rackets and, hopefully, coaching for free. <sup>19</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Submission from LTA

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> We were informed that due to the Olympic Torch Relay and other events in last week June and first week of July 2004, it was not possible to screen televised Wimbledon matches last year. <sup>18</sup> See www.tennisforfree.com

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> BBC London, http://www.bbc.co.uk/london/sport/tennis/tennis for free.shtml

- 2.10 The LTA is supportive of the campaign and is trialling two programmes—in Rushmoor (Surrey) and the London Borough of Merton—in order to work out 'how this business model works, because coaches need to earn a living'. The Assembly's research shows that a third of local authorities in London appear to operate a policy already in which courts are free or the fee goes uncollected.
- 2.11 Both Sport England and the LTA told us that simply making public courts free is 'not a cost effective answer';<sup>21</sup> this approach needs to be accompanied by proper training. The LTA noted that statistics from the USA show that only 18 per cent of people who played for free on public tennis courts carried on playing. This rose to 50 per cent once professional coaching was twinned with free access. Similarly, a Sport England pilot to encourage young Glaswegians to swim for free, initially showed that usage of public pools increased by more than half. However, once initial enthusiasm waned and account was taken of the increased costs for councils and the loss of some traditional swimmers, there has only been a 6 per cent increase in usage.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> John Crowther, Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Sport England response, Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

## 3. Barriers to playing tennis in London

- 3.1 Of course, there is little point in using the Wimbledon Championships to inspire young people to become more active 'if they are going to come out of their front doors to rotting facilities, poor coaching and infrastructure.' 23
- 3.2 As Sport England observed:

What we now have to do is make sure we have that infrastructure in place so that when [an English player] wins Wimbledon, we have open doors, we have the clubs, and we have the coaches in place...I think the big question mark is whether we are ready for that success if we do win Wimbledon. I think there is a lot of hard work needed to do that.<sup>24</sup>

- 3.3 We found it difficult to obtain any clear comparisons between levels of funding, training and support or particular barriers in London compared to other cities. At an international level, LTA noted that tennis infrastructure across the UK lagged behind other strong tennis nations. For example, the LTA would have to spend £1.2 billion to have the kind of indoor court access nationally that countries like France enjoy. France has six times more courts per person than the UK; Sweden has eight times more courts.
- 3.4 In summary, Sport England and the LTA identified the following barriers to greater participation in tennis in London:<sup>27</sup>
  - Cost (according to the LTA, this is more perceived than real studies show that actual cost of tennis membership is more than half what people estimate)
  - Poor local authority facilities and a lack of investment in facilities
  - > The weather (majority of tennis opportunities available throughout summer)
  - > No co-ordinated approach to tennis for people with disabilities
  - Low level of girls participating (only 31% of coaches are women)<sup>28</sup>
  - Over-stretched volunteer network
  - ➤ Competition with other leisure activities and sports<sup>29</sup> and loss of interest in playing any sport once young people leave school.<sup>30</sup>
- 3.5 The one London-specific observation made by the LTA was that 'the size and spread of some boroughs causes problems in being able to produce meaningful networks of community clubs that can interact and support each other

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Submission from LTA

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Collated from submissions from LTA and Sport England

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Sport England put the proportion of female coaches at 25%

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> The more popular sports played by primary and secondary school children at least 10 times a year (in order): swimming (61%), cycling (56%), football (51%), athletics (40%), gymnastics (39%), rounders (37%) and tennis (32%). *Young People and Sport in England 1999*, Sport England, 2001.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> According to LTA, 70% of all children when they leave school, do not carry on participating in sport.

effectively.'<sup>31</sup> This reflects information gathered by the Assembly elsewhere<sup>32</sup> and Sport England's experience: 'We have tried hard to get the London boroughs working together on a number of sports initiatives and...we have found that an extremely difficult challenge.'<sup>33</sup>

3.6 The box below illustrates some of the ways in which the LTA is trying to overcome some of these barriers in London. It has sought to encourage more young people to start playing tennis (through Mini Tennis for young children and the Tennis in Schools Programme) with the hope that some of them will move on to play tennis at the elite level.

#### Other LTA activity in London

- ➤ In December 2003, LTA received planning permission from LB Wandsworth to build a **National Tennis Centre** in Roehampton. The Centre, costing approximately £40 million, will consist of 16 outdoor courts, six indoor courts, gymnasium, physiotherapy centre, rehabilitation area, exercise facilities and temporary accommodation.
- ➤ LTA also runs a **Club Vision programme** (which supports and modernises clubs in Great Britain) and a **Performance Clubs programme** which offers specialist training and support to players in each region. There are currently 10 performance accredited clubs in London that enjoy over £170,000 funding from the LTA per annum
- ➤ It has established 5 **indoor pay and play centres** in Islington, Bromley, Sutton, Redbridge and at the Westway, providing 39 indoor courts and 24 outdoor courts.
- 3.7 In a city in which 48 per cent of children in inner London households live in poverty, 34 affordable tennis lessons at convenient locations is essential. The LTA's City Tennis Club (CTC) programme, which started in Hackney in 2001, focuses on the regeneration of park and school courts in deprived inner and urban areas and aims to give young people a chance to play tennis for as little as £1 a session. The LTA has invested £321,000 in 5 clubs in London; between them they have developed links to 75 schools and five Active Sports partnerships. These clubs provide 60 dedicated tennis courts in inner city parks. According to the LTA, 15,000 London children are now taking tennis lessons at these clubs each week.
- 3.8 Two good examples are the CTC clubs at the Westway Sports Centre (which has eight indoor and four floodlit courts) and Hackney Tennis Club (Clissold Park). Clissold Park received LTA funding to resurface nine local authority courts and now, according to the LTA has '800-1,000 kids playing tennis throughout the year who have never played tennis before.' Both Westway and Clissold Park hold open tennis lessons for children within the local area, offer 'pay and play'

<sup>31</sup> Submission from LTA

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> See for example, *A Sporting Chance*, GLA, September 2003 and *Bidding for the 2012 Olympics: A contribution from the London Assembly*, GLA, November 2003

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> After housing costs. See Sustaining success: developing London's economy, LDA,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

#### **Westway Tennis Centre**

Located on land underneath and adjacent to the A40 Westway flyover in North Kensington, the Westway Tennis Centre opened in 1995 with capital investment from the LTA and Sport England. With further LTA and Lottery funding its four tennis courts were expanded to 12 in 2001.

The Centre aims to encourage local young people from all social backgrounds to become involved in tennis both through outreach work in local schools and its work with local community groups and youth projects. This work feeds into a structured tennis development programme offering coaching at all levels for children from the age of four upwards.

The Centre balances the dual role of being a pay and play centre offering top-class facilities, with both indoor acrylic and outdoor clay courts, and operating an extensive community tennis programme. It is also an LTA Junior Performance Tennis Centre with nationally ranked players. Being one of only two non-membership indoor tennis centres in London, Westway is one of the busiest indoor centres nationally, with over 2000 players a week.

Providing access to quality facilities for such a market has resulted in it being able to create and fund an extensive community tennis development programme, which now also attracts additional external funding from bodies including the LTA.

Grass roots tennis development has resulted in thousands of local primary and secondary children participating in school time activities. Most local schools take part in regular tennis sessions as part of their curriculum activities. As a result over 300 players in 12 local schools take part in weekly tennis sessions delivered by outreach coaches. The Centre also provides follow-on opportunities for local young people to play at whatever level they aspire to. Over 400 children are now part of the Westway junior tennis programme taking place at the Centre each week.

Programme activities are heavily subsidised by the Westway Development Trust, which developed and runs the centre. A bursary scheme also exists to enable players from low income families to fulfil their potential whether this is as a recreational player or as an elite performer. Many local children have gone on to perform at county and national level, which indicates the wealth of talent and ability within inner city areas.

The Centre aims to break the barriers that have traditionally limited participation in tennis. It run sessions for local youth clubs and further education colleges, and has hosted events for disability groups. It aims also to offer access to careers in sport to local people, and all six of the current development coaching team were involved as youngsters in the Westway tennis programme. The educational, life skill and career benefits this brings contribute to the local community and offer positive role models to junior members of the programme.

Whilst it continues to invest in its programme, the Centre is still acutely aware that its facilities and programmes are extremely unusual if not unique in inner London. The limited availability of top quality facilities is still one of the key limiting factors in inner city tennis development. Even Westway's extensive facilities and outreach programme can only serve a relatively small area. The Centre is equally constrained in terms of the availability of court hours for junior tennis, due to the financial need to cross-subsidise its development programmes from 'full-price' court hours.

The Centre also endeavours to offer some affordable tennis for local adults through 'pay and play' organised sessions, but the core of its work is with the players of tomorrow.

opportunities and provide professional training. In the past, tennis professionals (John McEnroe, Venus Williams, Pat Cash and Boris Becker) have attended Westway and Clissold Park to promote CTC activities, provide coaching to young players and play exhibition matches. Five London boroughs<sup>36</sup> are in discussion to open further clubs. The LTA suggested that the Mayor of London could help by promoting these kinds of programmes within London.<sup>37</sup>

- 3.9 There is little that the LTA can do to change the weather but it has sought to invest in indoor courts and floodlighting through its Club Vision programme and Indoor Tennis Initiative. In 2003, the LTA committed £2.28 million to facilities in London (30% of the LTA's total facility spending last year) and since 2001 it has invested over £4.89 million in 16 major tennis projects in London.
- 3.10 Sport England has launched a website <a href="www.activeplaces.com">www.activeplaces.com</a> which aims to list facilities for all sports, including the locations for tennis courts in London. We believe its usefulness could be enhanced if it also records the condition of facilities. If the LTA's estimation that a third of local authority tennis courts are in a state of disrepair is correct, this information should be highlighted on the database. This will provide a more realistic picture of sports resources in London and may serve as a prompt to local authorities to improve their local facilities.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that Sport England include information about the condition of tennis facilities on its 'active places' website.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> London Boroughs of Brent, Lambeth, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

#### 4. Future investment in tennis in London

- 4.1 In 2003, Sport England spent approximately £18.7 million on tennis facilities, coaching and promotion and outreach in London (see Figure 1 below). Its Chief Executive told us that 'from now on [all funding] will be channelled through regional sports boards at a community level and through governing bodies like the LTA [once a business plan has been agreed].'38
- 4.2 In effect, this will mean two funding streams for tennis in London:
  - one distributed to LTA to invest in line with its business plan;
  - > the second allocated though the London Sports Board.

Figure 1: Sport England funding for tennis in London 2003/04 <sup>39</sup>								
Programme Name	Grants	Award Amount £	Project Cost £					
Active Communities Development Fund	2	125,481	420,706					
Active Sports – National Governing Bodies	1	83,130	83,130					
Community Capital	56	18,289,444	28,261,931					
Awards for All	46	172,156						
Total	105	18,670,811						

4.3 This will not, however, signify a dramatic increase in the amount of funding for tennis facilities or programmes in London. Sport England made very clear to us that:

In terms of investment of resources [for tennis], it is limited. If you take our London regional sports boards, they have got about £20 million across all sports. We have just reopened the doors for business on lottery and already we have had 180 applications in the last week in London alone, at a total project cost of £200-£300 million. We are going to have to be far more focussed in our investment...Sport cannot rely on the lottery. There has been a 63% real decline in lottery funding and Exchequer funding has stayed the same.

- 4.4 As a result, Sport England will target funding to those London boroughs which are committed to sport and leisure and have a robust sports plan in place- rather than 'spreading the jam thinly.'40
- 4.5 This will lead to some difficult decisions. We heard that the tendency is towards consolidating facilities under one roof, towards 'swimming pools, indoor tennis courts, skate parks [and so on] all packaged together' with library, internet café and crèches;<sup>41</sup> one possible model is the David Lloyd Centres. With increased

<sup>38</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Submission from Sport England

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

pressure on funding, there is inevitably less ability to prop up out-dated, poorly maintained, or inconveniently located sporting facilities. In addition, Sport England is keen to invest in the human side of sport – the volunteers and coaches which keep tennis going in London – rather than 'investing in bricks and mortar.'<sup>42</sup>

4.6 The LTA told us it is under pressure to deliver maximum returns from its capital investments. In some cases, the proviso for LTA funding for new facilities has been that they are mainly used for tennis. One example discussed was the development of a new community sports facility based in Leyton, East London (the Leyton Orient Community Sport Project). As Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme explained:

The intention was to improve ten outdoor tennis courts by placing a 'bubble' type structure over six courts. The initial costs were £900,000 with the LTA generously providing £650,000 (half of their annual facilities budget). As the project developed the costs rose for the indoor centre especially as the LTA and Sport England had a long debate at a national level about the most appropriate fabric strength for the bubble. The effect of this on the project was an increase on the indoor centre costs to £1.5 million.

Neither Sport England nor the LTA were willing to fund the gap. In addition the LTA had offered £50,000 over five years as a contribution to running the centre. Following a period of discussion the Sports Club Orient Board and Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme Board decided to decline LTA's kind offer. This decision was based on the understanding that the LTA would require sole use of the facility for at least 28 years.

As both Boards were responsible for the future success of the facility it was agreed that this would be too constraining especially as no other sporting activities would be allowed to take place. Both Boards therefore concluded that for a 40% capital contribution and £10,000 per year for five year running contribution the LTA were getting a very very good deal but that the 28 year sole usage requirement was both unreasonable and unsustainable.  $^{43}$ 

- 4.7 In the end, a plan was approved to build 6 outdoor floodlit multi use tennis, netball and basketball courts since they 'would offer far more scope in attracting and sustaining large numbers of participants.'<sup>44</sup> The LTA noted that 'we never withdrew the offer. We left the funding there. Unfortunately, we could not make it work in that particular instance because it was not adding up.' With limited resources and pressure to achieve success in tennis, it 'has to put money where [it] gets the output.'<sup>45</sup>
- 4.8 In his London Plan, the Mayor has committed to 'work with strategic partnerships to promote and develop London's sporting facilities' and has requested that boroughs ensure that 'new provision [of sports facilities] is focused on areas with existing deficiencies in facilities' and encourages multiuse. 46

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Email from Neil Taylor, Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Email from Neil Taylor, Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Policy 3D.5, *The London Plan*, GLA, February 2004. p.138

4.9 As the example above demonstrates, achieving better tennis and sporting facilities in London will not be easy. There are significant tensions within the current funding system and considerable pressure on sporting bodies to demonstrate a 'return' on investments.

#### Recommendation 3

There is an apparent tension between the targeting of the LTA and Sport England's limited resources and the ability of Londoners to attend sports facilities and programmes in their local area. We recommend that this issue be kept under review by the London Assembly and the London Sports Board.

## Appendix A: Recommendations and evidence received

#### Recommendations

- 1. Taking a lead from New York's celebrations during the US Open, the Mayor of London should work with Visit London and the LTA to promote tennis during the Wimbledon Championships 2005 (for example, by screening live televised matches in Trafalgar Square and hosting exhibition matches in prominent public spaces).
- 2. We recommend that Sport England include information about the condition of tennis facilities on its 'active places' website.
- 3. There is an apparent tension between the targeting of the LTA and Sport England's limited resources and the ability of Londoners to attend sports facilities and programmes in their local area. We recommend that this issue be kept under review by the London Assembly and the London Sports Board.

### Culture Sport and Tourism Committee meeting, 12 May 2004

The Committee heard from:

- > Roger Draper, Chief Executive of Sport England
- ➤ John Crowther, Chief Executive of the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)
- ➤ Heidi Cohu, Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)

#### Written submissions

The Committee received written submissions from:

- > Sport England
- ➤ ITA

## **Appendix B: Orders and translations**

#### **How to Order**

For further information on this report or to order a copy, please contact Richard Linton, Senior Scrutiny Manager, on 0207 983 4207 or email at richard.linton@london.gov.uk.

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