



# Sustainability Appraisal

Accessible Tennis

May 2021



# Executive Summary

This report has been prepared for Accessible Tennis CIC to provide an initial sustainability appraisal of the organisation, so providing a benchmark to monitor future progress along the Sustainable Pathway and identify strengths and weaknesses within the organisation to allow a strategy to be developed for improving the positive impact of the organisation.

Through a discussion with Marie Burns on 17 May 2021 and reviewing the Accessible Tennis website and sustainability policy quantitative and qualitative information was gathered and collated into this report.

Across the four quadrants of the development tool, the report highlights current areas of success and where future development could be considered to improve overall performance and sustainable development of the organisation. To avoid bias, the assessment has no weighting, i.e. every indicator is of equal value. Weighting systems are often contentious and they prioritise particular issues. The Sustainable Pathways approach is to present an unbiased independent assessment which presents the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation. This then allows the organisation to decide its own priorities and weightings.

Accessible Tennis is a social enterprise which aims to provide tennis coaching for underrepresented groups in sport such as people with disabilities or health conditions, older people and women with the aim of improving the health, fitness and wellbeing of those individuals and the community as a whole as well as improving social inclusion. The organisation is a nomadic company, with no owned facilities but using local facilities. There is a Head Coach supported by self-employed coaches depending upon demand and funding.

Many of the strengths of the organisation are due to it being a nomadic company, with no buildings or facilities. However, it does use local facilities and so can influence venue owners by making choices based on sustainable criteria. The current risk assessment does cover some issues like public transport, security, shelter, access to drinking water and toilet facilities. A “sustainability checklist” could be developed for venues to include for additional items such as assessing energy suppliers where appropriate (for provision of renewable energy or use of green energy suppliers), efficiency of building management systems, waste collection policies, approach to biodiversity, etc.

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While Accessible Tennis has informal practices for travel and purchasing, it may like to consider developing more formal policies for travelling, ethical trading and supply chain management.

The review has also revealed that Accessible Tennis currently has interaction with the local community to educate them and demonstrate to them what it is doing in terms of sustainability. There is evidence of published material discussing what the organisation is doing regarding sustainability and to improve this the organisation could add a section to their website.

Suggested next steps are to:

- Develop a “sustainability checklist” for venues to include for assessing energy suppliers where appropriate, efficiency of building management systems, waste collection policies, approach to biodiversity, etc. Such a checklist could be part of the decision making process while also encouraging venues to consider sustainability.
- Review purchasing strategy and supply chain requirements to include for environmental and ethical performance;
- Consider developing a sustainability awareness training session for coaches to pursue the sustainability goals of the social enterprise; and
- Consider supporting (in all its forms) a local biodiversity charity or social group to demonstrate its awareness of the need for improving biodiversity, particularly in urban areas.

Sustainable Pathways Ltd would welcome the opportunity to discuss this report with Accessible Tennis and to discuss the next steps that could be taken on your sustainable pathway.

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## 2. Welcome

Sustainable Pathways (SP) is a collective of independent professionals with experience and tenure across a range of sectors, working as one to create an even better world where people think, live and work sustainably with ease. One of the services we provide is a sustainability appraisal which helps you understand where the organisation is in terms of its sustainability performance and the successes and challenges faced by your organisation and market sector. Thereafter, we can work with you to further your development as a resilient, innovative and sustainable organisation.

The first step is to take a holistic view of your current performance across our four key pillars of sustainable development. By doing this, it allows us to design with you an action-based development programme which is bespoke to your organisation. It also allows you to set a current benchmark of performance and monitor progress as we move forward.

This report was prepared for Accessible Tennis CIC to provide an initial sustainability appraisal of the organisation, so providing a benchmark to monitor future progress along the Sustainable Pathway and identify strengths and weaknesses within the organisation to allow a strategy to be developed for improving the positive impact of the organisation.

### 3. SP Appraisal for Small Organisations

The Sustainable Pathways Appraisal for Small Organisations is a bespoke design and development tool, created by SP specifically for small organisations as part of our service to clients. This appraisal allows us to demonstrate the organisations performance across our four key pillars of sustainable development at this current point in time in a robust and accessible report.

This appraisal enables us to work with you to design a holistic and action-based programme to continue the development of your organisation with particular emphasis around resilience, innovation and sustainability in all its forms.

Through a discussion with Marie Burns on 17 May 2021 and reviewing the Accessible Tennis website and sustainability policy quantitative and qualitative information was gathered and collated into this report.

Across the four quadrants, the report highlights current areas of success and where future development could be considered to improve overall performance and sustainable development of the organisation. To avoid bias, the appraisal has no weighting, i.e. every indicator is of equal value. Weighting systems are often contentious and they prioritise particular issues. The Sustainable Pathways approach is to present an unbiased independent appraisal which presents the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation across all areas. This then allows the organisation to decide its own priorities and weightings.

## 4. Understanding the diagram

The diagram is split into four quadrants: Society, Environment, Natural Resources & Economy.

In general, the closer the bars are to the centre of the diagram, the more sustainable the organisation for that aspect. Each quadrant contains five key questions which are represented in the form of a bar.

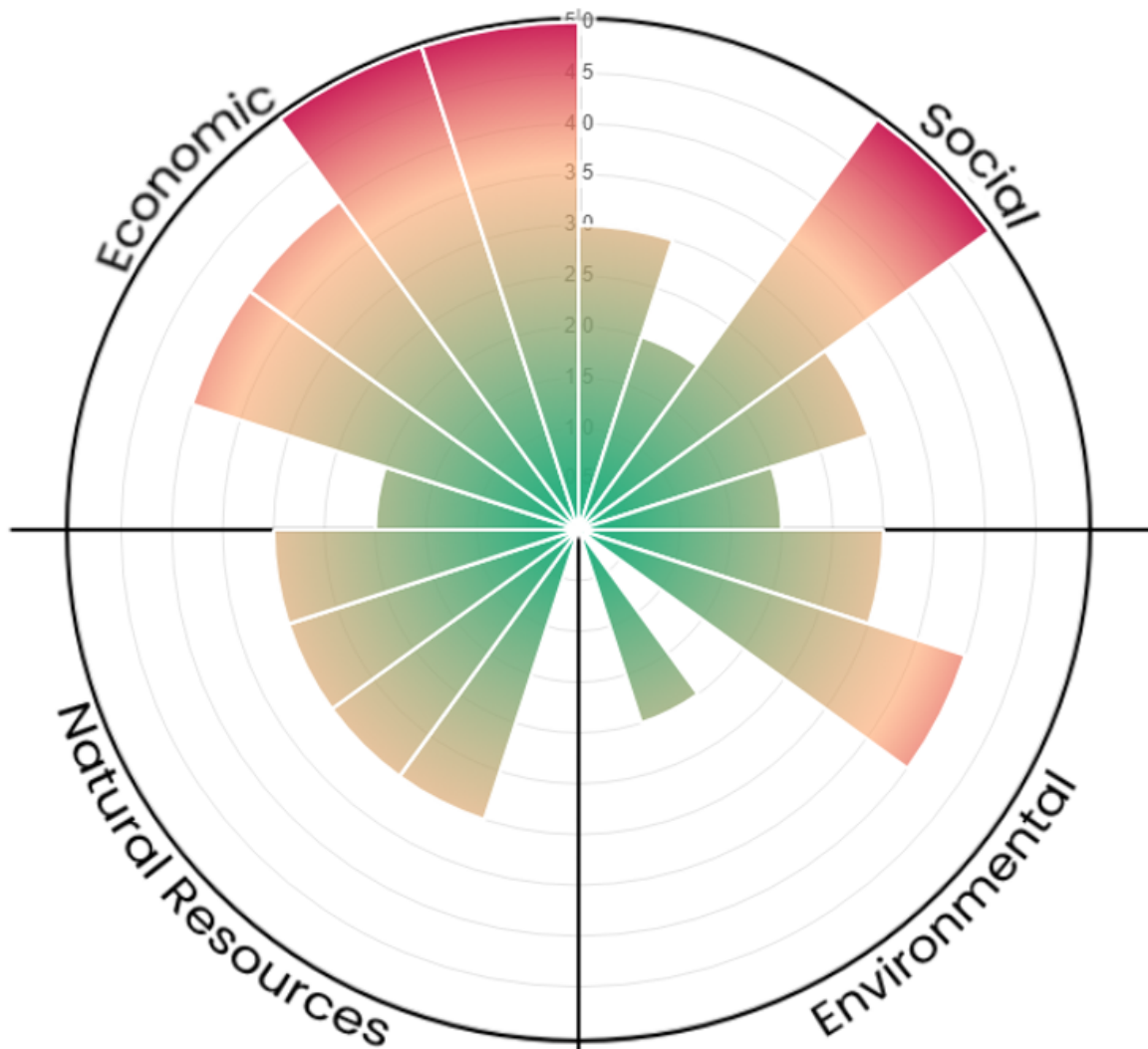
- **Red** equates to unsustainable areas
- **Amber** corresponds to normal practice
- **Green** represent areas of high performance and sustainability

The report is divided into two key sections:

- **Insight:** This section provides an overview of the organisation's performance across the four quadrants.
- **Research & Findings:** Lastly, we provide you with our main findings and your responses to each of the research questions.

# 5. Insight

Insight provides an overview of the organisation's performance in each quadrant of the four quadrants. This insight reflects where you are as an organisation at this current point in time.





## 5. Insight

Celebrations	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strong on engagement with the local community and vulnerable groups</li><li>• Strong on promoting diversity</li><li>• Very good at encouraging sustainable transport</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supply chain and ethical trading</li><li>• Considerations of biodiversity and building management systems when reserving venues</li></ul>

A more detailed review of these celebrations and considerations is given in the following section.

## 6. Research & Findings

As explained previously, the sustainability appraisal has no weighting, with no indicator having any greater importance than any other. The Sustainable Pathways approach is to present an unbiased independent appraisal which presents the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation. This then allows the organisation to decide its own priorities and weightings.

Accessible Tennis is a social enterprise which aims to provide tennis coaching for underrepresented groups in sport such as people with disabilities or health conditions, older people and women with the aim of improving the health, fitness and wellbeing of those individuals and the community as a whole as well as improving social inclusion. The organisation is a nomadic company, with no owned facilities but using local facilities. There is a Head Coach supported by self-employed coaches depending upon demand and funding.

This assessment, carried out in May 2021, considers the organisation as it is operating now. While Accessible Tennis has no owned facilities, it does enter into agreements with other local providers such as tennis and squash clubs and community centres. The assessment therefore considers how Accessible Tennis can influence providers and ensure the use of sustainable facilities wherever possible.

During the discussions it was evident that the social enterprise has considered elements of sustainability and is actively promoting issues such as diversity and sustainable transport. It is encouraging to see that the Head Coach is promoting diversity within the LTA. Depending on the local population mix, it may be worth considering representation from the ethnic minority sector.

The strengths of the organisation are unsurprisingly around natural resources and environment. Some of the indicators in these sections are not relevant for a nomadic company. However, Accessible Tennis does actively promote sustainable transport and carries out a risk assessment of venues before making bookings. The risk assessment is understood to cover essentials such as accessibility of public transport, security, shelter, access to drinking water and toilet facilities.

In terms of waste, members are encouraged to use their own re-usable water containers rather than single use plastic bottles. Again, as a nomadic company, there is little own waste generated.

## 6. Research & Findings

While Accessible Tennis has no facilities or green spaces, it may consider its venues' approach to improving biodiversity, or supporting a local biodiversity charity or social group to demonstrate its awareness of the need for improving biodiversity, particularly in urban areas.

As there are no permanent staff, communication with staff is not an issue. Communication with club members can be challenging as all members do not have access to or able to use IT systems. E-mail correspondence is not reliable. Communications are usually by word of mouth, through support workers and other on-line members.

With regards to training, all coaches have appropriate coaching qualifications and registrations with some having additional disability qualifications. Accessible Tennis also encourages suitable members to train as coaches to improve personal worth and to provide examples of success to other members. Accessible Tennis may like to consider developing a sustainability awareness training session for coaches to pursue the sustainability goals of the social enterprise.

Accessible Tennis does compare itself with other providers services and shared experiences, although there are not many similar social enterprise organisations.

Customer feedback is by on-line forms, letters of support and nominations for awards from members.

One area of operations that has not been fully identified is the supply chain. While there is a preference to buy from other social enterprises, local companies and ethical traders, cost is an essential consideration for the enterprise. There is no checking suppliers on their environmental performance, child labour or modern slavery.

Furthermore, like many sports organisations, Accessible Tennis purchases equipment. If and when considering the purchase of clothing equipment, Accessible Tennis could consider purchasing from suppliers that use recycled materials as part of their clothing. Similarly, if purchasing tennis equipment, Accessible Tennis could consider purchasing 'second-hand' equipment to extend the use phase of equipment that would otherwise end up as waste. It may also be the case that existing commercial clubs could donate their 'old' equipment to Accessible Tennis.

## 6. Research & Findings

Our recommendations based on this assessment are:

- Extend the risk assessment of venues, or develop a “sustainability checklist” for venues to include for assessing energy suppliers where appropriate (for provision of renewable energy or use of green energy suppliers), efficiency of building management systems, waste collection policies, approach to biodiversity, etc. Such a checklist could be part of the decision-making process while also encouraging venues to consider sustainability.
- Review purchasing strategy and supply chain requirements to include for environmental and ethical performance;
- Consider developing a sustainability awareness training session for coaches to pursue the sustainability goals of the social enterprise; and
- Consider supporting (in all it's forms) a local biodiversity charity or social group to demonstrate its awareness of the need for improving biodiversity, particularly in urban areas.

## 7. Recommendations

While Accessible Tennis has informal practices for travel and purchasing, it may like to consider developing the following formal policies:

Suggested Policy	Benefits
Travel Policy	To ensure employees travel for work is essential and by the most.
Ethical trading	Ethical trading/investment practices of organisation
Modern slavery	Process for checking operations and suppliers for incidents of: child labour, modern slave labour or young workers exposed to hazardous work
Supply Chain	Preference for local suppliers

Accessible Tennis has a number of strengths in terms of sustainability, which should be celebrated. There is evidence of published material discussing what the organisation is doing regarding sustainability, to enhance this it is recommended that a sustainability section be added to the website.

## 8. SDG Review

The United Nations has developed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are an urgent call for action to address poverty, health and education, inequality and economic growth while tackling climate change and protecting the environment. Increasingly the SDGs are being adopted by business as a measure of their sustainability credentials. Based on this initial assessment Accessible Tennis can be considered to be positively contributing to the following Sustainability Development Goals:

Goal 3 – Good health and well-being

Goal 5 - Gender Equality

Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities

Goal 13 - Climate action



## 9. Conclusions & Next Steps

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Sustainable Pathways Ltd would welcome the opportunity to discuss this report with Accessible Tennis and to discuss the next steps that could be taken on your sustainable pathway.



**Think now and future,  
then move your feet  
and do what needs to  
be done.**

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