

# Mainstreaming disability tennis in the UK

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## About me:

- 15 years working in para sport
- Previous Disability Manager at the Tennis Foundation
- Inclusion manager at the LTA
- EDI advisor for Badminton England
- EDI advisor for Sport for Development Coalition
- Vice chair of a disability independence charity



## Objectives of this session:

- Gain knowledge of tennis in Britain's approach for embedding disability inclusion
- Provide practical ideas of how mainstreaming can be implemented successfully
- Gain knowledge of useful resources to support with educating your workforce

# Defining 'Mainstreaming'

**“the process of making something start to be considered normal”**

# Tennis Foundation



- Formed in 1987
- Great Britain's leading charity
- Working in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association
- Shared resources with the LTA e.g. Human Resources, Legal, IT etc
- Key areas of interest:
  - Tennis for disabled people
  - Tennis in education
  - Tennis for underserved communities – Top 40% most deprived areas
  - Responsible for wheelchair, VI, ID, Deaf tennis performance

# TF disability team structure



# Timeline for embedding disability tennis



First disability strategy launched. Funded specific roles made full time due to good progress made

**2013-14**

Launch of new disability strategy (2017 – 2021). New investment from Sport England – inc an uplift in resource (regional personnel)

**2017**

**2012**



London Paralympic Games, the TF starts with the development of its first disability plan and obtains significant investment from Sport England, which includes funding for 4 roles (2 central, 2 regional).

**2016**

Rio Paralympic Games, review of current strategy and plans to bid into Sport England for future investment.

**2018/9**

The TF integrates its services into the LTA. Change management process starts to understand how TF roles fully integrate into the various teams across the LTA. The LTA launches a new 5 year strategy 'tennis opened up'. We rebrand our programme.

Charitable partner

National Governing  
Body

Facility Investment

 **Tennis**  
Foundation



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Newly purposed NGB

Newly purposed Charity



Launched  
2022



# What have been some of the challenges?

- ‘You’re the expert, we’ll pass it to you’
- Leadership in the NGB not understanding inclusion
- Governance not inclusive of disabled people
- Strategy – optically, nothing. Easy option to state charity does it
- Lack of Education – both online, F-T-F (e.g. OYD) and through lived experience. Tackling ableism and unconscious bias towards disabled people
- Lack of data and insight – what are participation levels, what are the barriers, what are the opportunities?
- Funding from the NGB, needed to source externally
- MARComms – no commitment to include better representation of disabled people; capturing social impact stories and communicating these

# Reframing the conversation



# The medical model of disability

I don't understand your way of communication

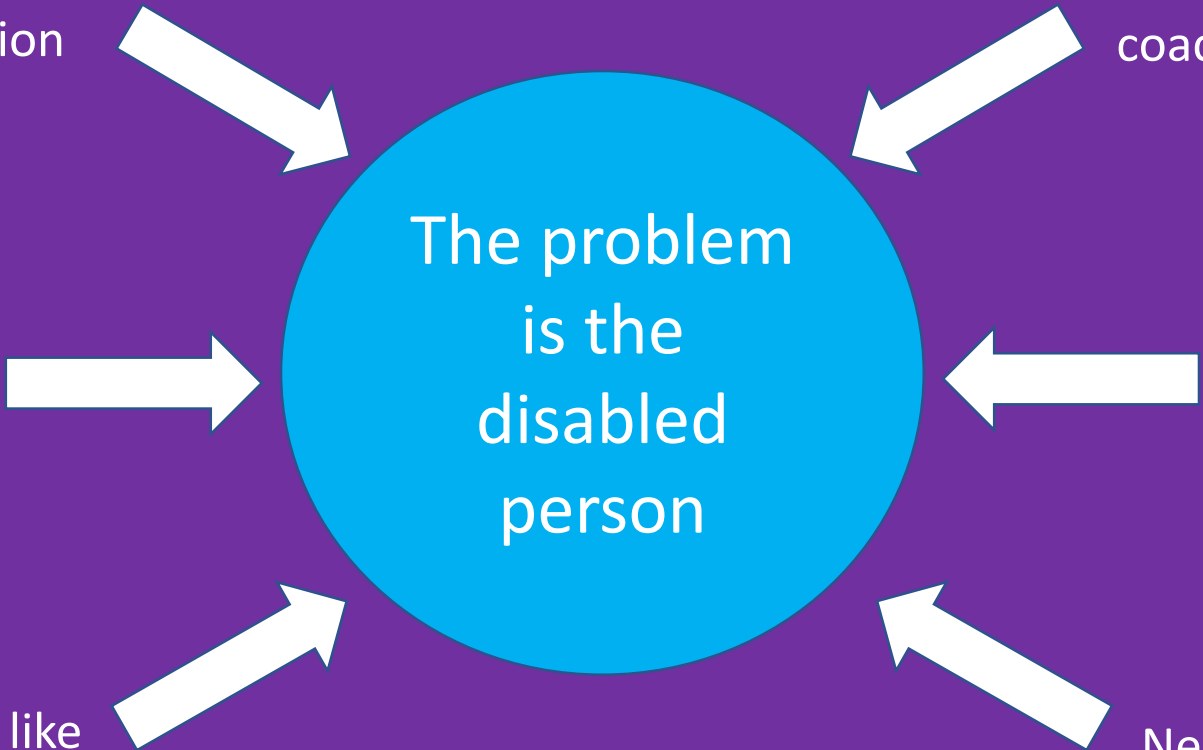
Can't hear or see the coach

Materials not accessible

Can't get into the building

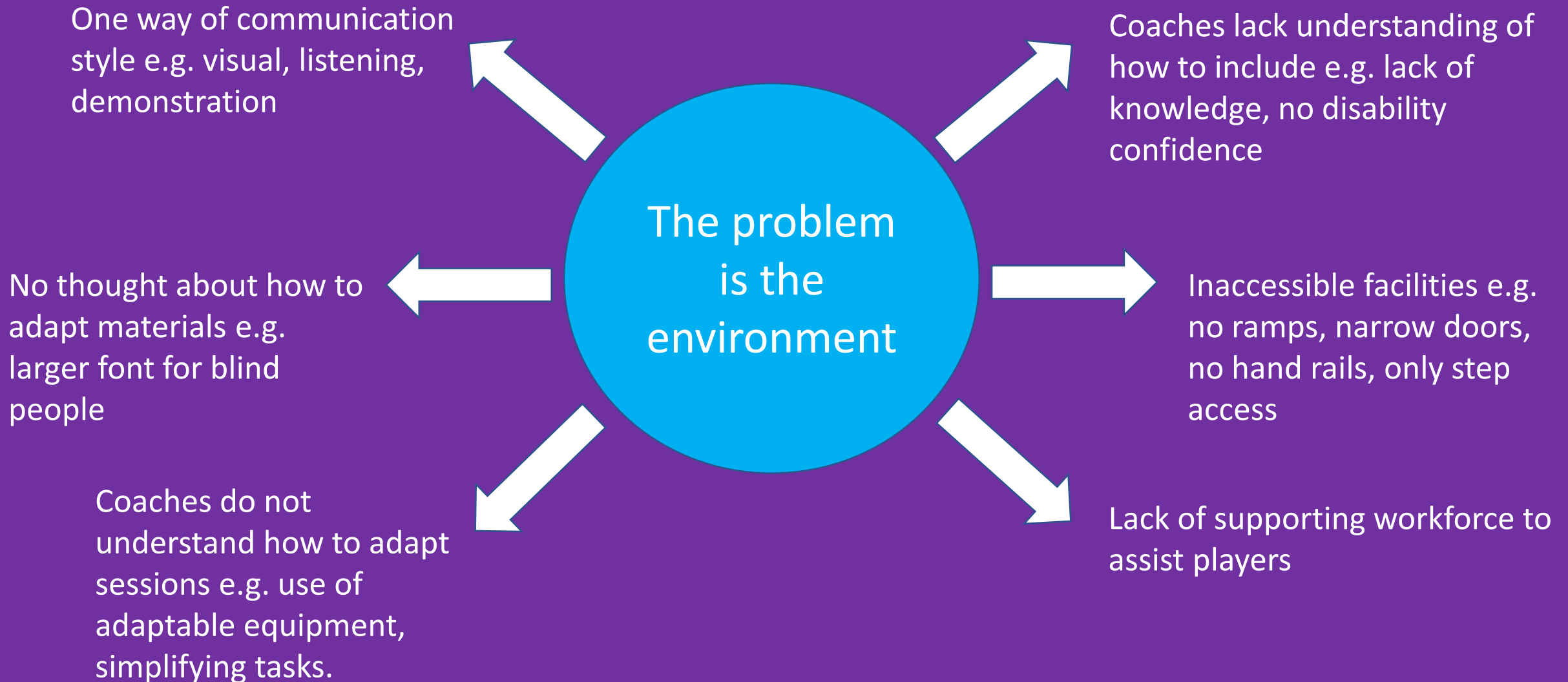
Can't perform tasks like others

Needs assistance to play



The problem is the disabled person

# The social model of disability – preferred!



# Selling the benefits:

- Reputation
- Income
- Funding opportunities
- Growing membership
- More hours for workforce
- Utilising quieter periods at facilities that doesn't impact on peak times.
- Job satisfaction – you're breaking down barriers!

All things you should be selling...

# The Purple Pound

The Purple Pound refers to the spending power of disabled households. A disabled household, is a household in which at least one of the members has a disability. Organisations are missing out on the business of disabled consumers due to poor accessibility (both physical and digital) and not being disability confident in their customer services approach.

**1 in 5**

More than 1 in 5 potential UK consumers have a disability

**£2 billion**

Businesses lose approximately £2 billion a month by ignoring the needs of disabled people

**73%**

of potential disabled customers experienced barriers on more than a quarter of websites they visited

£

**£16 billion**

Taking averages per head, the online spending power of disabled people is estimated at over £16 billion

## Loss of money for business per month



**£17.1 billion**

Estimates show that the 4.3 million disabled online shoppers, who click away from inaccessible websites, have a combined spending power of £17.1 billion in the UK



**14.1 million**

The number of disabled people is increasing: From 11.9 million (2014) to 14.1 million (2019)



**75%**

75% of disabled people and their families have walked away from a UK business because of poor accessibility or customer service



**1 in 5**

Nearly 1 in 5 working adults have a disability



**£274 billion**

The spending power of disabled people and their household continues to increase and is currently estimated to be worth £274 billion per year to UK businesses

V

Vision

M

Mission

O

Objectives

S

Strategy

T

Tactics

Accessibility –  
engaging with  
underrepresented  
audiences





## INNOVATION

Innovate in the delivery of tennis to widen its appeal.

**How we will do it:**  
Identify, engage with, and promote formats of the game that make tennis more fun, flexible and easier to play.



## VISIBILITY

Broaden relevance and increase visibility of tennis all year round to build engagement and participation with fans and players.

**How we will do it:**  
Promote and activate our events and competitions to engage and excite local communities around tennis.  
Build a communications and content programme to increase the levels of fan engagement and win back lapsed players.



## ACCESSIBILITY

Make the customer journey to playing tennis easier and more accessible for anyone.

**How we will do it:**  
Make it easy for people to find and access tennis facilities.  
Develop and implement a joined up junior pathway to get more kids playing and staying in tennis.

# TENNIS *Opened Up.*

To grow tennis by making it relevant, accessible, welcoming & enjoyable.



## ENGAGEMENT

Engage and collaborate with everyone involved in delivering tennis in Britain, particularly coaches and volunteers to attract and maintain more people in the game.

**How we will do it:**  
Motivate and support volunteers in helping them to deliver tennis.



## PERFORMANCE

Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.

**How we will do it:**  
Transform the development of future British champions.



## INVESTMENT

Support community facilities and schools to increase the opportunities to play.

**How we will do it:**  
Evolve our facility investment strategy to deliver the right facility and operating models.



## LEADERSHIP

Lead tennis in Britain to the highest standard so it is a safe, welcoming, well-run sport.

**How we will do it:**  
Develop and implement the highest safeguarding standards across tennis.

## MAKING IT *Happen*

### FANS:

We know that there is a huge opportunity to bring more tennis fans closer to the LTA, so we can build relationships with them, offer them new ways to enjoy tennis, and help them rediscover a love for playing. We'll aim to have many more fans engaged with us by 2023.

### ADULT PLAYERS:

We will help many more people pick up a racket; for the first time or the first time in a while. And we'll make sure people of all ages and abilities can and do play more often, not just in the summer.

### YOUNG PEOPLE:

We need more children to start playing tennis, and to keep on choosing it. We'll do whatever it takes to provide more opportunities for parents and kids from the whole of Britain to choose tennis, and provide a clearer path through from starter sessions to age-appropriate competition.

### HIGH PERFORMANCE:

Our player pathway is designed to find and nurture the next generation of champions, with a particular focus on enabling young players to break into the top 100, win medals and inspire the tennis fan audience.



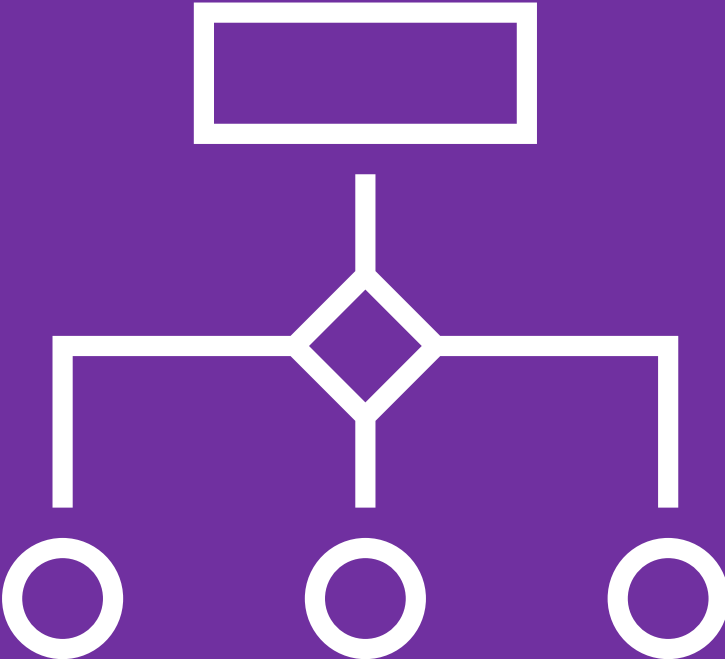
Integrating services from one organisation to another has its challenges.

Discussion:

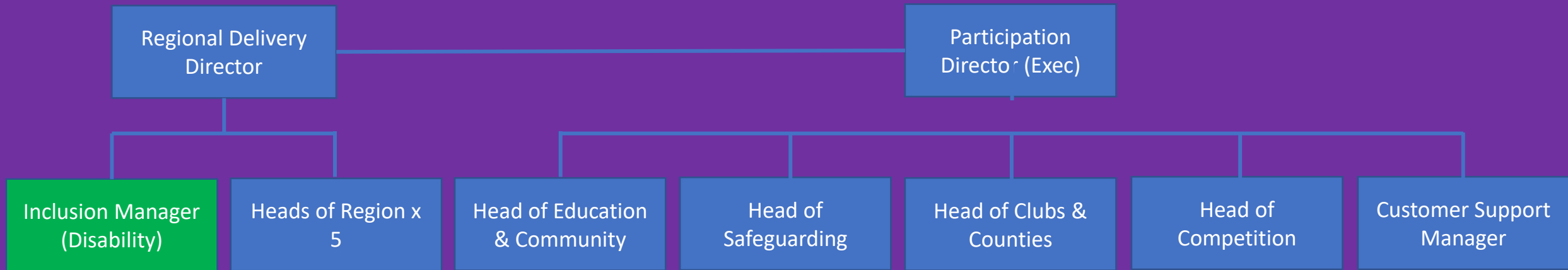
Does your previous/current work align to the organisations strategy?

Do para initiatives ladder up to achieve the business vision and objectives?

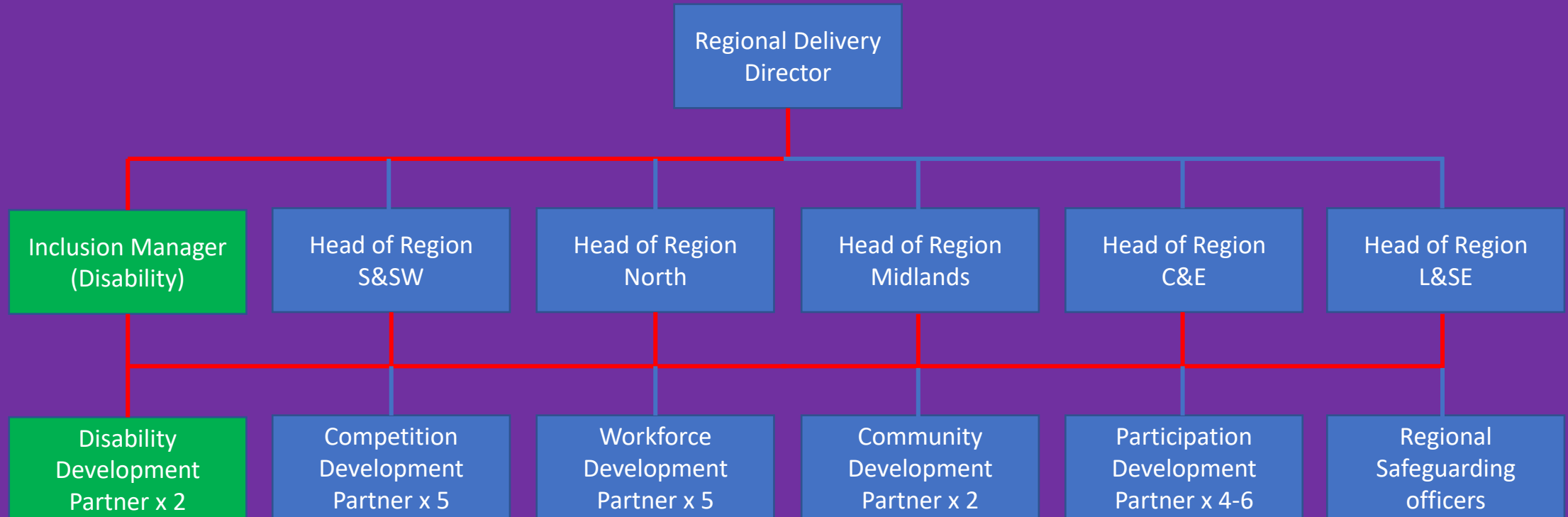
# Organigram of how disability now sits in the LTA



# Participation Directorate SLT (LTA)



# Regional team structure (LTA)



Management of 38 LTA Open Court Programmes coordinated by County Associations

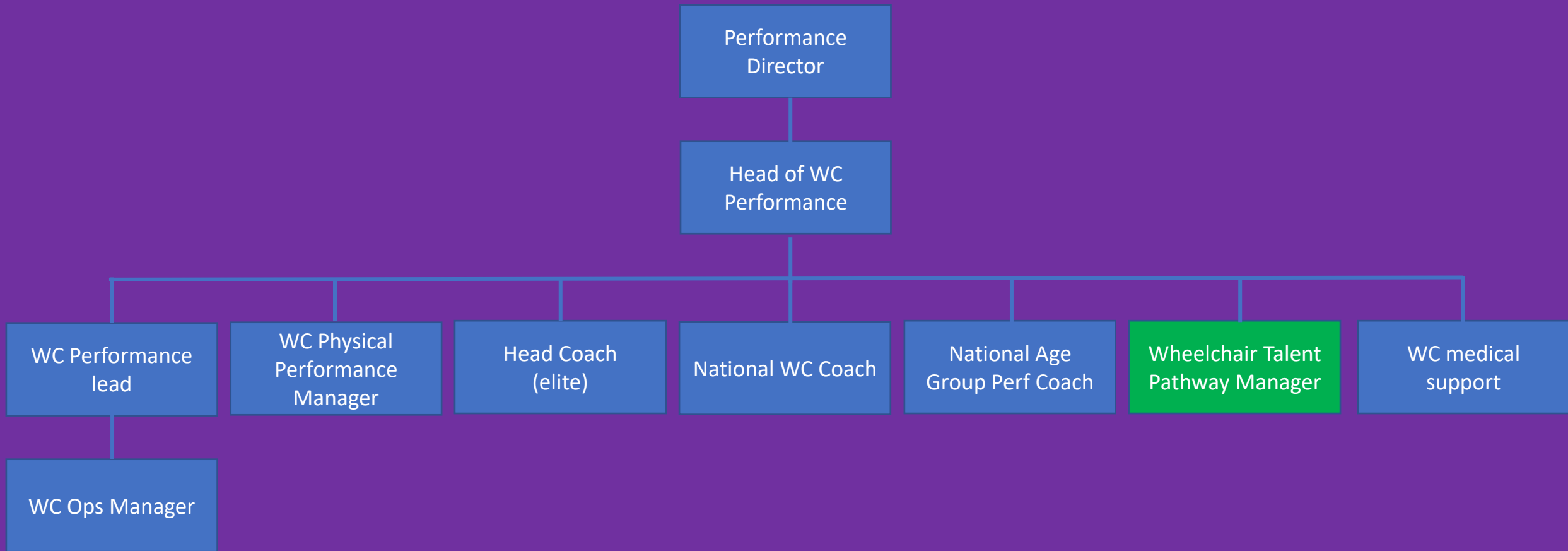


To achieve our ambition of an every day inclusive culture, our DDP roles enable other team members to embed offers – both inclusive and impairment specific - for disabled people into their plans

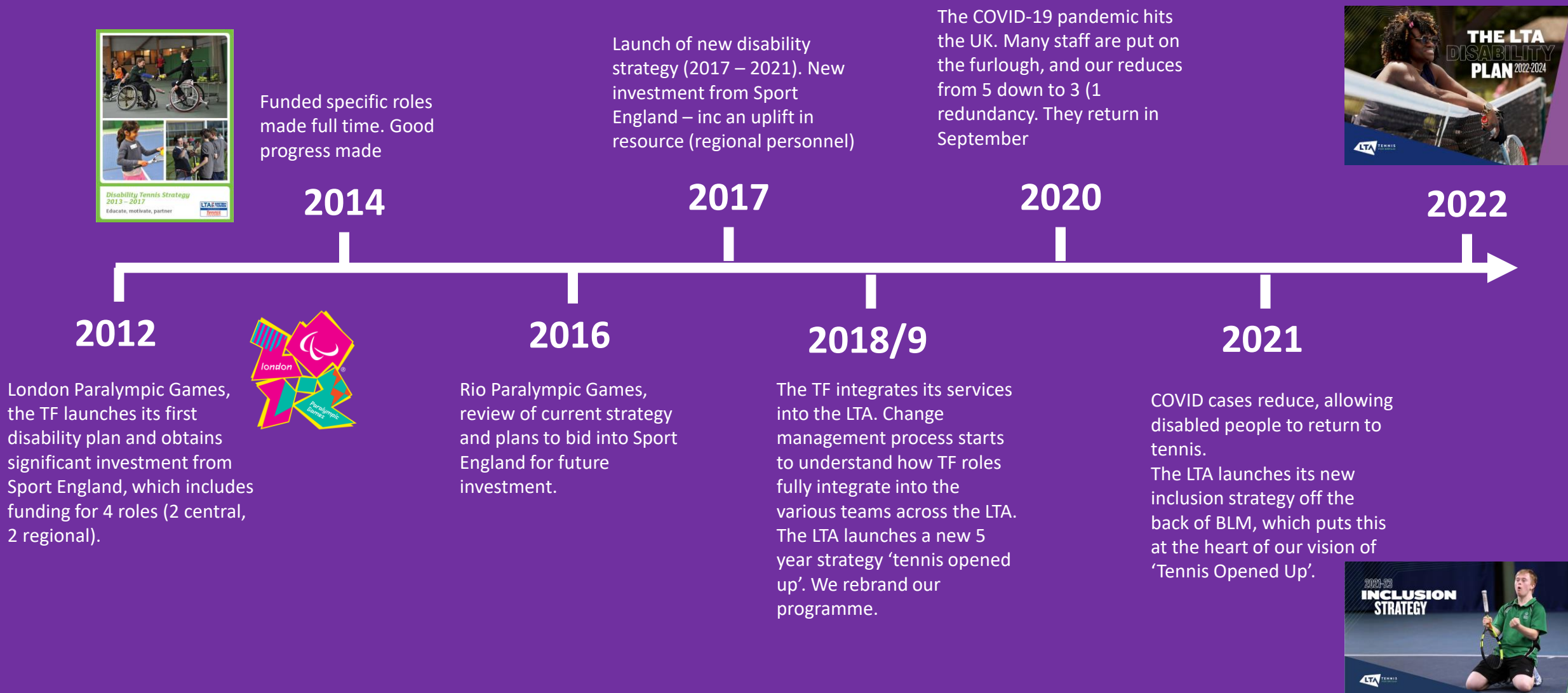
# Disability Competition team structure (LTA)



# Wheelchair Performance (LTA)

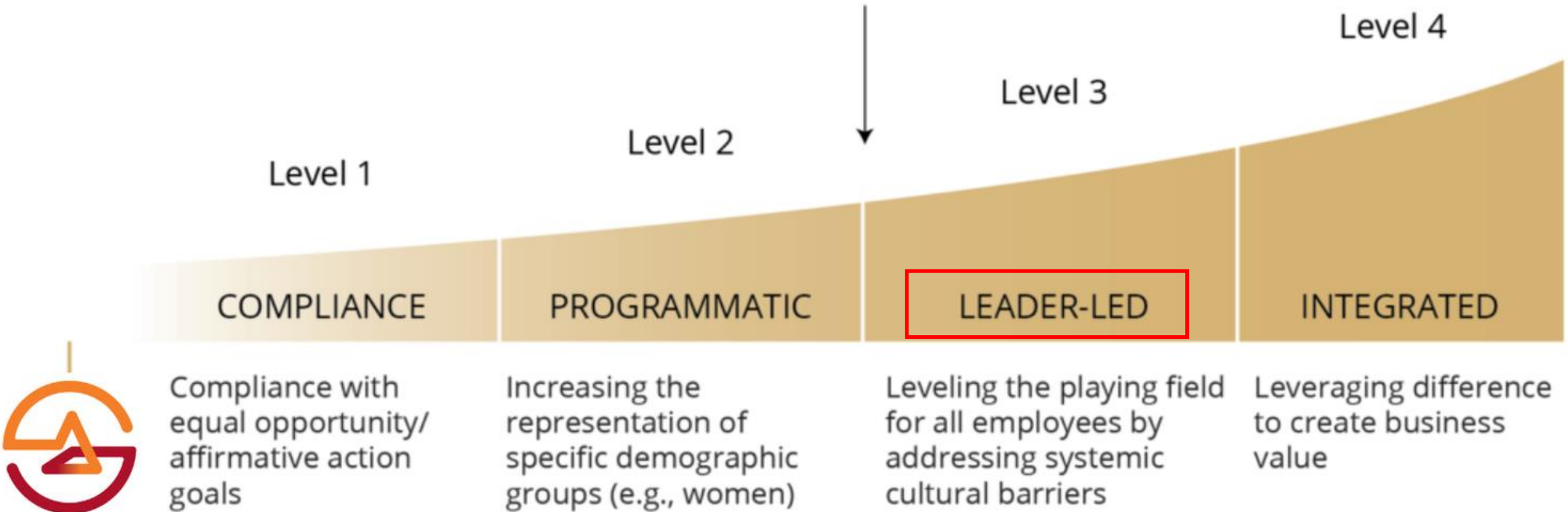


# Timeline for embedding disability tennis



# What does the path to an inclusive culture look like?

## Deloitte Diversity & Inclusion Maturity Model





Where are we as of today?



# OPEN FOR ALL

Making tennis more inclusive  
for disabled people

Today we officially  
launch our Disability  
Plan 'Open For All'

Forming part of  
our business  
priority projects  
for 2023

## OUR JOURNEY SO FAR...

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**13,000**

disabled people playing monthly (2019) on the LTA Open Court Programme

**SUCCESSFUL**

national partnerships with AoC Sport, MENCAP, British Blind Sport, Parkinson's UK and SENSE

**500+**

Open Court venues delivering impairment specific programmes

**ENGAGING**

disabled people and those with lived experience through our impairment specific advisory groups

**70%**

of LTA County & Island Associations and our home nations of Tennis Wales and Tennis Scotland support the LTA Open Court Programme

The LTA's Open Your Doors learning module now reaching **MORE VENUES**

through a new LTA Learn Online Module

**1,109**

disabled people competing in disability domestic competitions (2019)

Our wheelchair performance players achieved **4 MEDALS**

at the Tokyo Paralympic Games

**3 BRONZE, 8 SILVER AND 8 GOLD**

medals achieved at VI, deaf and learning disability world championships

**ACTIVELY LISTENING**

with non-sport charities to understand how we can change perceptions

The LTA hosts a full calendar of **INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS**

to cater for all levels of players on the pathway including the British Open

Continued **FUNDING SUPPORT**

from Sport England and the LTA Tennis Foundation for disability tennis

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# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Based on the current challenges and the response needed to provide disabled people with fair and equitable opportunities to access tennis, we have set out the following objectives:

## 1 CONTINUE TO RECOVER AND REBUILD

We will listen more and listen better to ensure that our future plans are co-designed and co-produced with disabled people, continuing to work to understand the impact COVID-19 has had on disabled people and how tennis can respond effectively and inclusively.

## 2 MAKE TENNIS MORE INCLUSIVE FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

We will embed a higher standard of inclusive practice in all aspects of the game to include disabled people, explicitly as part of our new Inclusion Strategy. By doing this, we aspire to change perceptions of our sport and remove barriers where necessary, enabling disabled people to access tennis in their own way.

## 3 GROW AND IMPROVE THE LTA OPEN COURT PROGRAMME

We will use the views of disabled people to inform further our decisions on how to grow and improve our disability tennis participation programme, so that more disabled people can access specific opportunities locally.

## 4 REACH NEW AND DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

We will identify and maintain key national partnerships to help us reach new and different audiences. Through these partnerships our aim will be to explore intersectionality with other characteristics such as Age, Lower Socio-Economic Background and Ethnicity/Race.

## 5 CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PLAYER PATHWAY

To support a player pathway, across multiple impairment types, which effectively engages and transitions players throughout the tennis journey, so we have a rich group of players from different backgrounds achieving their full potential.

# OUR KEY NATIONAL DELIVERY AND SUPPORTIVE PARTNERS

## DELIVERY PARTNERS



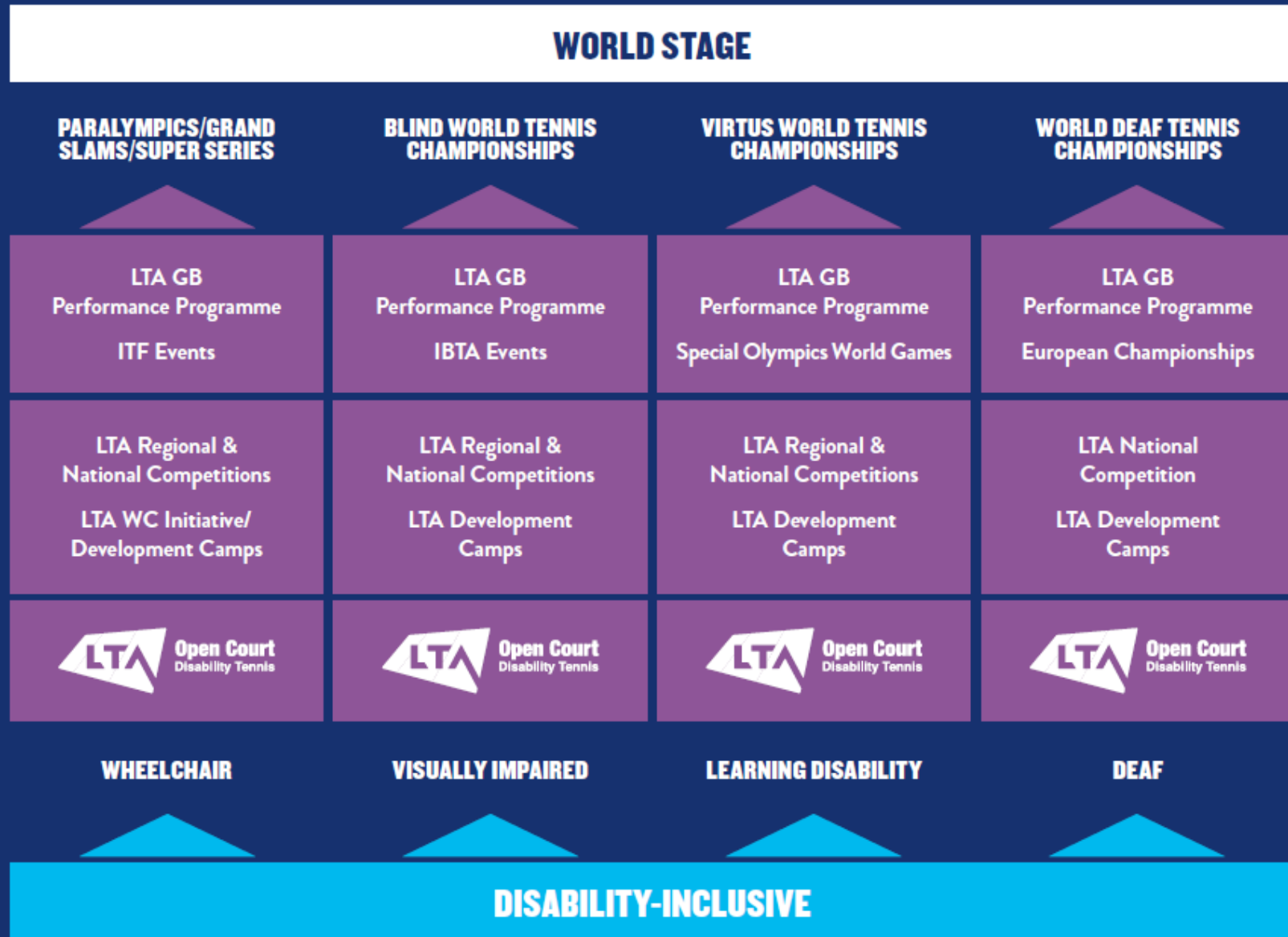
## ADVISORS



## FUNDING CONTRIBUTORS



We will aim to work with additional partners over the lifetime of this plan.



# What should NGB's aim to achieve

- Including disabled people into your Strategy – How do your para sport objectives support the overall vision, mission and objectives?
- Better Governance – policies in place with leadership involved in decisions around inclusion
- Commitment to funding para sport – either resourcing or sourcing
- Developing education or encouraging IL for internal and external workforce
- Obtain data & Insight – what are participation levels, what are the barriers, how does this compare to the national average? What does this inform?
- Identify key 'trusted' national partnerships to open up your sport to more diverse audiences
- MARComms – commitment to include better representation of disabled people; capturing social impact stories and communicating these to inspire change
- Co-producing with disabled people – creating advisory groups
- Job descriptions – updating those roles that need to include inclusion.

# Useful links:

[Activity Alliance](#)

[Sport England](#)

[Sport England Club Matters – Disability](#)

[LTA Disability strategic plan](#)

[LTA Disability](#)

[LTA Inclusion](#)

[LTA online education](#)

[UK Coaching resources](#)



Thank you for listening

Questions?

# Contact details

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