

Chief Executive's Report – Sara Sutcliffe

Paper: 10c

Introduction

This report covers the period from January until March 2021.

Attached to this report you will find departmental reports covering current activity, future activity and some of the challenges that the staff are facing in delivery of their programmes. I will try not to repeat that detail and instead focus on the bigger picture and the stakeholder landscape.

It is now over 12 months since the country went into its first lockdown and none of us foresaw the situation 12 months later. Firstly, I hope that you and your families are all well, safe and healthy and that with the easing of restrictions you are now able to meet up and see loved ones. It feels as if light is at the end of this long tunnel.

I would also like to take this opportunity again to thank the Senior Leadership Team and all of the staff for their dedication, flexibility, adaptability and general tenacity over this testing year. I am proud of each and every one of them and I know how much they share in the desire for table tennis activity to be able to start up again in earnest.

I would also like to thank Sandra and the Board again for the additional time they have given in the last few months to support the executive as we continue to manage the ever-changing situation.

Executive Report

The various departmental reports explain the impact of Covid 19 which is significant. The Development Department deserve much credit for managing the return to play advice, assisting clubs in grant applications, the numerous clubs, league and coaching webinars which have been well attended and showing us how technology can really help to share experiences and make connections.

There have been many discussions with the World Table Tennis team about hosting a London hub in September/October window although as I write this is looking increasingly unlikely due to the decision to move the China hub (planned for pre-Olympics) to that window. The preparation work has not been wasted and whilst an event in 2021 remains possible we will probably shift our focus to 2022. A September 2021 date has also been suggested for a Commonwealth Championships in India so we are staying closely in touch to minimise conflicting events.

Whilst mentioning the Olympics I want to pay credit to our elite athletes who have managed the uncertainty and constantly moving goalposts for qualification against a backdrop of very few international events for preparation. We of course extend our best wishes to all of the British Para squad as well for their preparation towards Tokyo. I am sure we will all spend many hours supporting our athletes and other Team GB/Para GB athletes from all sports this summer on our TVs.

The membership survey is going live shortly and I strongly encourage you all to promote it widely in your County networks so that we have a robust response rate. Without a strong response it is difficult it gathers the insight we need.

We have had sight of the interim report following the research conducted by Sheffield Hallam University on behalf of the large collective of NGBs. Thank you to the clubs that responded, the table



tennis response was good overall. The interim report shows that our 54% membership rate for 20/21 is about average and that there is optimism that sports will recover to 70-80% of pre pandemic membership levels in 12 months. However, it is also clear that lower socio-economic groups and people with disabilities are harder hit and less likely to return as quickly. We look forward to receiving the full report in the coming weeks and sharing the content.

Membership income is the largest variable of income in our budgets and underpins important services we provide to the membership including insurance, ranking, marketing and communications as well as contribution to competitions, performance and talent development budgets. The 21/22 budgets have been built based on the 20/21 membership levels to be conservative however the income will be closely monitored. At the moment the budgets do not reflect the 50% discount offer but various options have been identified should we need to make cuts to reflect a significant take up of the offer and/or membership growth over the 54% benchmark does not materialise.

I am very pleased to see work on the Diversity Action Plan progressing and I thank all of those on the working group. Tackling all aspects of diversity is a big task but it will ensure that table tennis is better set up for the future and more reflective of the communities we live in. Whilst participation diversity is improving (although harder hit by the pandemic) it is not reflected in administration, coaching or volunteering in the same way. I thank the Board for approving the recruitment of a new post, a Diversity, Inclusion and Volunteering lead officer, to help drive this important area of work forward.

At its meeting in early March the Board decided that it will recommence work on the Table Tennis England strategy with a workshop in late June. At that workshop the Board will consider amongst other things whether in light of the changing environment and the pandemic that Mission 2025 is refreshed or whether it is better to start afresh on a new short/medium/long term strategy. How the sport will be consulted with will also be discussed at that meeting and we will be able to provide you with an update thereafter.

Sport England/UK Sport

Sport England has released its Uniting the Movement strategy <https://www.sportengland.org/why-were-here/uniting-the-movement>. Greg and I will present more about this at the National Council meeting.

I am attending a presentation from UK Sport on their future strategic plan on 28 April and Aled and I also recently attended a workshop with Coaching UK on their vision and strategy for coach education framework.

We continue to work closely with the Home Nations on the management of the British progression fund programme for the 2021-25 cycle.

ITTF/ETTU

Sandra has submitted a separate report on ITTF and ETTU activity and there is a separate agenda item.

Operationally we are in constant dialogue with Jonny Cowan, recently appointed as the European Manager for World Table Tennis, on our ambitions to host WTT events in England. We know that London has been identified by WTT, supported by external market research, as a key target host city.

We are working closely with BPTT on the bid to host the 2023 European Para Championships.



Commonwealth Games/Birmingham 2022

We continue to liaise with the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee on a number of aspects as they head into the last 15 months of preparation. We were invited to send observers to the Technical Delegate workshops recently which we did. Richard Scruton has been appointed as the Technical Delegate. Internally we have established a cross functional working group to ensure we are linking up all aspects of participation, promotion (including recent ticket promotion) and legacy as well as supporting the technical officials and volunteer recruitment. There is a very transparent relationship between B2022, CGE and Sport England who together provide a regular NGB CEO update (next meeting in May) and we have individual sport contacts as well. We have facilitated a meeting in mid-April between Vivek Kohli, Chairman of CTF and the table tennis competition manager Shelia Mercer which I shall be attend too.



Information/Activities - Last Period

The team all continue to work from home, and this is likely to continue until June 2021, they are all working well, and we continue to have all staff calls every other week to ensure we touch base regularly.

With the furlough scheme extended until September we are trying to balance the financial assistance that provides whilst ensuring we have sufficient capacity to continue to deliver what we need to do. We will monitor this ongoing as return to play starts to move forward.

The **EGM** was held on 25th January and this was very labour intensive to organise in such a short period of time and over the festive period. This was a difficult period for all and there were no winners in this process, but effective governance was followed and the outcomes are below: -

- *Special Resolution 1*: a vote of no confidence and instruction to the Board to remove from the Board – Anthony Catt, Elected Deputy Chair of Table Tennis England – **52% supported this resolution**
- *Special Resolution 2*: a vote of no confidence and instruction to the Board to remove from office and from any other table tennis posts held domestically or internationally– Sandra Deaton, Chair of Table Tennis England – **17% supported this resolution**
- *Special Resolution 3*: a vote of no confidence and instruction to the Board to remove from office and from any other table tennis related posts held domestically or internationally– Sara Sutcliffe MBE, Chief Executive Officer of Table Tennis England – **10% supported this resolution**

As these were special resolutions and required 75% none of them were passed

I would like to give special thanks to Caroline Williams as the Returning officer and the scrutineers for all her hard work running up to and following the meeting. To Standing Orders committee to adapt in a quick turnaround and a virtual meeting and also to Estyn Williams for chairing the meeting so well in a difficult situation.

Board Guidance Pack - Following the Board Evaluation it was decided to fully review the Board Guidance pack and associated documentation, the first draft was presented to Governance and Risk in January and a small sub group of the Board are just finalising the documentation, which will be ready next month.

Election for an Elected Director – Process for an elected director is underway and will be finalised by the 14th May 2021 and we hope to have a new board member in time for the next Board meeting in June.

We have increased the amount of information and guidance to potential candidates to ensure all nominees are clear on the requirements involved in being a Board Member.



TT Leagues – We have continued to develop the system and we are delighted to have been named finalists in the Best Operations, Commerce and Event Management Technology category at the 2021 Sports Technology Awards.

[https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tt-leagues-developer-up-for-prestigious-award/?utm_campaign=1900368 Over%20the%20Net%20-%20March%205%2C%202021&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Table%20Tennis%20England&TTID_Auto=202127&dm_i=38NL,14QC0,6Q13SX,4CX75,1](https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tt-leagues-developer-up-for-prestigious-award/?utm_campaign=1900368%20Over%20the%20Net%20-%20March%205%2C%202021&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Table%20Tennis%20England&TTID_Auto=202127&dm_i=38NL,14QC0,6Q13SX,4CX75,1)

AGM – Plans for the AGM are well underway and we have agreed a way forward with the returning officer and standing orders committee on an online voting system that will accommodate our complex weighted voting. The meeting will be classed as a hybrid meeting but due to the ongoing uncertainty around the pandemic and restrictions all attendees will be virtual except those that are coordinating the meeting at our Head Office.

HR – It is with regret that we will be losing Lucy Franklin our Head of Marketing and Comms as she has made the difficult decision to move back to Australia to be closer to family. We have been actively recruiting over the past few weeks and I am delighted to be able to announce that Hannah Holland will be joining us from the 26th April and Hannah has a wealth of experience including working for Rounders NGB.

Challenges/Issues

- The main issue this period was the significant impact of an EGM being called and the negativity that has surrounded it, especially at a time when things are already very difficult with having to live with Covid isolation for the last year.

Actions from National Council Meeting 16th January 2021

<u>Action</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>When</u>
SS will take points raised by National Council about fees back to the Board	SS	Completed and actioned
Affiliation Fee discussion to be revisited on 24 th April NC Meeting	VW	Agreed and distributed
Presentation from Performance Team to be sent out with minutes	MS / VW	Added to Website
AR (Cleveland) to submit report for agenda on 24 th April re ITTF Matters	AR	Complete on Agenda
Highlight any papers sent to National Council that must not be circulated	ALL	Ongoing



In Memoriam

Eric Baker
Chairman of Loughborough League

Derek Butt
Leicester League President

Geof Bax
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-geof-bax-veterans-world-champion/>

Chester Barnes:
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-the-great-chester-barnes/>

Peter Williams:
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/All-Departmental-Reports-NC-24th-April-2021-Updated.pdf>

Graeme Sopp
International Umpire, President of North West Kent league



Finance Report – Samantha Garey

Paper: 10d

At the time of writing this report, we are currently working on the financial year end and preparation for the annual audit. I am therefore unable to provide you with the final year end position until this has been completed and I don't believe supplying the Q3 reports would be of any benefit, as this is now 3 months old. However, I can provide you with an update on the year end forecast and the other information reviewed by Finance Committee and the Board more recently.

Year-end forecast

At the end of Q3 the year-end forecast was estimated as a surplus of £65,681. Membership renewals remained static at 54% of the previous membership season. This meant that we saw a reduction of £183,503 in membership income, which would usually create a deficit. However, we have managed to make savings in expenditure through virtual meetings for committees, reduced rent, minimal staff expenses and cancelled competitions.

The following table shows expenditure costs saved due to government restrictions, which are included in the year end forecast.

	Net Impact
Rent	£ 16,610.00
Committee costs	£ 30,748.00
Staff expenses	£ 76,437.00
*Cancelled competitions	£ 123,000.00
Total	£ 246,795.00

*This is how much the net expenditure has reduced due to the competitions cancelled in 20/21.

Not only did we see a reduction in expenditure, but also due to the lack of competitions the income has also been reduced to virtually nil in the following areas;

- Competition entry fees
- Ranking and tournament levies

With the cancellation of two Nationals events last season and the cancellation of the National Championships this year we reached agreement with Mark Bates Ltd to suspend the sponsorship fee for 20/21. Mark Bates Ltd are a committed partner and we are looking at ways to enhance their support in the coming centenary year. We are also working closely to promote the suite of Mark Bates Ltd insurance products to the membership as we receive a commission payment for products bought by Table Tennis England members and referrals.



Where possible, we have also managed to utilise the HMRC furlough scheme for those staff roles that were not funded by Sport England or UK Sport, as long as it didn't impact on the needs of the business to be able to support all of our members. At the end of Q3 this equated to approximately £88,122. Without this additional support, we would have been forecasting a deficit for the year end.

21/22 Draft budget

The draft budget, which was approved by Board is forecasting a deficit of **£61k**, however this is based on membership renewals remaining the same as 20/21, which was 54% compared to the previous year. It is worth noting that due to reduced membership renewals in 20/21, we haven't deferred as much membership income that we normally would, which means the membership income bought forward for 21/22 is £60k lower compared to the prior year.

It's very likely that we will still see a reduced level of membership compared to 19/20 figures, maybe not as much as 46%. Therefore, as an indication of a change in membership numbers, based on 19/20 members, an average 10% swing in paid renewals is equivalent to approximately £40,700.

Membership discount offering

The Board considered various options which included a full refund of fees for 19/20 or a free membership for 20/21. Both of which would see lost revenue of approximately £223k. This would put the organisation in a financially insecure position, which would invariably have significant and wide-reaching implications to jobs, programmes and support for the membership. Therefore, the most viable option was to offer a discount.

The Board approved a membership discount for the 21/22 season, for those members that continued to support the organisation by renewing their membership in 20/21, despite the imposed restrictions due to COVID-19. This was based on the assumption that we were likely to see an uptake of this offer somewhere in the region of 40%.

For information, please see the following table, which shows the financial impact of a discount for those members that renewed based on increments of 10%.

Membership Category	50% membership discount	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%
Compete Plus - Cadet & Junior	£4.00	£2,112	£1,901	£1,690	£1,478	£1,267
Compete Plus - Senior	£8.00	£5,440	£4,896	£4,352	£3,808	£3,264
Compete - Cadet & Junior	£4.00	£5,304	£4,774	£4,243	£3,713	£3,182
Compete - Senior	£8.00	£88,432	£79,589	£70,746	£61,902	£53,059
		£101,288	£91,159	£81,030	£70,902	£60,773



Membership Category	50% membership discount	50%	40%	30%	20%	10%
Compete Plus - Cadet & Junior	£4.00	£1,056	£845	£634	£422	£211
Compete Plus - Senior	£8.00	£2,720	£2,176	£1,632	£1,088	£544
Compete - Cadet & Junior	£4.00	£2,652	£2,122	£1,591	£1,061	£530
Compete - Senior	£8.00	£44,216	£35,373	£26,530	£17,686	£8,843
		£50,644	£40,515	£30,386	£20,258	£10,129

It is worth noting that the draft budget does not include the discount, as we don't know for certain what the uptake will be, but the uptake for the licence refund we previously offered, was minimal. If membership renewals don't exceed 54% and we saw an uptake in the discount offer over and above 40%, this would increase the forecast deficit to over £100k.

We will continue to monitor the level of membership renewals, as well as requests for the renewal discount and if necessary, adjust expenditure accordingly. The scenario planning continues to be reviewed based on government guidelines while restrictions are still in place and is reviewed by the executives and the finance committee on a regular basis.

Information/Activities last period

Website and brand refresh

- We are continuing to work on the website and have now completed the wireframe stage, and initial style scape phase.
- The archive site, which is separate to the main TTE website is now complete, and now work is being done on what specific documents are required to be uploaded.
- We have finalised our external brand guidelines, and are about to finalise new corporate templates to reflect the new brand assets. We are undertaking a soft launch for the brand refresh, as the new website will be used as the major 'launch' of the refreshed modern look.

Digital:

- The digital evaluation across all channels is now complete. This process enabled us understand what channels we should keep and what we should change or remove. Also understanding what content performs better with our audiences. Part of this process included determining key metrics that we will be now conducting monthly reports.

Marcomms activity and support

100+ articles have been published on the TTE website which include but not limited to:

- Covid updates
- LinQsport launch
- Champions League coverage
- UK Sport funding announcement
- Olympic qualifiers team announcement
- Olympic qualifiers coverage
- Ongoing support delivering e-newsletters, clubs, schools OTN.

Other marketing support: TT Kidz Awards live; TT Kidz Virtual Schools Competition; club webinars; TASS survey; Participation Survey; Pride of Table Tennis local award winners and judging appeal; Coach mentoring and Licensed Coach benefits.

Day of filming in Nottingham to create content for social, which has been used across our digital platforms

Coronavirus communications: our department continues to provide support across the organisation supporting promotion of resources, webinars, Return to Play updates and general communications to our various stakeholders.

Mark Bates Ltd 1 year on since Nationals – to mark one year since the first year of Mark Bates Ltd sponsoring Nationals, we played on Facebook live the finals matches across a weekend.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/mark-bates-why-we-are-committed-to-our-sport/>

These had some great engagement, and was a good opportunity to provide Mark Bates some value as part of the partnership.

National Careers week - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/national-careers-week-2021-careers-in-table-tennis/> during this week in March we ran a social campaign highlight the different career paths in table tennis and how people can get involved.



International Women's Day – To mark this year's International Women's Day on March 8th, we ran a campaign highlighting some women in the sport. This campaign was run across our social channels and we saw some great engagement over the period.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/international-womens-day-choose-to-challenge/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/iwd-jeanette-andersons-story/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/iwd-kate-hughes-story/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/iwd-priya-samuels-story/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/iwd-juliet-berties-story/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/iwd-milestone-performance-highlights/>

Commonwealth Games : Birmingham 2022 – as part of working with the B2022 Marketing and Communications team, we have supporting a ticket giveaway competition to the table tennis community <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/win-tickets-to-the-birmingham-2022-commonwealth-games/> . We will continue to work with the B2022 closely to identify other opportunities to promote the games and provide benefits to our membership.

Challenges/Roadblocks

Over this last period, there was a prioritised focused of delivering communications around the EGM. This meant that some priorities had to be de-prioritised, which then unfortunately had a flow on affect to the focus over the last few months. Now that the EGM is over, we are very much now back to planning for the year ahead.



Activity/Information

We are currently working through a marketing and communications plan to begin in line the Governments roadmap to ease restrictions to promote outdoor play on Ping! tables across England. This will involve a multi-channelled approach across digital and will focus on the positives with outdoor play. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/get-set-for-outdoor-table-tennis/>.

All of our Ping! Pong Parlours remain closed, but we've been in constant communication with our shopping centres and expect them to gradually re-open from 12th April, based on Government Guidelines.

Parlours have been impacted massively this past year, but we are optimistic and expect them to bounce back and provide opportunities for table tennis activity which is likely to be limited elsewhere. We have launched a 20% discount to shopping centres, to encourage a kick-start from when restrictions allow. We will continue to cross-promote these new Parlours, along with existing to clubs and leagues as they open. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/special-return-from-lockdown-offer-for-shopping-centres/>

During the latest lockdown we arranged for a concentrated sample of 6 partners (**Birmingham, Blackpool, Leicester, Manchester, Nottingham & Worthing**) towns/cities to be distributed play at home kit, to then distribute to local households from February. We have added weight to these kits by combining efforts with 'Core' team to also offer TT Kidz packs and signpost to TT Kidz Awards and live streams. We will be conducting a survey after these packs have been received to understand the impact, as well as undertaking case studies.

Sport for Confidence – work continues to develop a therapeutic tool kit for health professionals and partners to refer to when utilising TT as a means of rehab and support for those with long term health conditions and/or disabilities. Aiming for May 2021 completion, with a view to 'launch' at the next National Conference (June 2021).

Work continues with our Ping! lead partners on activation plans into the spring/summer. We continue to remain work with partners who are yet to renew, as well as extend our reach to engage more lead partners. Emphasis however is very much on re-building projects and partnerships whilst we still face the covid challenges. Lockdown 3.0 is proving challenging, but in some aspects is also providing the time to prep and plan ahead.

Parkinson's TT UK: In bid to further support and align to the We Are Undefeatable campaign, Table Tennis England are proud to be supporting a mobilised group of volunteers named 'Parkinson's TT UK (PDTTUK)', who are committed to enhancing and creating more opportunities for players with Parkinson's (PwP) to engage with. PDTTUK support players with Parkinson's (PwP) to play table tennis, exploring different ways to engage and support Parkinson's Table Tennis community. Working together with PDTTUK, our aim is to promote and enable more opportunities for players to engage in the sport and for those who wish to do so, feel comfortable to progress through to competitive play. 2021 will see the UK's very first UK Table Tennis Championships for players with Parkinson's. The event, hosted at St Neots TTC, Cambs, has been scheduled for 21st August 2021, with registration and entries closing on the 9th August. For more information on the event, [click here](#).



Challenges/Roadblocks

Challenge continues to be lockdown, which restricts us from promoting participation across our mass participation programmes. We do feel more confident now that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and we have put in our planning to try a re-build as soon as restrictions allow.

Information/Activities - Last Period

World Table Tennis events launched in Doha with four English players represented. Unfortunately, two suffered injuries which hampered their progress (Sam Walker and Liam Pitchford) and Tin-Tin and Paul performed well enough considering the lack of match practice. For Tin-Tin this was her first international match in a year.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-edged-out-by-karlsson/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/drinkhall-misses-out-on-main-draw-in-doha/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/surprise-defeat-for-pitchford-in-doha/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tin-tin-is-defeated-in-doha/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/drinkhall-and-walker-exit-wtt/>

Liam, Paul and Tin-Tin (with Charlotte Carey) competed in the World Olympic Singles Qualification, also in Doha. Liam got the closest to qualifying directly there, losing out in the final match.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/fatigue-cost-me-in-final-says-pitchford/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-beaten-in-olympic-qualifiers-final/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-blitzes-his-way-into-semi-final/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-marches-on-but-drinkhall-goes-out/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/winning-starts-for-ho-and-carey/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/gb-stars-ready-for-tokyo-shot/>

England players continue to train online and support others training

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/mentor-jarvis-leads-live-session-for-youngsters/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/inside-an-england-training-session/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-stars-well-prepared-for-competition-return/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/driving-performance-progress-in-a-virtual-landscape/>

Several Squad coaches attended the ETTU coaching seminar

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/trio-of-england-coaches-tap-into-german-expertise/>

England Junior Squad members had an online joint training session with Linz

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/juniors-make-the-most-of-linz-link/>

Home Nations ecamps have been successfully held

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/home-nations-come-together-for-e-camp/>



MAG and Performance team report was published and work continues to address the points that have been raised.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/mag-feedback-report-on-performance-published/>

Performance and coaching team are continuing to work very closely together, with the performance staff supporting several webinars and education sessions.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/join-our-purposeful-practice-webinar/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/catch-up-on-our-women-girls-webinar/>

Tom Jarvis and David McBeath are recovering slowly but making progress

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tom-and-david-step-up-their-injury-comebacks/>

Information/Activities – Current/Future

Revised EYC selection policy has been published incorporating the challenges of the lack of international competition and difficulties in selecting players. Teams will be taken in each category. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/selection-process-for-european-youth-championships/>

Following the government announcement, training will resume for under 18's from wc 12/04/21. These will be a series of single training days as hotels are currently not permitted for use. A number of different locations will be used for the England Junior training group to provide players with some flexibility.

UK Sport funding was confirmed for GB Table Tennis. Table Tennis England are working with the HN to confirm the GB relationship and then selections and investment decisions will be made.

Commonwealth Games qualification route has been published although the Para classes have not yet been revised. England will gain host nation places for the able bodied competition.

Hopes, Aspire and Junior Squads will receive increased support for the season 21/22 following savings made in 20/21 and in order to increase likelihood of players returning to international competition

TT Fit app is now being used across the squads with club coaches invited to online sessions and both national and local coaches able to support players through the app.

Ten England players have been awarded £5k backing



The publication of the England Skills Awards will be available for all licensed coaches on Moodle by the end of April.

ITTF calendars continue to fluctuate and change almost daily as COVID changes plans. At present no more WTT competitions are expected before the Olympics.

The European Team qualification has been partly cancelled and the men's team directly qualified for the finals. The route for the women's team is not yet known.

The European singles is planned for late June 2021 in Poland, but is of course subject to COVID.

The work with parents in Sport to develop support and resources for players' parents continues and should be announced in Q2 2021.

The European Olympic Singles qualification has been confirmed without quarantine for Portugal 21-25 April.

Challenges/Issues

The issues continue:

The lockdowns have created greater imbalances in world table tennis as each country has had different restrictions. The UK appears to have suffered more than most. This has limited player preparation for key tournaments.

WTT and Youth WTT events are constantly changing, making planning for return to competition for younger players particularly challenging.

Competitions & Events – Neil Rogers

Paper: 10d

Information/Activities - Last Period

COVID has continued to have a sizeable impact on Departmental staffing/ capacity, and we remain at just 40% normal levels

COVID-response processes remain ongoing; no regulated competition has taken place since November:

- rolling stop/ go decisions and comms on national events, and processing cancellations/ postponements to external and sector events. A current overview can be seen in the Calendar available here: [Competitions— Table Tennis England](#)
- Recent cancellation of the remaining age-group Championships this season, with an aspiration to reschedule later in the season if possible Age group Nationals cancelled— [Table Tennis England](#)
- Ongoing input into COVID guidelines (with Development team), actively exploring potential variants, and filtering/ sense-checking evolving Gov't advice for TTE competitions
- Ongoing support and dialogue with scheduled 1* events permitted to take place

As part of the ongoing exercise to establish a consistent set of Terms of Reference across TTE committees/ networks, [new ToR for the County Championships Committee](#) have been agreed

Separately, a refinement of the [terms and composition of the 'Ranking Policy Group'](#) has also been finalised. The changes have been communicated to the Group and a number of new members appointed

Have fed competition considerations into the parameters of the [TASS research project on women and girls](#) (led by the Development Dept) – it is anticipated the outcomes will have direct relevance and value to the Competition Review

Information/Activities – Current/Future

A presentation on functionality development for [online Tournament Sanctioning and Entry](#) via the Sport:80 membership portal took place with stakeholder groups pre-Xmas. This approach is planned for launch in season 21/22, and will be communicated following detailed consideration of process implications

Development work remains ongoing to spec and build the required functionality to [transition British League fixtures and results onto TTE's TT Leagues platform](#) (with thanks to the support of Neil Hurford) This will come online for season 21/22, in addition to an increased proportion of NCL, NJL and County Championships events (following pilot divisions in those events in 19/20)



Further feasibility studies are being undertaken to consider [hosting opportunities for WTT events in late-2021](#). ITTF have asked TTE to submit proposals for hosting a variety and combination of international events, noting that COVID impact and resumption of the domestic programme remain critical. As an illustration, each potential WTT event would be of higher-specification and longer-duration than the Team World Cup in 2018. If successful, this would represent a tremendous commitment and opportunity across the whole organisation, and a critical reprioritisation of current work programmes

[An open membership consultation](#) took place related to a [change to Junior age-group eligibility \(U19\)](#), following ITTF and ETTU decisions to change to U19. A practical feedback meeting with key event organisers also took place, and we received overwhelming support of the change. The change has been subsequently announced for domestic memberships, competitions, rankings and national squad [Junior category extended to under-19— Table Tennis England](#)

[The Rankings Project](#) remains ongoing, and a [2nd phase of member consultation took place in Dec-January](#). Regrettably, the volunteer undertaking some critical statistical analysis underpinning the next stage of the project has not responded to contact for several months – following some initial concern for the wellbeing of the individual, it is now believed this is related to the recent EGM and associated issues. The project team are currently continuing to pursue alternative options to deliver the modelling and simulation process - it is hoped that this disruption will not impact unduly on the anticipated project timeframe

[The Competitions Review](#) is underway, following two public calls for expressions of interest and subsequent constitution of a steering group balancing representation and experience. An initial steering group meeting has taken place, and the project team are currently progressing the first stage of the review process (detailed competition mapping)

We are actively working towards full resumption of activity for the new membership year/competition season (01 August), including all tournaments and British League. Accordingly, we are now [recruiting for the BL Executive Officer role](#) (currently vacant)

Challenges/Issues

Working towards the launch of online tournament sanctioning and entry has prompted an exercise to revisit the necessary consents and acknowledgements for event entry (GDPR, safeguarding, drugs-testing). This detail has been updated, and will now be checked against current practice for all national tournaments, national leagues, and other regulated events

Information/Activities - Last Period

TT Kidz:

- TT Kidz recommenced from the 9th February and was linked to the new awards scheme programme – nearly 75 children have signed up
- The TT Kidz club programme had to be postponed for a February start and will now recommence from September-October 2021
- The TT Kidz awards scheme, which launched in October, will now be trialled in 10 clubs across the country when clubs go back for U18's from the 12th April.

Pride of Table Tennis awards

Regional winners have now been selected by Regional Committees and announced. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pride-of-table-tennis-awards-regional-winners-announced/>

The National finalists have now also been selected, with winners announced at the National Club, Coach and Volunteer conference scheduled for 5th June. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pride-of-table-tennis-national-shortlists-revealed/>

During lockdown 3.0, club and coach webinars were restarted, taking the total of club and coach webinars run over the past 12 months to nearly 70, link below for further info on two of the topics covered recently.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/new-webinar-series-launched-to-support-clubs/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/webinar-women-girls/>

A virtual schools' championships are now in place to ensure we continue to engage and offer competitive table tennis opportunities for schools at this time.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/tt-kidz-schools-virtual-competition/>

A participation survey was carried out before Christmas and a separate report is attached with the findings. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/participation-survey-what-you-told-us/>

Following the resignation of Colette Gooding (moving to a role with ECB), we are delighted to confirm that Chris Turner will move into the position of Youth Participation Lead.

Adult participation – work continues on the development of a new local league product, that is being designed to help re-invigorate local league activity through an exciting and shorter format set up. This has now been presented to MAG, National Council and Board.

A new online table tennis disability awareness module has been launched targeted at clubs, volunteers and coaches, which has been offered free of charge to members.



<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/online-disability-awareness-training-module-launched/>

We have launched a range of new benefits for licensed coaches, including free access to a table tennis training app tool, discounts to courses and access to free content through the new TT Learning Zone.

Covid-19 response

Through the Club Support Officers we have been able to support a number of clubs with successful funding applications drawing down funding from Sport England. A webinar was also recently held on this topic to support clubs through any funding bids. We are really pleased that to date, 50 Lottery Funded awards have been made to table tennis, totalling £277,430. This puts table tennis in the top 10% of awards and funding granted, higher than other sports including Athletics, Swimming and Badminton. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/sport-england-funding-success-for-table-tennis-clubs/>

Nearly 30 additional clubs (taking the total number of clubs receiving Table Tennis England funding to 65) were awarded funding in November as part of our Covid Activation Fund.

Information/Activities – Current/Future

Lockdown 2.0 prevented some of our coach education courses re-starting, but these have now been scheduled for a restart in May/June.

Both schools' events (team and individual) have now been cancelled but a virtual school's competition is being planned for 2021 to ensure we continue to engage and offer a competitive opportunity for schools. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/tt-kidz-schools-virtual-competition/>

We are still actively planning for the National Club, League, Volunteer and Coaching Conference, which will now take place virtually on Saturday 5th June, more information will be shared in the next couple of weeks.

The Diversity, Equality and Inclusion action plan work is now really starting to take shape, we are also going out to recruit for a Diversity, Inclusion and Volunteering Lead to help drive this important work forwards.

An Activators course (this will act as the step before a Level 1 coach qualification) is due to launch in the next month to support clubs to engage new volunteers to support sessions getting back up and running.

Challenges/Issues

Many clubs are still unable to access their facilities and despite whether they are able to operate effectively through the tier system, 50% of clubs are still not in a position to open. We are supporting clubs and leagues as much as possible to help them find alternative spaces and look at solutions to get started again.