

Chief Executive's Report

25th September 2021
Author: Sara Sutcliffe

Paper: 10c



Introduction

This report covers the period from April – mid September 2021.

As usual 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.

The last couple of months has seen the easing of restrictions, the Board has met twice in person, the Senior Leadership have met and more staff are returning to the office albeit still with caution as we head into autumn. It has been a real pleasure to see colleagues again. I hope that this report finds you and your families well.

Again, I would like to take this opportunity again to thank all of the staff, the Board and the dedicated volunteers working hard to get table tennis activity back safely across the country. It has been fantastic to see clubs, leagues and competitions running again.

Executive Report

The Olympic Games and Paralympic Games have both provided a welcome summer of sporting achievements across numerous sports. Congratulations to Liam, Paul and Tin-Tin for qualifying and competing with pride. Congratulations too to all the athletes and coaches from BPTT for their excellent results securing 7 medals in Tokyo. Our website saw increased traffic throughout the period and we are responding to direct queries about where and how to play.

Thank you to everyone who completed or promoted the membership survey.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/membership-survey-what-you-told-us-what-we-are-doing/>

Membership income remains the largest variable of income in our budgets for this year. Whilst we are on track to hit the budgeted income level that budget was built on a conservative forecast (static levels of member from 20/21 season, not back to 19/20 levels) we obviously hope for growth again. This underlines the work being done to support clubs and leagues to restart, to secure access to venues and to provide assistance in helping clubs to access covid support grants.

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.



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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.

My congratulations to the development team for their recent success at the ukactive awards. The Ping Pong Parlours initiative won the Active Activation award and TT Kidz was highly commended in the Generation Active award. Fantastic recognition for these two programmes.

The centenary celebrations will be kicking off in the coming weeks and months. I am delighted that Steve Joel, Centenary Project Manager, will attend both Regional Forum and National Council to present the plans and explain how regions and counties can get involved.

As you will be aware Tony Catt brought a claim in the Employment Tribunal against the association as well as against Sandra Deaton, Mark Quartermaine and myself personally. I am pleased to confirm that the judge dismissed his claim at a preliminary stage confirming that as a volunteer non-executive director he did not have employment or worker rights. The judge also confirmed that it was not appropriate to bring a claim against individual directors and removed the three individuals as Respondents. His secondary claim for minimum wage will also fail as he does not have worker rights. The cost of defending the claim has been £7500 plus VAT (the rest covered by insurance). Notwithstanding advice from the solicitors that a claim for costs would have a high chance of success we feel that this would not be in the best interests of the sport. However, Tony Catt has recently notified us that he intends to appeal and therefore we will reserve the right to reconsider the issue of costs as this is causing on-going financial damage as well as management time.

Sport England/UK Sport

We have now supported over a hundred table tennis organisations to access over £500,000 of Sport England covid recovery funding.

Sport England issued a short time frame for the completion of the funding bid, which will cover a 5-year period (and 3 years for talent) as they move away from strict 4-year cycles.

It was a very different process to previous cycles. Sport England are moving to process of treating NGBs and Active Partnerships (formerly County Sports Partnerships) as 'system partners. The process is also a lot more iterative. The first stage which we had 3 weeks to compete involved a self-diagnosis of where we are and how prepared we are to develop in terms of tackling inequalities primarily. As a 'system partner' we will receive funding for our core operations and support of traditional sports development but that funding will not grow from its current levels.

Instead, the focus is very much about tackling inequalities as set out in the Uniting the Movement strategy <https://www.sportengland.org/why-were-here/uniting-the-movement>.

Following the Sport England September Board meeting we will be informed of our indicative award and from there will work to flesh out more detail with our relationship manager.

The revised Code of Governance is expected to be released in late September/October and we will need to review and agree an action plan with Sport England for any changes that it may entail.



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We continue to work closely with the Home Nations on the management of the British progression fund programme for the 2021-25 cycle. The parties are currently collaborating as a committee with a roadmap to agreeing and reconstituting a separate British body, with the agreement of UK Sport, by the end of March 2022.

Recruitment of two independent committee members is currently underway.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/job/great-britain-table-tennis-committee/>

ITTF/ETTU

Sandra has touched on ITTF and ETTU activity. We have submitted the following resolution to the ITTF AGM (to be held 24 November) to ask the ITTF to undertake research and consultation on competitive clothing to ensure a wider choice for all players. The issue is also being actively reviewed by our own committees.



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The AGM asks the ITTF executive to undertake a meaningful consultation with member associations, the Athletes Commission, the ITTF Gender Commissioner, clothing manufacturers and any other relevant bodies on competition clothing to ensure greater flexibility and choice of competition clothing for all players. The consultation should be conducted with a view to submitting a proposition to amend Regulations 3.2.2.1 at the next AGM.

Rationale: The current regulation provides

3: Regulations for International Competitions Page 44 ITTF Handbook 2019 v2 3.2.2 Playing Clothing
3.2.2.1 Playing clothing shall consist of a short-sleeved or sleeveless shirt and shorts or skirt or one-part sports outfits, socks and playing shoes; other garments, such as part or all of a tracksuit, shall not be worn during play except with the permission of the referee.

Research conducted by Table Tennis England and its partners has concluded that the inflexibility of kit options has been a key theme or a barrier leading to women and girls dropping out of the sport. Also, the current dress code is restrictive for people from certain religious communities to adhere to and females in particular can find it embarrassing and a perceived barrier to seek 'permission' to wear a particular type of clothing.

Table Tennis England would like to see the regulations amended to allow for full length clothing such as long-sleeved tops and leggings/tracksuits in competition without the need to seek permission from the referee. The regulations should not be gender specific.

This is a relevant and topical issue in all sports for example the German female gymnasts who wore unitards at the Tokyo Olympics and the WTA amending its regulations to include full or mid length leggings with or without a skirt. The ITTF needs to bring its regulations up to date with global developments.

Work continues behind the scenes with the ITTF and WTT regarding both the 2026 World Championships ambitions (feasibility study being undertaken and unfunded by UK Sport) and World Table Tennis events. Meetings will take place in Cluj at the European Championships.

We continue to work with BPTT on the bid to host the 2023 European Para Championships in Sheffield.



Commonwealth Games/Birmingham 2022

With less than one year to go to the Commonwealth Games our cross departmental group is busy. The technical officials list has been submitted (with a focus on gender balance and younger officials being required), One Year to Go celebrations in Birmingham were supported with tables activated in the city centre and other legacy plans coming together. We are delighted that Kate Nixon has been appointed as Assistant Competition Manager and we are in regular contact with the team at B2022. The membership offer of a dedicated ticket ballot for table tennis was promoted and the general ticket ballot is now open. Whilst it does not affect England as host nation the qualification route has been thrown into uncertainty due to the pandemic. We are trying to help our Home Nation colleague get the answers they require about qualification.

Sara Sutcliffe



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Operations & Governance Report

25th September 2021

Paper: 10d



Information/Activities - Last Period

Objectives for period:

1. Review of the Governance Action Plan and IRP to ensure on going compliance
2. Planning and renewal of all memberships from Mid-July - Sept target of 75%
3. Hold the Table Tennis England AGM and complete and actions for it and that come out of it.
4. Look at development of TT Quality Management system to support Governance structure and management including safeguarding
5. Look at reintroduction to the office environment
6. Board Evaluation Actions

Summary of Progress:

Review of the Governance Action Plan and IRP to ensure on going compliance

This has been moved to the 3rd quarter as we are awaiting the release from Sport England of the updated Code for Sports Governance, so that we can undertake a review against this and any new criteria that may be required

Planning and renewal of all memberships from Mid-July - Sept target of 75%

Online renewals happened from the 19th July and promotion of the 50% discount for those that renewed last season. We had to remove 1600 auto renewals to administer the discount and unfortunately on the day that auto renewals were requested 3 banks had issues so between that and expiry of some cards expiry dates we could not renew 3500 auto renewals as we would have done previously.

This has caused pressure on the team as we have then had to process these members manually, we are moving in the right direction increasing from 3,900 to now looking at 6,174 against 7,988 this time last year. We are of course setting back as many auto renewals as possible for the following season and have already processed 2000 of those that were removed or failed.

From the period 19th July to 6th August we had over 3,100 tickets and all were processed in an average of less than 5 working hours, we also had in the first week of the lines opening for renewals on the 2nd August nearly 1,000 calls with 95% of them answered first time and all remaining voicemails returned.

I would request all National Councillors to encourage their league members to renew their memberships.



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MEMBERSHIP		SELECT BY DATE	COMP SEASON
		09/09/2021	VS 2019/20
21/22 SEASON MEMBERS			
ALL MEMBERS: 14,785	2020-21 Season (YTD)	15,188	▼ 2%
	2019-20 Season (YTD)	20,898	▼ 29%
REVENUE: £191,281	2020-21 Season (YTD)	£197,240	▼ 2%
	2019-20 Season (YTD)	£306,958	▼ 38%
PAID MEMBERS: 12,103	2020-21 Season (YTD)	11,837	▲ 2%
	2019-20 Season (YTD)	18,167	▼ 33%
AUTO RENEWALS: 6,174	2020-21 Season (YTD)	7,988	▼ 22%
	2019-20 Season (YTD)	7,571	▼ 18%

MEMBERS MATRIX			
2019-20 Season	2020-21 Season	2021-22 Season	Grand Total
8,656 29%	8,656 47%	8,656 59%	8,656 26%
3,845 13%	3,845 21%		3,845 12%
2,098 7%		2,098 14%	2,098 6%
15,287 51%			15,287 47%
	1,658 9%	1,658 11%	1,658 5%
	4,105 22%		4,105 13%
		2,373 16%	2,373 7%
29,886 100%	18,264 100%	14,785 100%	32,723 100%

- 2,373 – completely new (when look at the previous two seasons)
- 8,656 – were in both 19/20 and 20/21 and also purchased in this season
- 2,098 – were in 19/20 then lapsed and came back this season
- 1,658 – were in 20/21 and renewed in 21/22

Discounts – we have had requested 2,947 discounts

Hold the Table Tennis England AGM and complete and actions for it and that come out of it.

The AGM was held virtually on the 17th July 2022 and with 24 resolutions it was a very long meeting of 7 hours, the new voting process using Mi-voice worked well.

Look at development of TT Quality Management system to support Governance structure and management including Safeguarding



All safeguarding procedures have been reviewed and updated and a significant amount of Terms of Reference have been completed. Board Guidance Pack has also been completed with all supporting documentation.

Look at reintroduction to the office environment

We are still on limited numbers in the office and are looking to expand this throughout September

Board Evaluation Actions

Significant progress has been undertaken on the actions from the external evaluation and the remainder of the training is scheduled for the last quarter of the year.

Work undertaken during this period outside the Annual Plans

Other focuses this period

1. Further discussions have taken place with TT Wales and we are currently developing elements of TT leagues for them to use in the new season.
2. Insurance – full tender process was undertaken with 6 companies contacted and 3 completing the full tender. Towergate were successful in winning the tender for a further 3 years.
3. Board Inductions were undertaken with the 4 new directors
4. Board Training organised for Risk Management and Board responsibilities
5. National Council Meeting was held virtually due to the ongoing restrictions and the election for the Chair of National Council was undertaken and Estyn Williams was successful again and will remain Chair for the coming year. We also underwent reappointment of National Councillors.
6. TT Clubs development work continues using the TT Leagues platform for launch in September.
7. Amendments to Articles from the resolutions agreed at the AGM and posting to Companies House
8. Preparation and delivery of the Annual Conference and delivery in a remote format
9. Board Approved 2022 AGM date of 2nd July 2022.

Enablers, positive impacts:

- Zoom continues to be used to maximise interaction and undertake key Governance requirements
- Teamwork and dedication in the operations/finance team in processing memberships and discounts with only 4 members of staff



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Issues, challenges or roadblocks:

- The delay in being able to send out details relating to the discount due to delays in development, compounding additional calls and helpdesk enquiries that could have been avoided.

<u>Action</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>When</u>
Discuss Table Tennis Table purchases and membership links	CD / GY	ASAP
Confirm AGM Attendance	ALL	Complete
Confirm timeline of annual review questions	SS	Complete
Sam Garey to provide answer to finance queries	SS / SamG	Complete

In Memoriam

March 20 Report

Derek Schofield – <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-derek-schofield-world-champion-and-vetts-founder/>

Brian Lamerton – <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-international-umpire-brian-lamerton/>

June 20 Report

Charlie Childs – <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-keith-charlie-childs/>

Ronnie Allcock - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-england-international-ronnie-allcock/>

Bobby Raybould - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-bobby-raybould-england-international/>

Peter Shead - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-england-international-peter-shead/>

Geoff Scruton - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-geoff-rushton-national-councillor/>

John Burtenshaw – <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-john-burtenshaw/>

October 20 Report

Gerald Gurney – <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-gerald-gurney-historian-collector-estta-stalwart/>

Heather Masters - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-international-umpire-heather-masters/>



January 21 Report

Bob Stannard - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-bob-stannard/>

Ron Bayliss - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-ron-bayliss-draycott-long-eaton-ttc-founder/>

Eric Todd - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-eric-todd-batts-founder/>

April 21 Report

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/news/archived/obituary-england-international-peter-williams/>

June 21 Report

Fred Lockwood: <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-veterans-world-champion-fred-lockwood/>

Eileen Allison: <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-eileen-allison-much-loved-referee/>

September 21 Report

Jim Palmer <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-jim-palmer-national-elections-scrutineer/>

Cicely Palmer - Teller



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Performance

25th September

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Information/Activities - Last Period

SENIOR

Paul Drinkhall, Sam Walker, Tin-Tin Ho and Ho and Charlotte Bardsley competed in the European Championships, Poland in June. Both Paul and Tin-Tin performed well, losing to the eventual winners of the men's and women's singles;

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/luckless-pitchford-forced-to-withdraw-from-europeans/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/walker-and-bardsley-show-fight-at-euros/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/walker-and-bardsley-bow-out-of-singles/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/drinkhall-and-ho-set-up-germany-clashes/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/drinkhall-and-ho-bow-out-to-german-seeds/>

Liam Pitchford, Tin-Tin Ho and Denise Payet competed in the WTT Contender event in Budapest in August, with Liam reaching the quarter-finals and Denise Payet reaching the quarter finals women's doubles

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/payet-joins-olympians-for-return-to-international-circuit/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-and-payet-advance-in-hungary/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-into-wtt-budapest-quarter-finals/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-knocked-out-in-budapest/>

Sam Walker, Tin-Tin Ho, Maria Tsapsinos, Denise Payet and Charlotte Bardsley have competed in the ITTF Czech Open in August. Sam and Tin-Tin reached the mixed doubles quarter final and Sam has reached the men's doubles final with partner Truls Moregard (SWE)

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tsapsinos-joins-ho-and-walker-in-czech-main-draw-singles/>



<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/three-english-athletes-make-progress-in-czech-open/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/sam-walker-reaches-czech-open-final/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/historic-moment-for-walker-after-doubles-victory/>

The England Women's team have qualified for the European Team Championships which take place in Cluj, Romania at the end of September

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-women-set-for-euros-qualifying-campaign/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/sibley-out-of-retirement-to-fire-england-to-euros/>

YOUTH

European Youth Championships: Charlotte Bardsley reached the last 32 of the Junior Girls singles, and combined with Mari Baldwin to reach the last 16 of the Junior Girls doubles and the Cadet Girls team finishing in the top 20. An outbreak of Covid-19 severely impacted the teams just before the championship with a number of players unable to attend as a result

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/bardsley-and-baldwin-carry-english-hopes/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/bardsley-knocked-out-to-end-english-interest/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/lowly-finish-for-boys-despite-back-to-back-victories/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-girls-claim-top-20-place/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/changes-to-european-youth-championships-squad/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/hunter-reaches-main-draw-in-croatia/>



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England youth players reach knockout stages of the first WTT youth events of the 2021-22 season

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-youngsters-reach-knockout-stages-at-wtt-events/>

First cohort of DiSE players complete their two-year programme

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/dise-athletes-on-a-roll-after-completing-studies/>

Jakub Piwowar, Sienna Jetha and Kacper Piwowar select for the ETTU Euro talents squad

<https://www.ettu.org/en/n/news/2021/september/at-the-eurotalents-development-camp-halmstad-provides-perfect-training-environment>

GB

Three players, all from England, represented Team GB at the Tokyo Olympics. All three places were secured through the world ranking qualification. Tin-Tin secured the first direct female place since 1996. Liam achieved qualification for his third Olympic Games and was joined at the 11th hour by Paul Drinkhall following a late withdrawal and the Team Leaders request and presentation for the 'handback' place.

The Olympic Games performances were mixed. Paul Drinkhall recorded two good wins to reach the last 32, beating two players he had not previously won against. However, Liam lost his first match in last 32 which was doubly disappointing as his draw provided a strong opportunity to reach the semifinals. Tin-Tin lost to a higher ranked opponent in the first round.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/paul-drinkhall-added-to-team-gb-squad-for-tokyo/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/paul-weathers-the-storm-to-go-through/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/superb-drinkhall-into-the-last-32-in-tokyo/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tin-tins-positive-despite-olympic-defeat/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-and-drinkhall-out-of-olympics/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/olympic-reflections-gavin-evans/>



<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/olympic-reflections-tin-tin-ho/>
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/olympic-reflections-paul-drinkhall/>
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/olympic-reflections-liam-pitchford/>
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/team-gb-athletes-reflect-on-the-olympics/>

BPTT

BPTT enjoy their most successful games ever, winning seven medals in total;

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/wetherill-withdrawn-from-paralympics/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/awesome-foursome-guaranteed-medals-in-tokyo/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/bayley-proud-despite-missing-gold/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/china-too-strong-as-gb-trio-have-to-settle-for-bronze/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/key-gb-roles-for-ryan-jenkins-and-evie-collier/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/silver-lining-for-bayley-and-karabardak/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/vecko-toasts-good-health-and-medals-from-tokyo/>

OTHER

The Talent & Performance Committee has been created, with three individuals co-opted onto the committee, with the first meeting held recently on the 3rd September in Nottingham. TTE president Jill Parker also attended

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/don-parker-to-chair-new-performance-committee/>

Matt Stanforth appointed Head of England Performance

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/matt-takes-the-england-helm/>

Big plans for British table Tennis

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/key-changes-to-british-table-tennis-structure/>



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Performance podcast series launched

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/podcast-pitchford-cooke-and-evans-on-the-england-pathway/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/podcast-progressing-through-the-england-pathway/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/podcast-how-and-why-we-created-england-skills-awards/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/inside-team-england-podcast-series-launched/>

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- Development of online resources with Working with Parents in Sport is continuing and will be finalised shortly. Sessions for parents of squad players to be arranged once squad selections are finalised;
- Following squad selection player coaches to be invited to attend national training camps to observe and engage with national performance staff over the course of the season;
- TT Fit continues to be used for active three-way communication between player, local coach and national staff. Coaches included on all squad related communication and information;
- 21/22 Aspire and Junior programmes will expand to included opportunities international training and competition (where possible due to covid restrictions);
- Aspire and Junior squad programmes now include a more extensive international element which is significantly subsidised through the talent and performance budget, reducing player's core costs;
- Open days for clubs and coaches to be identified and shared publicly once all training dates have been confirmed by the University of Nottingham;
- Implementation of introduction programme currently being developed, with a particular focus on increasing female participation in performance;
- One week summer training camps for all squads have taken place over August;
- A further four players were awarded £750 each from Sportsaid to support their programmes;
- Liam Pitchford has been offered a place in the European Top 16 which takes place in on the 18th & 19th September;
- Liam Pitchford, Paul Drinkhall, Sam Walker and Tin-Tin Ho have qualified for the World Championships which takes place in Houston, Texas this November.

Great Britain

- GBTTC (Great Britain Table Tennis Committee) met officially for the first time (1/7/21). The MOU changes requested by TTS were agreed and the revised MOU sent to UK Sport. Simon Griew was confirmed as interim Chair. The ToR for the group were agreed.
- The second meeting on 2/9/21 discussed the timeline for the development of the new GB body to incorporate the new Governance code due this autumn.
- Recruitment is taking place for the two independent roles who will be a part of the new GB body when it is created.
- The GB Performance Group (GBPG) are currently writing the GB Junior Squad selection policy for approval by the GBTTC.
- Once approved the selections for this programme can begin.
- The Performance Director and Head Coach roles have been confirmed with GB and announced.
- New appointments for a GB Coach and shared admin role have been made and announced.
- The GB Coach Apprenticeship programme is still in development and due for launch in autumn 2021.

Challenges/Issues

The issues continue:

- The Covid outbreak had a considerable on staff work programmes, forcing a delay to planned projects including Squad selections for the 21/22 season.
- Liam was unable to attend the European Championships because of a Covid close contact. This also impacted his performance at the Olympic Games.
- None of the Olympic team were able to train abroad or use international sparrers in their preparation for the Olympic Games.
- The combination of the pandemic and the new international competition structure is having a significant effect on the ability for ITTF & WTT to be able to confirm competition dates, with competitions announced with very little notice, making player planning extremely challenging for both player and programme.

Marcomms

25th September 2021

Paper: 10d

Objectives from Ops Plan (Q2)

- Create Centenary marketing campaign based on upcoming activity and start lead up campaign
- Deliver Annual Review and assist with AGM planning and delivery
- Promotion and communications support and coverage for the Olympics
- TT Fast Format Marcomms plan created and promotion starts working with development team to do so
- Creation and delivery of Club Survey
- Support the delivery and promotion of Diversity and Inclusion plan
- Investigate/kick start value of tt piece which would fall in line with B2022 planning

The following two objectives have carried over from Q1:

- Development and delivery of new website and launch of brand refresh
- Support and creation of Return to Play campaign which links in with membership drive

Summary of Progress

- **Development and delivery of new website and launch of brand refresh**
Website. Since the last Board meeting the remaining flat designs have been signed off, existing website content has been reviewed and updated, the CMS has been set up, JASK have made headway in building the site, and the marcomms team are now populating the site alongside their other work, whilst JASK finish off the site development.
Brand refresh. Completed in Q1.
- **Support and creation of the Return to the Table campaign which links in with membership drive**
Ongoing – including support with ideas, a huge team effort in capturing video footage and creating videos for the overall campaign and individual themes, weekly/fortnightly website articles, email campaigns and creation of digital assets, including the digital toolkit and social media posts.
- **Create Centenary marketing campaign based on upcoming activity and start lead up campaign**
Underway – we have supported on a launch article and the creation of a survey starting the Centenary conversation, which aims to invite ideas from Leagues and County Associations as to how we can support celebrations during the Centenary season. We are now in the process of doing the same for individuals and clubs.

We have also created a Head Sponsors Proposal based on Steve's sponsorship ideas. Planning is in place to discuss ideas on how we can raise our profile and reach during the Centenary year.

- **Deliver Annual Review and assist with AGM planning and delivery**
This has been completed, including collating questions arising from publication of the draft. This will now guide changes to the online Impact report.
- **Promotion and communications support and coverage for the Olympics**
Organised media event in Nottingham, attended by ITV, BBC and other local media (other local media were provided with ready-to-use features). Also created several assets for use on social media in the run-up to Games. Arranged interview with Tin-Tin and the Daily Telegraph – resulted in a big feature in-print and online. Also provided footage for Recast, including some rights-free footage from Tom Jarvis in Tokyo. There were 760 online articles flagged by our media monitoring mentioning key words which were overwhelmingly one or all of Tin-Tin Ho, Liam Pitchford or Paul Drinkhall in the same article as table tennis. Overall advertising value equivalent was just under £12.9 million and a reach of 1.39 billion. This is only online mentions, not in print and not broadcast. The most significant generated by us was the feature on Tin-Tin in the Daily Telegraph.
- **TT Fast Format Marcomms plan created and promotion starts working with development team to do so**
Ongoing – so far, we have provided marcomms support for the work which has taken place with leagues during their planning stage. This included a TT Fast Format launch article on the website, a teaser animated social post prior to the National Conference, impactful conference slides and a landing page on the website. Regarding the community side of TT Fast Format, this will start around mid-October.
- **Creation and delivery of Club Survey**
After a long period of coronavirus restrictions, we want to ensure clubs are receiving the support they need to get players back playing as normal, and to achieve longer term plans and ambitions. The creation of this survey has been a collaborative effort and is now 'live' until the end of August.
- **Support the delivery and promotion of Diversity and Inclusion plan**
Ongoing – meetings are in progress; initially marcomms are supporting with the launch of the strategy/action plan 'Level the Table', planned for September 27th. This involves the creation and implementation of a comms plan and the design and production of the strategy document.
- **Investigate/kick start value of tt piece which would fall in line with B2022 planning**
After discussions with 4Global, leaders in social value and impact measurement, the team are working on an invitation to tender to gauge costs for planned work.

Digital Reporting – please see Appendix 1: Digital Reporting

Challenges/Roadblocks

The workload for marcomms has been significant over the past few months as there has been a lot of activity going on across the organisation since coronavirus restrictions have lifted. This is not a bad thing. It's been busy, but productive. Nonetheless, we have not been able to reflect or do too much forward planning, but I hope this can come in the next quarter.

Additional Items outside of the annual plans

- Working with Blue Green to ensure delivery of the Centenary book project. Initial designs are in from Blue Green and Steve is going to liaise with Diane to arrange for us to have her work to date, most notably the photos which she has not yet sent to us.
- We went live with our annual membership survey in late April to take on broad views about returning to play, membership, governance, communications, safeguarding and diversity and inclusion. Results were analysed in June, which showed positive intentions among members to return to the sport. Insights demonstrated the need to increase awareness of membership benefits outside of competitive play, and to give members further opportunities to give feedback and get involved with consultation processes. Findings from this survey will support learnings from focus groups conducted to guide changes to the Diversity Action Plan. The challenges faced by Women & Girls, Ethnically Diverse Communities and Disabled People in the sport focussed on the need to establish clear processes and support mechanisms to take action against discriminatory behaviour, as well as increase the visibility of these groups in athlete, coach, volunteer and official roles.
- Our work with Winners is ongoing, while final touches to agreed work streams are being made.
- Ask us Anything – promotion, collation of questions etc.
- Annual Conference – creation of the Honours booklet.
- Full communications support at the two age-group Nationals at the University of Warwick in July, including programmes and live streaming.
- Board blogs series launched and performance podcasts published.
- TT Kidz promotional support for phase 3 in clubs, including sponsored Facebook ads.
- European Championships and European Youth Championships reporting.
- Support on launch of Charlie Childs Coaching Grant – including online application form and writing of speech.
- Results from the Loop at Work Re-engagement survey is being analysed to gauge workplace conditions after the lifting of restrictions and eagerness for workplace table tennis to return.

Appendix 1: Digital reporting

Summary: Please note the period of these metrics is **from 1 May 2021 to 31st July** and compare to the quarter before (February - April).

Social media, email and website:

Channel	Followers	Impressions	Engagements	Engagement Rate
Facebook	21,121	1.4385M	224K	10.02%
Twitter	15,769	524K	4.7K	1.9%
Instagram	10,475	315.5K	15.36K	5.54%
Emails Sent		Unique Opens	Open Rate	Link Clicks
45 (+28%)		198,067 (+34%)	3.55% (-3.3%)	53,412 (+6.5%)
Total Sessions	Total Page Views	Bounce Rate	Time on page	
187,061 (+18%)	442,413 (+33.3%)	59% (-7.8%)	02:07 (+8.9%)	

Highlights

This quarter has been very successful across social, email marketing and website engagement as you can see from all twelve metrics increasing.

The commencing of table tennis events (internationally and nationally) has provided great content which our audience engages with, including live streaming – one stream which went ‘viral’ and reached nearly 500,000 people.

The rise across the board can be attributed to the Olympics occurring during this period as well, which saw a big spike in social and website engagement.

A concerted effort to continue to seek out new content, like the Inside Team England series needs to happen to ensure we don’t fall short of fresh new content when we don’t have big events us the Olympics to generate engagement.

Definitions:

Followers are the number of people that follow the specific channel. This also includes number of people who like the TTE page on Facebook.

Impressions are the number of times your content is displayed, no matter if it was clicked or not. However, an impression means that content was delivered to someone's feed. A viewer doesn't have to engage with the post in order for it to count as an impression.

Engagement and Engagement rates

- **Facebook:** [Facebook](#) measures engagements by likes, reactions, comments, shares, and some clicks on links, photos, or videos. Engagement rates on Facebook are measured by engaged users, not total engagements; if someone likes and comments on the post, that counts as two engagements, but one engaged user. Total engaged users are divided by the post’s reach to find the engagement rate.

- **Twitter:** [Twitter](#) engagements are measured by retweets, replies, follows, favourites, tweet expansion, or clicks on links, hashtags, embedded media, the username, or the profile picture. Engagement rates are calculated by adding all of these engagements up and dividing by total impressions.
- **Instagram:** [Instagram](#) defines engagements as likes, comments, and saves on a post. There are a few [ways to calculate Instagram engagement rates](#), and some Instagram users include or omit other factors like shares. To calculate an engagement rate, Instagram takes these metrics and divides by the total impressions.
- **YouTube:** number of clicks, divided by the number of thumbnail impressions
- **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn calculates update engagement rate by adding the number of interactions, clicks, and new followers acquired, divided by the number of impressions the post receives.

Emails sent: total number of emails sent across the reporting period.

Unique opens: A unique open is how many people have opened your email.

Open rate: The percentage of the total number of subscribers who opened an email campaign.

Link clicks: number of clicks on a link, button or downloadable document in the email.

Total sessions: Sessions in Google Analytics are defined as the total number of visits to your site — including both new and repeat visits.

Total Page Views: A page view is an instance of a page being loaded (or reloaded) in a browser. Page views is a metric defined as the total number of pages viewed.

Bounce Rate: Bounce rate is single-page sessions divided by all sessions, or the percentage of all sessions on your site in which users viewed only a single page and triggered only a single request to the Analytics server. (Basically, it shows how much people are just viewing one page and then exiting the website without interacting with any other content)

Time on page: This is the average amount of time a user spends on a page.

Competitions & Events

25th September 2021

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Information/Activities - Last Period

- The *Junior National Cup*, the rescheduled *U10-13s National Championships*, and the rescheduled *Cadet & Junior National Championships* all successfully took place in June/ July as the first national events delivered under COVID restrictions. The events themselves generally went well, despite significant challenges, although it was disappointing that some attendees did not willingly abide by unavoidable COVID protocols causing problems for staff and volunteers.
- National events new season processes have taken place:
 - [New season operational changes to rankings and events announced](#), including aligning TTE national championships against ITTF age-groups
 - [Rankings restarted after COVID suspension](#). [New season ranking run dates](#) and [opening player rankings published](#) (reflecting changes to Junior age-group eligibility)
 - [Ranking guidance](#) and [ITTF-TTE ranking equivalencies](#) updated and published
 - [Annual regulatory updates](#) (including regulated competitions, tournaments, and British League)
- All is progressing well for first events of new 21/22 season:
 - [Grand Prix #1 \(Crawley\)](#) and [Senior British League](#) are set to launch the season on 18 September. We are having to ensure that we are conversant with all venues' residual COVID protocols and continue to consider how this affects our standard approaches
 - Following a competitive tender process, we have established the [official ball supplier 21/22](#), and equipment suppliers for the full programme of national events
 - We have [recruited for vacant roles](#) to bring the Dept. back to a standard staffing complement: *British League Executive Officer* role (started June), *Competitions & Events Officer* and *Competition & Events Administrator* roles (both starting September)
 - Following a bumper crop of entries and interest in [men's VBL \(Veteran's British League\)](#), the viability of a small additional concurrent event has been established to complement the main event which is at full capacity. Entries are currently open to teams on the waiting list as well as those who last entered in 19/20, pre-COVID. This was a challenging and emotive issue, and has absorbed a significant amount of time and energy. I would like to extend my thanks to Susie Venner and Gary Wood, and to the volunteers, officials and colleagues that have dedicated time and crunched numbers to help provide this new opportunity at short-notice
- Ongoing development work to spec and build the required functionality for [British League fixtures and results on TTE's TT Leagues platform](#) has largely been completed. Pilots have also been established with the relevant Committees and contacts for specific divisions of NCL, NJL and County Championships events. Score entry testing took place for relevant individuals in August. My ongoing thanks to Neil Hurford must please be noted for his tireless and continued support of this work
- New [online Tournament Entry/ Payment](#) via the Sport:80 membership portal was actively trialed for two events (the Junior National Cup, and the Cadet & Junior National Championships) The first pilot went extremely smoothly; the 2nd event was more complex. This hands-on experience enabled us to identify and fix some bugs, and also some additional minor tweaks for functionality.



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These are awaited from Sport:80, which is a frustrating delay. Further pilots are subsequently anticipated for the National Qualifiers event (January), Grand Prix #3 (March), and for a 1* or 2* event (TBC). The latter would also include the online sanctioning element of the process. It remains the broad intent to launch the platform during season 21/22, but likely to be a phased implementation

- Committee Terms of Reference have been completed and published for [English Leagues Cup Competition](#) and [National Cadet & Junior League](#)
- John Mackey has been appointed as the new [Chair of the Tournament Approval Panel \(TAP Committee\)](#). Kim Mudge has been appointed as Secretary of TAP in John's place, which is another strong appointment. Thanks goes to Gail Johns for her time as Chair of TAP.
- A significant amount of time has been committed to supporting complications arising from misunderstandings, necessitating training courses and event-specific concessions for a number of volunteer tournament organisers. My thanks to colleagues in TOC (Technical Officials Committee) for supporting this process, and additionally to Susie Venner, Ritchie Venner and Don Parker for their helpful input to this issue
- A significant amount of time during this period has been committed to safeguarding and staffing -related issues, and to the Sport England submission

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- An exercise to explore options for an endorsed production/ streaming platform for British League Premier division has been prompted with MarComms Dept., and is hoped will take place during the Autumn period. The TTE partnership with Recast may or may not provide an opportunity in this regard
- Discussions regarding proposals for WTT event series hosting in 2022-2026 remain ongoing, and subject to an ever-changing landscape/ timeframe as WTT seek to actively 'cluster' numerous events. Separate but connected discussions related to feasibility work for the ITTF World Championships and Para World Champs in 2026 also remain ongoing. Progress is slow, dependent on and awaiting WTT/ ITTF info in both instances
- The Competitions Review is ongoing. The Competition Mapping exercise has been completed, as have eight Insight Meetings with NGBs and TTAs. Various Player Reports remain in-progress with Sport:80, which is a frustrating delay. Operational 'fire-fighting' has also unavoidably pulled focus away from this area. The Competition Review Steering Group is scheduled to meet mid-Sept to structure and populate a supporting document for the consultation process; the consultation itself is now anticipated to take place early-Autumn. A presentation on the project brief, goals, process and progress was delivered to the National Conference in June, and (by recording) to the Annual Meeting in August
- The Rankings Project remains ongoing. UK Sport have started a modelling and simulation process, with encouraging early feedback - we are very grateful for their expert support of this project although our ability to actively drive progress is limited. It is hoped to parallel launch a new rankings iteration for info/ refinement concurrent with the latter half of 21/22 season

Challenges/Issues

- See Sport:80 delays, above

Development, Volunteering & Mass

25th September 2021

Paper: 10d



Summary of Progress:

- **TT Kidz:**
 - 28 clubs signed up for delivery for phase 3 of 8-week programmes (start from October)
 - In discussions with TT New Zealand over potential license agreement, similar to TT Australia
- **TT Clubs** (online club management tool) launched in w/c 16th August with 50 clubs signed up. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/award-nominees-rocca-to-create-our-tt-clubs-platform/>
- Table Tennis England won one award and received a special commendation for another at the recent **UK Active awards**.
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/national-award-for-our-ping-pong-parlours-scheme/>
- The **Return to the Table campaign** launched, running from 26th July to 27th September, which incorporates the Back to TT re-launch. Over 100 clubs have signed up for the Return to the Table toolkit and 55 events are planned so far for the celebration fortnight. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/are-you-ready-to-return-to-the-table/>
- **TT Fast Format** launched in June, with five local leagues signed up for full pilots from September. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tt-fast-format-is-a-new-option-for-leagues/>
- **COVID-19 response funding** – staff have now supported table tennis organisations to bring in over half a million pounds in return to play funding support from SE.
- **Jack Petchey Foundation** – at the time of writing, the bid has gone in for year 11 funding and we are expecting sign off of funding in early September
- **StreetTT** – Pilots have continued to be rolled out across London with initial pilots exceeding target reach numbers.
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/ping-london-joins-forces-with-streettt/>
- Approx. 25 **Ping! partners** have now received activation funding and support
- A survey has been undertaken with our network of **workplaces/Loop at Work partners** to better understand the appetite for table tennis when returning to the office and the roll out of The Hub platform
- **Club audit** targeted at Premier and Associate clubs has launched and will be closing at the end of August. A league audit is being planned for early September.
- Zoiey Smale has joined us from British Gymnastics as our **Diversity, Inclusion and Volunteering Lead** and is having a positive impact already.



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- The **Level the Table, EDI strategy** is set for launch on 27th September at the end of the Return to the Table campaign and the start of National Inclusion Week (National Inclusion Week is a national initiative, not TTE specific). Thank you to those National Councillors that joined the recent consultation session.
- The new **Level 2 coaching course** has now been re-written to fall in line with the rest of the coaching pathway and the first courses using the new material will be ran in November
- An **Activator award** launched in August with 115 people signing up so far, which is being offered free of charge throughout the Return to the Table campaign. The course is designed for volunteers that may not want to, or be ready to be a Level 1 coach but want to help 'activate' table tennis sessions in their local clubs/communities
- The Table Tennis England development team supported **Parkinson's TT UK** to run the first ever Parkinson's TT National Championships in August.
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/still-time-to-enter-ping-pong-parkinson-nationals/>
- 14 Ping Pong Parlours have now re-opened now restrictions are easing, with four new Parlours on the horizon
- Through the delivery of online Tournament Organiser training, there have been over 50 new Tournament Organisers (Level 2) qualified in recent months.
- A new grant scheme has been launched in memory of Charlie Childs to support people to start or continue their coaching journey.
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/charlies-passion-lives-on-in-coaching-grant-scheme/>



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