

# Transforming Membership Proposal

## 1. Introduction

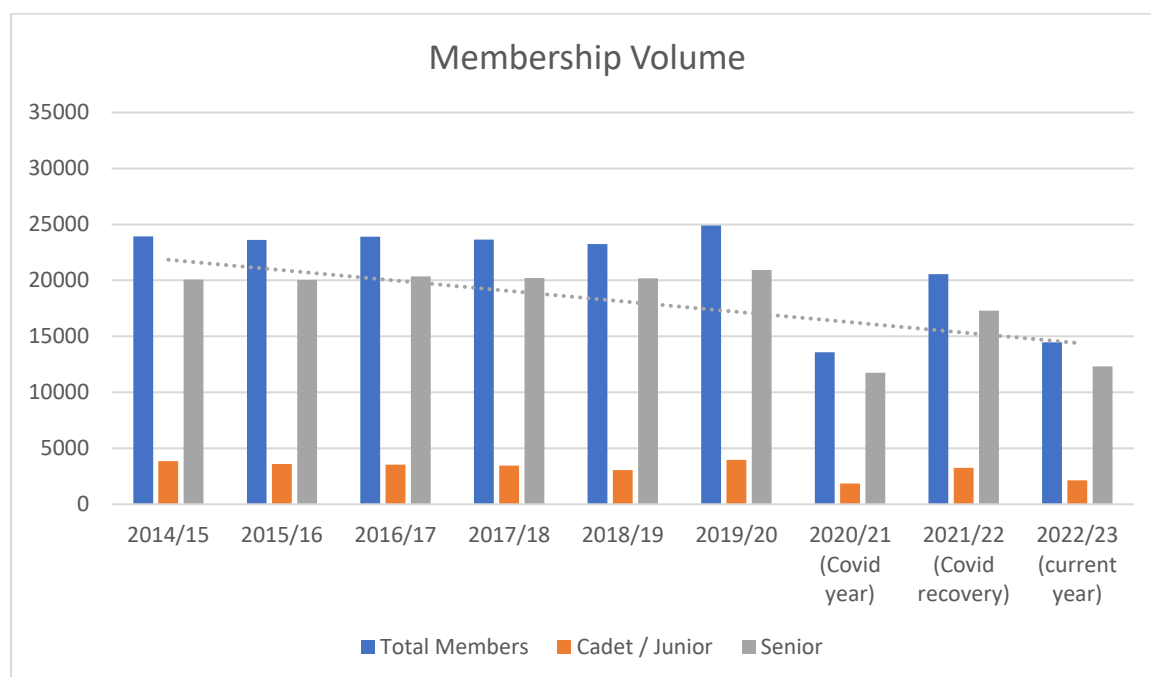
Membership of many National Governing Bodies of Sport is often a ‘thorny’ issue. Challenges relating to cost, perceived value, benefits offered etc. are all live issues that have historically been debated. Membership of Table Tennis England is no different.

However, our strategy reset presents membership as a key contributor to Table Tennis England's broader commercial strategy, as it embarks on plans to increase its self-generated revenue. To achieve this goal, membership, in both its perception and value proposition, must change.

Many members believe membership to be a ‘tax’ on their participation in the sport whether that be a player or coach. There is a widespread feeling among members that they **MUST** join as opposed to them **WANTING** to join and play their part of the growth and success of table tennis in England.

Over the years, numerous attempts have been made to ‘remodel’ membership – a review of benefits, revised pricing structures, technology, methods of collection etc. The outturn is that the value in being a member remains largely unrecognised.

Furthermore, membership income only rises if fees are increased, not by volume of members joining, where the numbers has been fairly static.





Alongside the feelings shared by many members, we are missing a huge opportunity to engage with those individuals who would be considered regular players (defined as playing at least 2 x monthly) but are not current members; this again points to a need for change if we are to increase the number of members of Table Tennis England, and the income generated from membership.

Table Tennis England proposes a step change in its membership proposition which will reshape categories of joining, pricing, the value proposition, and the customer journey; in short, an effective way in which to drive growth through positive engagement.

In summary, membership of Table Tennis England must be considered both an engagement vehicle with those who play table tennis, and one of our key commercial pillars - a high return business unit which attracts new customers, retains existing customers, and is well marketed enabling it to generate a significant surplus back into all levels of the game.

## 2. For Consideration

2.1. The term 'affiliation' is outdated and is consistent with nothing other than collecting money from individuals; there is a distinct lack of 'aligning', 'bonding', 'uniting' etc. as the dictionary defines. Furthermore, the term 'Membership' has much negative history associated with it.

2.1.1. The membership scheme to be completely 'rebranded'

2.1.2. Adopt a 'subscription' model

2.1.3. The new model to focus on what services members choose to purchase as opposed to the benefits received

2.1.4. All communication with 'subscribers' to be fully engaging

2.2. Beyond the investment made into each area from central funding, and the desire to secure local grants, Table Tennis England is aware of the need for more funds to reach local level that can be invested directly into the growth of table tennis, using the principle that the more income generated within an area is invested back into the area

2.2.1. From 1 August 2023, introduce a mechanism whereby 10% of Table Tennis England subscription fees collected are invested back into local table tennis – maybe an area, or specifically a County, club, local partnership

2.3. Table Tennis England is aware that the joining / rejoining process can be onerous and inefficient. Similarly, there is a requirement for members to remember to take action to renew annually.

We are also aware that the current single date of annual renewal is not always customer friendly.

2.3.1. Review efficiency of technology to manage joining and renewal process

2.3.2. Introduce a simpler 'three clicks to sign up' joining process

2.3.3. Introduce payment by direct debit only, including more frequent payment options i.e. monthly, quarterly

2.3.4. Introduce flexible subscription – the renewal date is 12 months from the date of joining

- 2.4. Currently, the 'barriers to exit' membership are too low; the existing value proposition is not strong enough.

Far too many members do not value their membership. Comments such as "what do I get for my membership fee"? and "why should I be a member?" are not uncommon, particularly for members who do not play competition or who place little value, if any, on the current benefits offered.

- 2.4.1. Through insight gathered, build a robust value proposition and fee structure
- 2.4.2. Develop a scheme based on the preferences an individual chooses to pay for, in addition to a modest 'baseline' subscription
- 2.4.3. Table Tennis England will publish a simple, easy to understand fee structure

- 2.5. Table Tennis England has a strategic objective to grow its own revenues to demonstrate greater financial resilience and sustainability.

However, it is all very well talking about revenues to fund growth, but the growth must be forthcoming to clubs and our members. Table Tennis England is not the be-all and end-all and we cannot afford for our clubs/members to lose interest in their governing body.

We do not have the monopoly on ideas, and we will embrace the views of our members, more often.

- 2.5.1. The Board and Senior Leadership Team to get closer to members. We will initiate regular, localised Members Forums to listen to the views of individuals on a range of topics of the game and use such insight to make informed decisions

- 2.6. Table Tennis England members, make a significant contribution to the development of our sport; approximately one third of our current owned income is derived from membership fees.

However, feedback suggests they are not particularly engaged, they do not feel valued, and we are currently limited in how our communications relevant to them as an individual.

- 2.6.1. A minimum 50% of communications across Table Tennis England's digital platforms to be reflective of club / league / coach / volunteer activity
- 2.6.2. Develop comms / features that promote the positive activity within and around a club i.e. encouraging more people to take part in table tennis, developing talent, coach education and development, open days, volunteer recruitment and reward, competition etc.

- 2.6.3. Undertake some research to understand the communication that individual members wish to receive from us along with the frequency. Such insight will determine the action to follow.
- 2.6.4. Through the digital technologies being commissioned, provide the ability for a member to state their preferences on the topics and frequency of communication from Table Tennis England.

## 2.7. In summary:

- 2.7.1. Move from a membership scheme to one where an individual subscribes to their chosen services
- 2.7.2. A clear value proposition to sit at the heart of the scheme
- 2.7.3. The customer journey is clear and efficient
- 2.7.4. Subscription is by direct debit, again increasing the efficiency for both the individual and Table Tennis England
- 2.7.5. The individual is in complete control – they decide what services they buy, when they join and their frequency of payment
- 2.7.6. A percentage of EVERY individuals subscription is invested back into their local table tennis development

## 3. The Review Panel

- 3.1. I propose to establish a Review Panel to manage the consultation and development of the new Scheme. The Panel is to be chaired by a member of the Board of Directors
- 3.2. The Review Panel to include a representation of the members whose numbers will be greater than staff / Board members
- 3.3. The Chief Executive and Head of Engagement to be members of the Review Panel

## 4. Scope of Review

- 4.1. The Review to be consistent with *Table Tennis United* and will consider
  - 4.1.1. The proposition
  - 4.1.2. The customer journey
  - 4.1.3. The value proposition
  - 4.1.4. The cost structure
  - 4.1.5. The technology requirements

- 4.2. The Review Panel is to inquire into the current membership proposition and make recommendations on appropriate changes; the content of this paper is to form part of the considerations and presentation to the consultation process
- 4.3. The Review Panel to ensure consideration is given to the branding of the membership scheme and the value proposition to individual members
- 4.4. The Review Panel is to ensure thorough engagement with all interested stakeholders. At a minimum, the Review Panel should hold consultation meetings that allow for contributions from a cross section of the membership

## 5. Timetable

- 5.1. The Review Panel to hold its first meeting no later than 14 October 2022
- 5.2. The first draft recommendations to be presented to the Board no later than 8 December 2022
- 5.3. The draft recommendations to be presented to National Council no later than 14 January 2023
- 5.4. The proposed new membership scheme to be presented to the Board of Directors for approval no later than 24 March 2023
- 5.5. The new membership scheme to be presented to National Council no later than 15 April 2023
- 5.6. The membership to be informed of the new membership structure no later than 30 April 2023
- 5.7. Implementation of the new membership structure from 1 August 2023