

## Young Ambassadors Help to Inspire Others

*Theme: individual development, young people, women and girls*

### Defining the Issue

The sport and physical activity sector often depends on volunteers to support the delivery of projects, with 6.2 million adults giving their time volunteering at least twice a week from 2018-2019. Table Tennis England's Young Ambassador programme aims to start young people on their volunteering journey, developing their skills and confidence to encourage sustained involvement into adulthood.

### Background Information

The Young Ambassador programme was introduced by Table Tennis England in 2017 for volunteers aged 14-25. Volunteers log their hours with milestone being incentivised. Each Young Ambassador has a club or league mentor, who oversees their development and supports them in their volunteer journey.

### The Project

Weymouth Table Tennis League struggled to find the right volunteers in order to grow their participation offer. When the Young Ambassador programme was announced, Andy Millar from the league thought it was a great idea to try a new way of engaging volunteers, arguing who better to inspire young players than Young Ambassadors.

After recruiting his Young Ambassadors through the club, Andy started a This Girl Can session. This gave two Young Ambassadors, Holly and Sophie, an opportunity to get involved in the project, acting as role models to the 60 young girls attending.

### The Impact

The Young Ambassador programme has given Holly and Sophie a platform to share their passion for table tennis and inspire others to take up the sport.

Sophie has progressed to being involved at National Competitions as a volunteer and has run an awards evening for the young people in her league. Sophie's commitment and hard work led to her being announced as 'Young Volunteer of the Year' at the 2019/20 Pride of Table Tennis Awards. Both girls plan to continue volunteering and aim to inspire others to love the game as much as they do.

