

Introduction

1. This report covers the last six months of activity. 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.
2. It is a pleasure to host National Council at the new offices at the Badminton Centre.

Executive Report

Much of the last six months has been dominated by three matters that related to operations and governance.

3. The Chairman appointment and the director elections. Following an open and transparent process Sandra Deaton was re-appointed as Chairman of the association for a further four year term. The process for the new director elections (Elected Deputy Chairmen) then started in April and concluded ahead of the AGM. Thank you to Returning Officer Caroline Williams for helping to unpick various issues with the electoral register due to missing annual returns. Congratulations to Susie Hughes who was re-elected and to Charlie Childs and Tony Catt who were both elected, all for a four year term.

At the AGM we also said farewell to Keith Thomas (Treasurer) and Mike Smith who both retired. Two other directors Andrew Nixon and Kelly Skeggs have also resigned recently due to time commitment issues and we will be commencing the open process for appointing two new directors shortly. All four of these directors will be missed and we thank them for their contributions to Table Tennis England.

4. The transfer of the membership system from TT365 to Sport 80 and the introduction of the new TT Leagues Membership system. These projects have taken up a significant amount of staff and volunteer time. Thank you to everyone who has been involved both in development and now the adoption of the systems. Whilst all new IT systems will experience teething problems we are very confident that both systems will provide better long term benefits to the association. Certainly we are already seeing the benefit of how the help desk feature of Sport 80 is allowing us to track members' queries and ensure they are being responded to more effectively.
5. The AGM and Annual Conference. Thank you to those National Councillors who attended although it is disappointing that some attendees chose to only come for the AGM and not the Conference itself. The process of submitting written questions on the Annual Review worked well and again and we will continue to use this format as well as taking additional questions on the day.



The lead up to the AGM saw Board members and some senior staff attend some 50 or so league and county AGMs. Some of these were to speak specifically about the decision to cease to fund TT365 for League Manager. But in many cases it was also an opportunity to discuss many other initiatives and opportunities for leagues and clubs such as TTKidz and BeTT programmes and to present the end of season awards. Thank you to those counties and leagues who took up our offer of attending and we will be continuing that offer annually.

Away from those big focus areas, we attended our Year 2 Sport England review and I have met with the new CEO of Sport England Tim Hollingsworth. The next six months will see the start of the process for funding applications for the next four year cycle. We are waiting for further information from both Sport England and UK Sport on the funding principles. We have been informed that we will undergo an external audit by BDO, commissioned by Sport England, in the autumn. Like a number of NGBs we are in the 'risk' category for financial sustainability due to the reliance we have on Sport England funding. We hope that the findings and recommendations will be of value but undoubtedly we need to continue to diversify our income streams.

I hope you find the attached departmental reports helpful. I would encourage all of you to regularly read the website which provides a continuous stream of news and stories as well as subscribing to Over The Net (our weekly newsletter). These are your best source of regular information regarding current activity. You should receive it automatically if your membership is up to date unless you have opted out of receiving communications. All National Councillors should be, at minimum, associate members. Due to GDPR (data protection regulations) we are unable to automatically make you a member so please do ensure you do it online or speak to anyone in the customer service team who will be able to help you.



Table Tennis England

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National Council Meeting

Department Update: Operations & Governance

For Information

Date: 14th September 2019

Author: Joanna Keay-Blyth

Information/Activities - Last Period

During this period we successfully undertook the appointment of the Chairman and the election of three Board Directors. Inductions took place with the new directors. We had our Annual AGM and Annual Conference at Hinckley Hotel in Leicestershire, where we had a good turn out by our membership. We undertook development and rigorous testing of our TT Membership system in partnership with Sport 80, ready to launch on the 1st July 2019. We built our relationship with Rocca Creative to develop our TT leagues system that could deliver league management for our affiliated leagues.

We held an all staff day at Lilleshall National Sports Centre to deliver some educational workshops, Table Tennis England updates and strategy discussions as well as some team building activities.

Board Members and members of the Senior Leadership Team attended numerous Club and League AGMs, which was a valuable experience in disseminating Table Tennis England information, updates, programmes and development. Positive feedback from those that were attended.

Sport England year 2 report completed and meeting held with Sport England on progress against plan and updates on year 3 and 4. Meeting went well and discussions were held over the possibility of losing £200,000 should the proposition to reduce membership fee by £7 succeed and the ongoing impact that this would have on future funding and being able to resource appropriately to develop the sport.

Information/Activities – Current/Future

TT Memberships launched on the 1st July 2019 and training delivered for all relevant personnel including Memberships being taken online for all new members and renewals also started. After having many years of the same system, it has taken our members a while to start to get used to the new system and recover their accounts but 2 months on we have had nearly 13,000 renew against 12,000 and over 3,500 more online than this time last year.

TT leagues also launched on the 1st July thanks to tireless work by Rocca Creative and the working group (staff and volunteers). The new platform has been well received by many leagues and we already have 178 leagues registered and 149 leagues already generating fixtures in the system with more coming on board each day. Developments have continued throughout this period and a new help guide has been established to support our Leagues for the future.

New helpdesk launched to support development and tracking for the new systems has seen over 3100



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enquiries with an overall average response rate of 25 hours. We aim to get this figure under 24 hours over the next 6 months as demand for TT leagues and TT membership enquiries become easier to respond as they should not need further development. New Helpdesk guide for TT Membership & TT leagues also launched to aid administrators undertake their role.

Numerous meeting have taken place with Estyn Williams (Chairman of National Council) to ensure the relationship and value of the National Council can be revitalised and add value to Table Tennis England board of directors in the future. The next National Council Meeting will be held on the 14th September.

Two Day strategy meetings took place with the Senior Leadership team to decide on the key priorities to recommend for the organisation and departments over the next 18 months. This will be reported to Board in September.

Internally work will shortly begin on reviewing and updating relevant policies and proccess starting with HR.

Challenges/Issues

1. Ongoing issues and disquiet with having to deal with the uncertainty from members of losing TT365, which distracts the team from undertaking their roles to deal with the comms around this.
2. The challenge of getting a League Management system in place quickly created a lot of pressure and other projects had to be deprioritised.
3. Two new systems and helpdesk going live on the 1st July, increased workload during the busy period of membership renewals.
4. Ranking issues – a combination of a new system along with discovering that some administration of the previous system had no observed the Ranking policy consistently. Some process were previously undertaken manually, which has led to some anomalies. These are being ironed out and automated in the new system.

National Council Meeting

Department Update: Talent and Performance

For Information

Date: 14th September 2019

Author: Simon Mills

Information/Activities - Last Period

- Commonwealth Championships in India saw a number of fantastic performances from a small team of players (3 men and 3 women; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/commonwealth-championships-squad-named/>). Notably both teams won silver medals, with the men's team coming within a whisper of a major upset (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/double-silver-as-england-lose-out-to-india/>). Individual medal winners for Tom Jarvis and Tin-Tin Ho in singles and Sam Walker and Tom Jarvis in doubles.
- European Youth Championships; Charlotte Bardsley reached the last 16 having beaten two seeded players to get there. (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/bardsley-run-ended-in-last-16/>). Teams were led by Cadet Boys 19th, but disappointment for the Junior Girls who were unable to reach the top division play offs as they managed in 2018 (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-end-on-high-to-seal-19th-spot/>)
- European Games; some disappointments from team and singles, with the mens team losing a number of close matches to lose overall against Portugal. Likewise in singles a close match for Sam Walker saw him lose 3 match points to the eventual silver medallist. Tin-Tin Ho also lost to the bronze medallist. Liam lost in his first match.
- Liam Pitchford and Tom Jarvis reached career highs (12, 170 respectively) (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-hits-a-new-world-high/>)
- Maria and Denise supported the Birmingham 2022 3 years to go day (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/meet-commonwealth-medallists-in-birmingham-this-weekend/>)
- New selection documents have been published for the England squads, now called Hopes, Aspire and Junior.
- "I am Team GB" support from Sam Walker for the Nation's biggest sportsday (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/olympian-sam-getting-set-for-nations-biggest-sports-day/>)
- Support from Liam and Sam for National Table Tennis Day (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/take-on-team-england-this-tabletennisday/>)
- Oliver Maric-Murray and Jakub Piwowar were the best English finishers at the Euro-Mini Championships, with few other stand out performances. (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/ollie-tops-list-at-euro-minis/>)



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Information/Activities – Current/Future

- Selections for Hopes, Aspire and Junior Squads will be completed by early September with 85 applicants for the Hopes and Aspire Squads, 53 being brand new it promises to be competitive.
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/compete/competitions/selection-policy-events/>
- European Team Championships are being held in early September
(<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/full-strength-england-upbeat-ahead-of-euros/>)
- DISE programme for 16-19 years olds has been launched and will provide additional opportunities for 15 players to receive education and sport support.
(<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/diploma-in-sporting-excellence-dise-applications-open/>)
- Liam, Paul and Sam will be telling their stories in promotion of the community connections as part of the aspiration funding requirement.
- Sports Aid, Backing the Best and TASS places are to be decided in the coming months.
- EYC selection policy has been published for 2019
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/compete/competitions/selection-policy-events/>
- Olympic policies are due to be published in September.
- Developing British opportunities for the best players from the nations to train together

Challenges/Issues

- The domestic competition remains a challenge and provides insufficient preparation for players heading to the international competition. The events team are working hard to develop the competition pathway but it is not a quick fix.
- Players transitioning age groups and overseas clubs, the pathway is continuing to try to prepare players to be better able to cope and learn in these different environments.
- Training volumes and quality is a constant challenge for English players and the new Awards scheme being developed within the Squad structure is working to guide and shape the players practice much more based on the demands of the international competition.
- Funding for individuals and programmes
- International competition programmes and ranking are evolving and thus our competition and players must learn to adapt to the newer environments and challenges.
- Supporting internationally based players

National Council Meeting

Department Update: Development and Volunteering

For Information

Date: 14th September 2019

Author: Greg Yarnall

Information/Activities - Last Period

- Launch of TT Kidz has taken place within the club network. 30 clubs are running TT Kidz programmes, which start in September/October. Bookings are open and can be viewed at <https://www.ttkidz.co.uk/>
- 54 projects now being supported with funding through the Be TT programme after a record number of applicants
- Following the announcement of the partnership with Premier Education, they will commence delivery in schools of TT Kidz from September 2019 - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/a-premier-partner-for-tt-kidz/>. They will also be helping to recruit more schools that want to deliver table tennis and you can see a promotional video to help with this by clicking the following link <https://www.premier-education.com/tt-kidz>
- Level 3 applications have just closed for the new 2019 cohort
- The terms of the Coach Licence scheme have changed recently with CPD no longer a requirement of maintaining a coach licence. This switches the focus of the licence to ensuring we have as many coaches as possible with the right safeguarding credentials in place (DBS and Safeguarding training) -
- All Sport England core measures are on track, with the majority currently exceeding regular participant numbers through programmes such as Satellite Clubs
- The Officiating campaign has had great success to date with over 25 new umpires having started their umpiring journey and 41 umpires now on the #BePartofit journey towards Birmingham Commonwealth Games.
- The coaching and officiating portals have now moved to the TT Memberships platform to enable individuals to access all of their information in one place, alongside their membership details
- We are the first and only sport working with Sport England on satellite clubs to pilot working with participants aged between 7-11, fitting in with our TT Kidz programmes. Satellite clubs has previously always been focused on the 11+ age groups.
- We have now had 35 applications for the female coach scholarship programmes and 18 applications to become female ambassadors.



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Information/Activities – Current/Future

- New dates for regional club, league and coaching conferences have been announced and included below <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/clubs-guidance/club-and-volunteer-conference-booking-process-and-timeline/> :
 - Sunday October 6: Aston Villa Football Club (Midlands)
 - Sunday November 24: Durham County Cricket Ground (North East)
 - Sunday January 19: South East
 - Sunday February 16: London
 - Saturday June 6: East
- We are delighted to be bringing the next ETTU Coaching Conference to London at the Greenhouse Centre between 30th October and the 1st November - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/book-now-for-top-level-coaching-conference/>
- New officiating courses have now been announced - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/umpires-can-get-on-pathway-to-birmingham/>
- Work to bring the Level 2 Coaching course in line with developments and upgrading of the Level 1 and 3 courses has now commenced
- Wider TT Kidz launch in schools will take place from October/November 2019
- Back to Table Tennis programme (to attract people that used to play back to the sport) now in place and will be available to clubs and leagues over the coming months. This adds to the suite of programmes available to clubs and leagues to utilise as part of the Be TT programme, which already includes Bat and Chat (50+ programme), Young Ambassadors & TT Kidz
- The Young Ambassador scheme, which helped engage 30 new young volunteers last year, will open again for clubs and young people from the 16th September.
- Use Big TT Conversation insight to inform next phase of Women and Girls action plan and engagement with young people in particular.
- Audit of county level development activity

Challenges/Issues

- The opportunities that keep presenting themselves connected to TT Kidz to get more young people playing continues to grow. We need to continue to explore how we make the most of these opportunities with the resources we have available to us
- Managing expectations as to what the area staff can support on the ground. We need to understand more about county and regional activity so that synergies can be explored whilst managing expectations as staff priorities are focussed at clubs and leagues. This should be supplemented by county activity and be more joined up. Currently BeTT activity reports are shared three times a year with Regional chairs but this information may not be reaching the counties.



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National Council Meeting

Department Update: Mass Market

For Information

Date: 14th September 2019

Author: Keely Armitt

Information/Activities - Last Period

- We were able to successfully negotiate with Sport England a more flexible approach to achieving our agreed targets. This will enable us to use data from our successful Ping Pong Parlour project, reporting the impact of this on behavioural change and means we are no longer solely reliant on Loop at Work and Ping in the Community to do this giving us the opportunity to prioritise and continue to develop the areas we are having the most success with and deprioritise the areas we are not.
- We have formal written agreements in place with 25 organisations this year, partnering us to deliver the Ping! project. This no longer just commitments them to the festival, but instead to delivering projects from the whole mass suite, building and developing a social and recreational playing scene and infrastructure in their town, city or county. We are also engaging a number of lapsed partners, including in Birmingham and Manchester and some new ones too.
- After receiving interest from a number of Universities, we have found that an Academic study into the long term impact of Ping Pong Parlours on Behavioural Change will prove too costly. We are currently exploring other options on how to capture this most valuable data.

Information/Activities – Current/Future

We are celebrating 10 years of the Ping! project with our #powerofping campaign on social media and through our Ping! and Table Tennis England websites. The campaign previews 10 films showing people and communities who have been positively impacted by the project and has been well received by the public and partners. We have seen a spike in sales for our Ping in the Community product as a direct result of this campaign and an associated promotion.

Three new Ping partners are due to come on board over the next couple of months. The projects vary in their size and include indoor and outdoor public tables, Ping Pong Parlours, Ping in the Community targeted work and festivals and events.

The data for Ping! public table usage is collected by partners over the summer months and will be available to us in October. All other project data is collected by us centrally and is largely on track with target.

Thirteen new Ping Pong Parlours have opened since April, taking the total number that are currently open to 41 (some in Ping! towns and cities, but many running independently). Many of the Parlours are staying open for long periods of time now, which is testament to the project and this is presenting new opportunities for us, and local clubs and leagues. Our staff are facilitating conversations at a local level to ensure these opportunities are maximised.



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We obtained a small grant from Sport England to support some research into introducing table tennis into prisons, building on the work already started by Brighton Table Tennis Club. The Ministry of Justice is showing interest in this area of work.

Information/Activities – Current/Future

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Challenges/Issues

We continue to have a challenging relationship with Sportlabs on The Hub platform. This needs some further development work before it can be launched to our Loop at Work customers.

We need to have a greater level of engagement with our mass market 'customers' so that we can have a greater influence over their playing behaviour (regularity and environment) and activity level (Sport England target). This is difficult without investing large sums of money in technology (which we don't have available) and in the absence of a 'social' or fan membership or offer, which we are still 6-9 months away from. In the interim, we are testing a few different options and ideas.

Often it is assumed that we don't reach out to local clubs or leagues when we launch a Ping Pong Parlour or other community work. Wherever possible we do contact the relevant league or club but we have found that the message often sits in one person's inbox and is not disseminated. We are trying to rectify this to ensure that where a local club or league wishes to engage with our mass participation programmes they can do so.

Useful links (to videos and articles)

View the published #PowerOfPing films here <https://www.pingengland.co.uk/#news>



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National Council Meeting

Department Update: Competitions & Events

For Information

Date: 14th September 2019

Author: Neil Rogers, Head of Competition & Events

Information/Activities - Last Period

- Sanwei/Topspin has been appointed as official ball supplier for the 19/20 season
- Venues for 19/20 are all now confirmed, with the exception of the National Cups (March, April & June), and Grand Prix #5 (June) – notably, the David Ross Sports Village, Uni of Nottingham, confirmed as host again for next Senior National Championships
- The Ranking Policy Group met again in June and has defined a timeframe for consideration of a new rankings system. A more detailed update will be submitted to Board in September.
- Initial discussions had with ITTF and UK Sport regarding hosting the World Championships 2026 and a series of lead-up events
- British League conference held, new season format and divisions confirmed and entries opened/closed. A more detailed update will be submitted to Board in September.

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- The current calendar showing all events can be found here <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/19-20-V10.2.pdf>
- Entries for the 1st 19/20 event are open (Grand Prix #1, Preston, September) with the aim that prospectuses and event format amendments, equipment tenders, and referee appointments for all other core events are finalised by end-August
- Volunteer-led events including NCL/ NJL (Mike Atkinson) and County Championships (Dave Goulden and Stan Clarke) will be supported by the TTE events team as normal
- Proposals for a Women & Girls event has effectively transitioned to a Development Team -led project at this time, with consultation via the regional team and intending to incorporate feedback from the Big TT Conversation
- Tournament Management software will be further considered once the Sport:80 online entry module is established, tested and launched.
- Vacant Competition & Events Officer recruitment



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- The planned Competitions Review is currently on hold pending progress on other live issues but will be commenced in the coming season
- Event volunteer recruitment strategy being developed and under consideration with MAG along with wider volunteer strategy

Challenges/Issues

- The Board's decision to bring the leadership of British League in house this season has meant a reprioritisation of some other programmes. The need to recruit and administratively support the volunteer organisers for JBL and VBL has impacted internal resources
- The Sport:80 online tournament entry/ validation/ payment module was due to launch 01 July, and is currently behind schedule due to prioritisation on the development and delivery of i) membership/ CRM, and ii) rankings - implications for the late introduction includes bulk manual entry processing, bulk manual payments, and bulk manual licensing checks until such time as it is launched
- Revised budgets for the remainder of the 4yr cycle (19/20 & 20/21) have necessitated some cost-saving measures to the Comps & Events programme
- Insufficient numbers of officials and tournament organisers puts constant pressure in the delivery system for competitions

National Council Meeting

Department Update: Marketing and Communications

For Information

Date: 14th September 2019

Author: Rebecca Hughes

Information/Activities - Last Period

June-August

1. Launched The Big Table Tennis Conversation which resulted in 2,000+ responses (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/big-table-tennis-conversation-tell-us-what-you-think/>) and completed analysis of the Big Table Tennis Conversation (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/big-table-tennis-convo-what-you-told-us/>)
2. Supported the coaching department with various products, including new Level 3 promo video and course launch (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/level-3-head-coach-course-open-for-applicants/>), coach tutor applications, ETTU conference and CPD removal as a pre-requisite for the from coach licence.
3. Launched new merchandise range (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/new-table-tennis-england-apparel-launched/>)
4. Supported the club department across a range of activities including: regional club conference promotion, club affiliation communications for new season, Young Ambassadors relaunch, club newsletter
5. Interviewed and appointed for a new Marketing Assistant
6. Supported the launch of TT Kidz and continued promotion
7. Supported the events team across a range of their events, including: Grand Prix and British League.
8. Created marketing plan around Will Bayley's involvement in Strictly to maximise the opportunity and increased interest around the sport
9. Supported the AGM, including communications, annual review booklet and end of year video
10. Elections: frequent updates to the website and news articles
11. Promoted the appearance of England players internationally, including European Games.
12. Organised National Table Tennis Day, which saw hundreds of events take place all over the country. (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tabletennisday-a-big-hit/>)
13. Redesigned new England kit for launch in 2020
14. Supported the Power of Ping campaign (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/powerofping-project-launched-to-showcase-the-sports-power/>)
15. Supported in the development and communications around TT Leagues
16. Comms around new season membership / TT Memberships launch
17. Creating a marketing plan to launch a new workplace product for the mass department
18. Commonwealth Games 2022 – supported the three years to go launch with athlete appearances and organisation of table tennis tables to the event / announced the inclusion of Para table tennis for 2022 (https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/para-table-tennis-confirmed-for-birmingham-2022/?fbclid=IwAR0q2cOLaDVyXMT45WbGFPTBk-qbP2b_pn3n9BgMSgk4-2ZOhgTsDBLx-Sw)



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19. Leading on contractual obligations and content production as part of the Aspiration Fund (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/table-tennis-secures-olympic-funding-from-uk-sport/>) including supporting the I Am Team GB Nation's Biggest Sports Day event (<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/olympian-sam-getting-set-for-nations-biggest-sports-day/>)
20. Weekly creation and distribution of Over the Net
21. General day-to-day marcomms support

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- Launch new workplace product to help drive participation in workplaces and engagement with Table Tennis England
- Implement Strictly Come Dancing marketing plan to ensure we capitalise on this rare media opportunity and inspire more people to play the sport
- Begin a communications review to understand how members are currently engaging and how we can improve this engagement with them.
- Begin a website review to understand if our current website is fit for purpose
- Continue to offer marcomms support to departments for products including: clubs, coaches, volunteers, Ping!, TT Kidz, events and competitions
- Create and begin implementation of Senior National Championships

Challenges/Issues

- Big Table Tennis Conversation got a great response from our core audience, but we didn't meet our target for the 'mass participation' audience to help us understand more about these players, and we need to look at the engagement of these players.
- Ensuring that vital messaging is reaching members and stakeholders (the planned comms review will help evaluate this)
- AGM period was very time-consuming in amount of communications that were needed, leading to a de-prioritisation of other items. We continue to have to de-prioritise other work to react to pressing matters – i.e. Strictly and the rare opportunity for the sport to get large-scale media coverage