



Apprentice scheme launched for clubs

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Table Tennis England has launched a scheme to help young people take the first steps into a career in table tennis, and to help clubs recruit support staff at an affordable wage.

The Premier Club Apprenticeship Programme will see us work with ICON, a national apprenticeship training provider, to offer Premier Clubs the support needed to recruit apprentices.

An apprentice must be aged between 16 and 24 and could take up a paid role within the club as a coach, development officer or in another supporting role. They must be employed for a minimum of 16 hours per week, up to full time.

The club must be in a position to cover the salary cost, which typically works out at a minimum of £3.70 per hour.

We can offer clubs an employment hosting service, which means clubs who are not set up to employ via Payroll can still access the programme. The apprentice would be employed by Table Tennis England, but deployed and line-managed by the club.

The apprenticeship is a great way of clubs recruiting professional club support at an affordable wage. It is also a route into employment which may be attractive to many young people in the club or local area.

Joola Plymouth is one club to have already seen the benefit of engaging apprentices. Chairman Kevin Buddell said: "Having employed three apprentices over the past three years we have been delighted by the results.

"Not only have they assisted in all aspects of the day-to-day running of a busy table tennis club, they have provided a valuable source of knowledge and opinion of how the younger generations differ from the sometimes out-of-date ways we historically ran our club. We now utilise all aspects of social media which has clearly added value to our club.

"They have all moved on to permanent employment within the education sector with partners we worked with, who had the opportunity to work with our apprentices and get to know them, then offer them full-time positions.

“They continue to volunteer at our club but also continue to promote our sport to the young children they work with on a day-to-day basis, thus expanding our membership.”

Alongside the work in the club, the apprentice will complete a qualification with ICON, such as a Level 2 diploma in Activity Leadership. Candidates can also complete UKCC coaching qualifications as part of their role.

By gaining valuable work experience and qualifications whilst getting paid, it can pave the way into further coaching roles for the apprentices.

Table Tennis England and ICON will provide support in advertising for and recruiting suitable candidates, plus support throughout the programme to help mentor the apprentice if needed.

If you are interested in your club becoming involved in this programme please contact chris.brown@tabletennisengland.co.uk

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