



## Withington Baths over 50's Table Tennis Session

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A table tennis class for over 50's was set up at Withington Baths in November 2018 and now regularly sees busy sessions. The class was developed after conversations with residents and members of the local Age Friendly Network. As well as interest in the sport from an accessibility perspective and the various health benefits including improved hand-eye coordination and mental alertness. Using partners has been key to the success of the class, working with partners or receiving advice should be a key consideration for all when looking at their club or classes as it can ease the load and provide additional support. Withington Baths have recognised the need for more physical activities in the local area especially for older people and are very keen to help improve the health and wellbeing of local people. As a result, Withington Baths accessed funding from the Manchester Wellbeing Fund with support from the NHS buzz Neighbourhood Health Worker who has helped to develop and facilitate the project. The buzz Neighbourhood Health Worker worked closely with Andrea Holt, Table Tennis England's Development and Volunteer Officer, at acquiring unused table tennis tables from the community, sourcing a brilliant table tennis coach and helped to promote the popular activity to the local community.



Due to the success thus far Withington Baths wish to continue promoting table tennis and are looking at establishing sessions for younger players and the wider community. As such they are going to run a trial to see the popularity and how to further develop the sessions. This will ensure that the sessions are run in a manner which attracts members, will be sustainable and improve the health and wellbeing of those living in Withington and Old Moat. However, it is not just the health benefits that have made the sessions so popular. The ease at which people can pick up table tennis and the ability for different skill levels to play together. This has helped reduce the social isolation of participants and made the activity appealing. However, the sessions also provide coaching for those looking to improve meaning different skill levels are catered for and the sessions are appealing to a wide group of people. For more information please call Withington Baths on 0161 478 1181 or email [reception@lovewithingtonbaths.com](mailto:reception@lovewithingtonbaths.com)

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