



## Big Table Tennis Convo - what you told us

Author: [Paul Stimpson](#)

Posted On: [July 25, 2019](#)

Thank you to the 2,000+ people who took part in the Big Table Tennis Conversation, as well as many of you who have helped provide feedback in different ways over the last few months.

We had a range of responses, from which we have drawn out five key insights, some actions we have already put in place to address them, and some thoughts on how we will act on them in the future.

We'll continue to update you on our progress towards addressing each insight but please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any further thoughts or reflections.

### You told us:

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81a091" tabindex="0" title="<strong>76% of you play for the love the of the sport and 81% strongly agree that the sense of a table tennis community is important</strong>t" >76% of you play for the love the of the sport and 81% strongly agree that the sense of a table tennis community is important

**What we are already doing:** In recent years we have introduced the Pride of Table Tennis awards, and continue to run a range of conferences to help bring grassroots organisers closer together, including our National Conference earlier this year, as well as other events.

**What we are going to do:** We are going to continue to look at how we help the table tennis community share their love of the sport through events, conferences, competitions and online. You can see the dates for upcoming club and league conferences over the next year if you [click here](#).

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81a218" tabindex="0" title="<strong>74% of you would value a membership benefit of discounts on table tennis equipment and clothing, and 56% of you would value more

short coaching video</strong>s" >74% of you would value a membership benefit of discounts on table tennis equipment and clothing, and 56% of you would value more short coaching videos

**What we are already doing:** When you purchase a membership with us, you are entitled to a 10% discount from UK Table Tennis.

**What we are going to do:** We are going to review how we work with partners and coaches to provide more content and access that would benefit all members, regardless of skill level and equipment preference.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81ed04" tabindex="0" title="<strong>The table tennis community is passionate about getting more children playing the sport. 85% of parents say that the exercise benefits are a key factor to taking part, with the second benefit being the chance to socialise</strong>" >The table tennis community is passionate about getting more children playing the sport. 85% of parents say that the exercise benefits are a key factor to taking part, with the second benefit being the chance to socialise

**What we are already doing:** We have launched our youth programme, TT Kidz, to help introduce more children aged 7-11 to the sport in a fun and engaging way, while also creating a pathway to clubs to keep them playing. We also merged with English Table Tennis Schools Association to help strengthen links with schools and ongoing competitive opportunities.

We also now have 40+ Ping Pong Parlours and nearly 1,000 public tables available across England for people to play on, free of charge, providing great entry level opportunities in social spaces. Approximately 2.5 million people use these table each year, a large percentage of which are children and young people.

**What we are going to do:** Look at how we continue to engage the whole table tennis community to help introduce more children to the sport and keep them playing at clubs and competitions. We will grow the amount of table tennis delivered in schools through strengthening the partnership with Premier Education, who deliver sport in over 15% of primary schools nationally.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81ed8f" tabindex="0" title="<strong>Lots of you want us to continue to invest in more tables in the community.</strong>" >Lots of you want us to continue to invest in more tables in the community.

**What we are already doing:** With the support of Sport England we will continue to invest in Ping!, Ping Pong Parlours, Ping in the Community and Loop at Work packages, building further the infrastructure of free playing opportunities.

**What we are going to do:** We will investigate how we can solve the challenge of table and equipment availability in these places and help more people to progress to owning their own bat and balls and playing at clubs.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81edde" tabindex="0" title="<strong>The table tennis community would like to see more women and girls playing the sport and 53% of females say they were introduced to the sport by family and friends, in comparison to 35% for males.</strong>" >The table tennis community would like to see more women and girls playing the sport and 53% of females say they were introduced to the sport by family and friends, in comparison to 35% for males.

**What we are already doing:** Earlier this year we launched a female coaching bursary scheme, and an

ambassador programme, which aims to improve and establish the visibility and community of females involved in the sport.

Over the past two years, we funded 45 women and girls projects in clubs and leagues as part of our BeTT programme, and will be supporting a further 22 this coming season. We have funded coaching for 28 females this year ahead of competing in a 'Ping Pong Fight Club' corporate event.

Our social programmes see high engagement with women and girls (54% in Ping Pong Parlours for example).

**What we are going to do:** We will continue to work with clubs, schools and other groups to understand how to introduce more women and girls to the sport and develop better experiences that keep them playing. We will also develop national partnerships to increase our exposure to more audiences.

## What would you do if you ran table tennis in England for a day?

"What would you do if you ran table tennis in England for a day?" was a question within the survey. Over 1,000 people chose to answer this question and shared ideas on wide-ranging subjects, including young people, schools, women and girls, membership and the profile of the sport.

We've read every comment and found a number of similar requests running through the ideas. We've responded to these main themes below:

### Membership

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81ee24" tabindex="0" title="<strong>Explain more clearly where membership fees are used</strong>">**Explain more clearly where membership fees are used**

To help members understand how vital their membership fees are, and where the money is spent, we have written an article titled 'How your fees support our sport'. To read the article, [click here](#).

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81ee73" tabindex="0" title="Look at the ranking system">**Look at the ranking system**

Table Tennis England is currently reviewing both local league and national rankings. The Table Tennis England Board has tasked a project group with consulting and proposing options to ensure the national ranking system is fit-for-purpose. **MAG** have been consulted as a first-step on the respective importance/ priority of the fundamental underlying principles. During season 19/20, the Rankings Group will research and undertake a full consideration of different options, with membership and additional MAG consultation at the appropriate stages. The time frame for adoption of any changes, and whether this extends to local leagues, will depend on the preferred option and the practicalities of implementation. This week we launched a survey asking for the opinion of league players on the local league rankings and what they would like to see. To take part in the survey, [click here](#).

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81ee9f" tabindex="0" title="Visit leagues to get opinions of people face to face">**Visit leagues to get opinions of people face to face**

This year board members and staff visited over 40 league and county AGMs to hear and share views. We welcome the opportunity to engage further with leagues and should you have events, meetings or historic events, we would welcome an invitation to attend.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81eec5" tabindex="0" title="Create an open forum for players to air their views" >Create an open forum for players to air their views

Table Tennis England welcomes all views and comments from players. These can either be made through contacting us direct through our helpdesk, or by approaching your local National Councillor, who are an alternative link between the players and the Board.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81eeeb" tabindex="0" title="Create a 'one member, one vote' policy" >Create a 'one member, one vote' policy

Table Tennis England has been consulting with members and it became evident that the original proposition put forward at the AGM wasn't the solution in our step to move closer towards one member one vote. The Board will continue to do work to provide a viable option that will achieve this.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81ef0f" tabindex="0" title="Respond to emails from members" >Respond to emails from members

Table Tennis England respond to all correspondence that we receive, We have recently developed a helpdesk support system that tickets every email received and allocates a tracking number that can be traced to ensure no communication is missed.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81ef34" tabindex="0" title="</strong><strong>Communicate staff changes to members</strong><strong>" >Communicate staff changes to members

We will look at increasing the visibility of our staff within the table tennis community and get better at communicating changes with our members. We will create a staff structure that includes photos so you can know who you're talking to.

## Grassroots / mass participation:

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81ef7f" tabindex="0" title="More funding for grassroots / funding support to local clubs and coaching" >More funding for grassroots / funding support to local clubs and coaching

Each year we spend almost £1million on grassroots. This includes giving funding to clubs and leagues through the Be TT programme. In the first two years of the programme, we supported 173 projects. For Year 3, there was up to £750 available per club/league looking to develop a project that focused on one of the following: women and girls, short format leagues and under 11s. Be TT is open to PremierClubs with appropriate workforce and a licensed coach.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81efa7" tabindex="0" title="Include disabled people at grassroots level" >Include disabled people at grassroots level

We created an inclusivity group this year, which opened up a grant for clubs or community organisations to apply for, in order to enable them to be more inclusive. This could have been a grant to pay for equipment, coaching, starting a new session, or adapting venues to allow for greater accessibility. We funded 13 projects with a total of just over £3,500 being awarded. Eight of the projects funded were targeting those with a disability. All of our mass participation projects use wheelchair friendly tables, and research has shown that 20% of participants have a disability.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81efcd" tabindex="0" title="Offer free table tennis or budget table tennis / put table tennis in public places to play" >Offer free table tennis or budget table tennis / put table tennis in public places to play

We have a network of over 500 public tables across England, which allow over 1 million people to play each year. You can find the free-to-access tables in outdoor places, indoor public places and in shopping centres. To find your nearest table visit <https://www.pingengland.co.uk/#placetoplay>

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81eff2" tabindex="0" title="Put more tables in outside spaces" >Put more tables in outside spaces

Our network of over 25 partners, who help deliver the Ping project locally, are continually looking to grow the provision of table tennis in their area – so watch this space! We also offer outdoor packages within our Ping in the Community project, so why not suggest table tennis to your local council? Visit [www.pinginthecommunity.co.uk](http://www.pinginthecommunity.co.uk) for more information.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f018" tabindex="0" title="Put table tennis table in care homes" >Put table tennis table in care homes

Our Ping in the Community project is available for care homes in England. We know what an impact table tennis can have on people in care homes, so this is an area we are currently looking to expand in. As part of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations for Ping!, we're offering 50% off indoor table packages for care homes, day centres & community groups. [Click here to find out more.](#)

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f03c" tabindex="0" title="Try to encourage local councils and community centres to provide more facilities" >Try to encourage local councils and community centres to provide more facilities

We current work with 25 partners, who are mostly local councils or Active Partnerships, across England to enhance the provision of table tennis in their area – including public tables, community projects, workplace projects and activation projects. We also have a project called Ping in the Community which allows community centre's to introduce and embed table tennis into their community.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f062" tabindex="0" title="Introduce the sport to more businesses as a way of getting employees healthy and into more community sports clubs. Consider rural isolation as oppose to targeting cities" >Introduce the sport to more businesses as a way of getting employees healthy and into more community sports clubs. Consider rural isolation as oppose to targeting cities

We have a project called Loop at Work which allows workplaces to provide table tennis as an activity to their employees – there's over 450 workplaces involved in this project! We're also working on bringing an online platform to make it easier for workplaces to run competitions, challenge colleagues and interact with table tennis at work. We're also working with Action with Communities in Rural England to bring table tennis into rural areas in England.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f096" tabindex="0" title="Make it more accessible. Set it up in more parks, shopping centres and also more public places where people are able to use it without much planning" >Make it more accessible. Set it up in more parks, shopping centres and also more public places where people are able to use it without much planning

All of our mass participation project work to bring table tennis to the places where people already spend their time, making it easy for them to pick up a bat and play! We work with 25 local councils and Active Partnerships to grow the number of tables in public areas, and our Ping Pong Parlour project has brought table tennis to over 45 shopping centre's across the country! There's over 500 public tables available across England, with over 1 million people visiting these tables each year.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f0c4" tabindex="0" title="Organise a mass fun day to raise awareness and show how much fun it is. Inside and out and make it very sociable" >Organise a mass fun day to raise

awareness and show how much fun it is. Inside and out and make it very sociable

Every year in July we have National #TableTennisDay, which celebrates everything table tennis! We encourage as many people as possible to run events and get people involved in the game.

## Young people & schools

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f0eb" tabindex="0" title="More advertising to encourage young people into the sport" >More advertising to encourage young people into the sport

We are currently entering phase 1 of the recently launched [TT Kidz programme](#), which aims to get more 7-11 year olds in the sport. This includes an online advertising campaign in TT Kidz' locations, as well as providing clubs with the tools and resources to raise the local profile of their club programmes, including outdoor and indoor banners, leaflets, posters and assistance with generating media coverage.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f110" tabindex="0" title="Encourage more participation at schools" >Encourage more participation at schools

We have recently partnered with Premier Education, who deliver sports sessions in over 15% of primary schools nationally. Activity Professionals from Premier Education will be trained to deliver TT Kidz sessions across their network of schools to take table tennis to thousands more young people. We will also be launching TT Kidz in schools from September 2019 where we hope to show more schools what a great sport table tennis is to deliver in the school environment. We have also redeveloped our Teacher's Award, which is designed to give teachers the confidence and creativity to teach table tennis in schools. The programme has been developed with teachers and is linked to the GCSE criteria.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f134" tabindex="0" title="Promote an outdoor table tennis programme for schools and include information on rules of play and a ladder competition" >Promote an outdoor table tennis programme for schools and include information on rules of play and a ladder competition

Table Tennis England offers and promotes an outdoor package just for schools. As well as equipment, the package also includes a resource pack full of tips and templates, as well as medals, posters and certificates. More information about this can be [found here](#). The [Jack Petchey Table Tennis programme](#), now in its ninth year, allows us to offer schools across London and Essex access to heavily subsidised indoor and outdoor tables. In 2019 we provided 50 outdoor tables to schools in this area.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f158" tabindex="0" title="Promote among youth clubs more" >Promote among youth clubs more

There are lots of opportunities to work in this area, and Table Tennis England is pleased to be building partnerships with the National Association of Boys and Girls Clubs, and OnSide Youth Zones in London. Through Sport England Satellite Club funding, we have also funded the development of new sessions for 11 to 25 year olds in seven youth or community centres. These are due to start delivery in September 2019. We are working with the Jack Petchey Foundation to explore the opportunity to develop table tennis in youth clubs in London. The Jack Petchey programme enables us to donate table tennis tables to youth clubs across London and Essex and we are excited to see our work in youth clubs develop further.

## Women and girls:

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f17c" tabindex="0" title="Encourage more female involvement" >Encourage more female involvement

Table Tennis England set up a working group to develop an action plan to guide the development in this area. There are four key objectives to encourage more female involvement in the sport:

- Increase player membership from 10% to 15%
- Increase amount of qualified and active female coaches
- Improve and establish the visibility and community of all females involved in table tennis
- Develop national partnerships to increase our exposure to new audiences

Earlier this year we launched a coaching bursary scheme for females as well as an ambassador programme. Both of these are now closed and we are working with the applicants on the next step.

Through our club and league development programme, Be TT, we have also been funding projects that aim to grow the number of females in the sport. In year one and two, we help fund 45 project which on average, engaged almost 400 weekly participants. A further 22 projects have been submitted for year 3 funding from Be TT.

## Coaching:

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f1a0" tabindex="0" title="Increase the number of qualified coaches">Increase the number of qualified coaches

We are constantly adapting and making changes to the coaching pathway to make it as accessible as possible. We've recently made amendments to both Level 1 (Session Coach) and Level 3 (Head Coach). Following the development of these qualifications we've seen an increase of the average number of candidates on our Level 1 increase from 10 per course to 17. Our Level 3 has also been oversubscribed every year since its launch. Over the coming year we are concentrating on the Level 2 qualification to ensure our coaching pathway is up-to-date.

We're also giving coaching course bursaries to those on our Young Ambassador programme, to help more young people get into coaching. The programme aims to incentivise young people to volunteer at their table tennis club, and once they've logged 10 hours, they're eligible to claim a £95 bursary. So far 20 young people have received a bursary.

## Performance

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f1c4" tabindex="0" title="Get our top players (like Liam Pitchford) into as many worldwide competitions as possible">Get our top players (like Liam Pitchford) into as many worldwide competitions as possible

Our top four men all regularly participate in the World Tour. Liam Pitchford competes mostly in the Platinum and World Tour events, while Paul Drinkhall, Sam Walker and Tom Jarvis – together with Tin-Tin Ho and Maria Tsaptsinos – compete regularly in these, plus some Challenge and Challenge Plus events.

All six recently competed at the World Championships and all reached the main draw of this event.

< class="collapseomatic" id="id698d87c81f1e8" tabindex="0" title="Get our national team into the top 10 in the world">Get our national team into the top 10 in the world

The current men's team are ranked 10th in the world, the highest level for a number of years. The men have also won bronze medals at World Championships (2016) and the Team World Cup (2018). We are working to support to women to achieve their best performances and aiming to qualify a female player for Tokyo 2020.

Downloaded From:

<https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/big-table-tennis-convo-what-you-told-us/>