



Female action plan meeting with success

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Initiatives to increase the number of women and girls playing key roles in table tennis are paying dividends, with female coaching bursaries and the female ambassador scheme both proving popular.

The Women and Girls Action Plan was developed to increase the engagement Table Tennis England has with females, to seek to address a low percentage of females in our membership and as active coaches. In the 18/19 season, only 19% of coaches were female and that figure fell to 13% for player members.

The action plan has clear objectives which will help to engage more females in the sport and improve the experience of those already enjoying it.

The plan was delivered to delegates at the National Conference earlier this year and two elements of the action plan have now been launched. Applications were open for both an ambassador programme and coaching bursary during the summer and successful individuals have now been confirmed.

The coaching bursary was introduced to increase the number of active female coaches and the number of applications we received surpassed expectation.

We have supported 23, with an age range of 16 to 70. Of those, 15 will attend a Level 1 course, six are at Level 2 and two have been accepted on to Level 3.

Applicants will receive ongoing mentoring to ensure that they feel supported during the course and then when they begin coaching. We look forward to sharing their coaching stories and the impact they have on their local community.

At the National Conference, the Ambassador programme was also launched. This was an open application process whereby anyone could nominate themselves or be nominated to be a Female Ambassador. This is to help improve the visibility of women and girls in the sport and celebrate the great work they are doing.

The ambassadors are a wide range of ages and all have a different story about their involvement in the sport. A

total of 17 ambassadors have signed up, including Table Tennis England CEO Sara Sutcliffe and Chairman Sandra Deaton. Five of the ambassadors have also been successful in receiving a coaching bursary.

Most of the successful applicants are very pro-active at a local level within their local communities and clubs. Their role as an ambassador will vary between individuals but we are hoping to celebrate their journey and have their support at events or conferences in their areas. If you know of someone who would be a great ambassador or would like to be involved, please get in contact.

We have published a good practice guide on increasing female participation. Research suggests that there are 13 million women across England who want to be more active. This document is for those wanting to engage more women in table tennis and helps to understand the barriers to participation and how to overcome them, how to market sessions to women and girls, plus case studies of successful projects.

[Click here to download the guide](#)

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