



## Bid launched to host Para Europeans in Sheffield

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**Posted On:** June 01, 2021

British Para Table Tennis has received approval from UK Sport, the UK government's agency for major sporting events, to receive funding to bid for and, if successful, host the 2023 ITTF European Para Table Tennis Championships.

The announcement follows a feasibility study that saw eight cities across England express an interest in staging the Championships, with Sheffield selected as the hosting partner. The chosen venue is the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield, which is also the training base for the British Para Table Tennis Team.

The last international Para table tennis event to be held in the UK, outside of the London 2012 Paralympic Games, was the British Open in 2011 and staging the European Championships would provide a valuable opportunity to showcase the sport and its accessibility to a wide audience.

The timing of this European Championships ahead of the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris is key, with the event giving athletes the opportunity to secure direct qualification and valuable ranking points.

"We want to thank everyone who has worked so hard to get us to this stage," said BPTT Chairman Karen Tonge MBE, "and UK Sport for supporting our bid. The funding provides confidence that a world class event can be delivered, and we are looking forward to providing an exciting bid to the International Table Tennis Federation that provides excellent competition for the athletes and showcases Para Table Tennis at its very best."

Esther Britten, UK Sport's Acting Deputy Director of Major Events said: "As the UK government's agency for major sporting events, I am delighted to give UK Sport's backing to the UK's bid for this championship. Our ambition is to secure events which reach, inspire and unite communities and I truly believe hosting this event will play an important role in helping us achieve this."

Table Tennis England Chief Executive Sara Sutcliffe MBE said: "We're delighted to be working with BPTT on the bid

to host the European Para Championships in Sheffield in 2023.

“Not only is it a great opportunity for the Para players a year before the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games but it is also an important part of our wider strategy to bring international table tennis back to England. Hosting such an event helps inspire the next generation of players and provides fantastic opportunities for our officials and volunteers to get involved.”

Councillor Mazher Iqbal, Executive Member for City Futures, Development, Culture, Regeneration said: “Sheffield promotes inclusivity in sport at every opportunity so we are really proud to be working with British Para Table Tennis as the host city for this bidding process.

“As the training base for the British Para Table Tennis Team, and a host city for major international sporting events in 2021 and 2022, we are well equipped to represent our nation in delivering a fantastic tournament that will inspire others, raise the profile of the sport and increase participation. We look forward to progressing the bid further and demonstrating why Sheffield is the perfect host.”

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