

# Lord Mayor Has A Ball!

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Shaun Marples – ETTA, John Timms – MLS Contracts Ltd, Peter Taylor – BTTAD, Lord Mayor of Sheffield Coun Sylvia Dunkley and Sue Gilroy MBE.

Sheffield's Lord Mayor had 'a ball' testing her table tennis skills against top para athlete Sue Gilroy MBE.

Cllr Sylvia Dunkley visited the English Institute of Sport, Sheffield (EISS) to meet Barnsley-born Commonwealth gold medallist Sue ahead of the British Open Para Table Tennis Championships, which will be held in Sheffield in September.

After a chat about Sue's hopes for the forthcoming competition, Cllr Dunkley indulged in a quick game of table tennis – and confessed that she is a fan of the sport.



The Lord Mayor of Sheffield focuses on the game in hand

Cllr Dunkley said: "I am a table tennis fan myself so it was lovely to visit this wonderful sporting facility and meet Sue. She is a very talented lady and we are lucky that she is one of the players representing our country in the British Open Para Table Tennis Championships."

Sue, a mum-of-two and full-time primary school teacher at Shawlands Primary School, Barnsley, is aiming for Gold at the London Paralympic games 2012 and is just one of a squad of Sheffield-based GB players who will compete in the British Opens.

The event will attract more than 400 elite disabled table tennis players, including many Paralympic 2012 hopefuls, from 39 countries across the world when it takes place at EISS on Sept 14 – 17.

The squad of GB players who regularly train at the Sheffield venue, including Sue and Sheffield-born star Kim Daybell, will be aiming high when they compete in the Opens after a string of recent medal successes. Will Bayley, who is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the world and moved to the city to train full-time in pursuit of a Paralympic Gold, will also compete along with University of Sheffield student David Wetherill.

Sue said: "I'm really looking forward to playing at the British Opens in Sheffield. It is going to be great playing so close to home and in front of a home crowd.

"There are so many players from all over the world coming to take part including those ranked in the world's top 15 so we should get some really good competitive matches. It's going to be an excellent championships."

Cllr Dunkley added: "It is going to be a huge event attracting hundreds of people to the city from all over the world and I am delighted that Sheffield has been chosen to host it."

The British Open Para Table Tennis Championships 2011 is supported by the British Table Tennis Association for Disabled people (BTTAD), UK Sport, ITTF Para Table Tennis, the English Table Tennis Association (ETTA) and Sheffield City Council.

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