

# Halton TTC net national award

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Karen Tonge MBE receives the award from HRH The Earl of Wessex

Halton Table Tennis Club has won a prestigious national honour at the Sport and Recreation Alliance's **Community Sport and Recreation Awards**. The club was presented with the **School Links Award** sponsored by Utility Aid.

The award was presented to the club chairman Karen Tonge MBE by HRH The Earl of Wessex at St. James's Palace in London today after the club put the judges in a spin with their hard work during the past year.

The club has built up amazing links with schools in the community, with the club's coaches putting on sessions and competitions involving more than 60 schools and colleges in the local area within Halton, Cheshire and Merseyside.

The club also loans equipment, helps provide training courses for teachers and youngsters interested in becoming officials, and offers free lunchtime sessions to make table tennis accessible to hundreds of children who otherwise might not have had the chance to get involved.

Tim Lamb, Chief Executive of the Sport and Recreation Alliance, said: "This award recognises the fantastic example that Halton Table Tennis Club has set in its commitment making sport accessible to all.

"Many people's love or indeed aversion to sport is formed from their experiences at school, and by reaching out to so many students and offering such a fantastic experience Halton are smashing through the barriers towards people living longer, healthier, more active lives.

Halton Table Tennis Club Chairman Karen Tonge, MBE said: "We are delighted to win the School Links Award. Our work in schools is fundamental to what we do as a club and over the past few years we have become embedded in the local community.

"Young people are at the heart of everything we do as a club and the £1000 that comes with this award will help

us train even more volunteers so that table tennis becomes a part of everyday life in Halton, working closely with Halton Borough Council and County Sports Partnerships in Merseyside and Cheshire.”

Mark Willerton, English Table Tennis Association National Programme Manager, said: “Halton Table Tennis Club is truly a flagship club – never resting on its laurels and continually striving to achieve more every year.

“The breadth and diversity of their day-to-day operation is unprecedented, reaching everyone from school groups to their nifty 50s workshop – they are the standard bearer for all other clubs.”

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