



Veteran National Championships given a new-look

Author: [Jamie Gordon](#)

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Table Tennis England and VETTS are teaming up to run a new-look annual Veteran National Championships, starting next May 2016.

The event will be held at Aldersley Leisure Village in Wolverhampton on May 14 and 15 2016.

This follows widespread consultation with veteran players about creating a new format for the championships, which will no longer feature alongside the Senior Nationals organised by Table Tennis England.

The consultation period in August and September saw members contacted via email and articles and information posted on the Table Tennis England and VETTS websites. It asked how they wanted to proceed.

There were just under 100 responses, with a consensus emerging on a number of key points:

- There was a definite appetite for a new look veterans' event with a higher entry limit than at present
- It seems odd for Table Tennis England and VETTS to run separate National events (which has been the case for many years) – combining the two would be a sensible approach
- Age Bands were favoured ahead of one Open category
- A weekend was preferable to midweek
- The original suggestion of a July event raised concerns – respondents felt it was too late in the season and could clash with holidays
- Location was an important factor, with a preference for a central venue
- Prize money was not felt to be important as the reward would be in winning itself
- Entry fees should not be too high

Taking all the feedback into account, Table Tennis England and VETTS have planned a joint venture, with Aldersley chosen as the venue and the weekend of May 14 and 15 as the date.

There will be age-banded categories, with Table Tennis England running the Over-40s and VETTS running the other age bands.

There will be a social event organised for the Saturday night.

Table Tennis England Chief Executive Sara Sutcliffe said: "We're delighted to work with VETTS to ensure veteran players have a National Championships in a format which meets their needs and which they can be proud to compete in.

"I would like to thank all the players who took the trouble to let us know their views – we have listened to them and are confident we have reached the right outcome.

"I'm very much looking forward to the event and I'm sure the players are too."

Susie Hughes, Acting Chairman of the VETTS said: "Working alongside Table Tennis England will bring economies of scale and allow us to produce a bigger and better National Championships. From the consultation, it is what our members want.

"The next step will be to have a small working party from the VETTS liaising closely with Table Tennis England to deliver what should be the premier veterans event in the country. We will be keeping our members closely involved and informed in this process."

More information will be available early in the New Year from Table Tennis England and the VETTS.

For more information about the VETTS, see <http://www.vetts.org.uk>

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