



## Hugo's making table tennis friends in high places!

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Teenager Hugo Ursell is the *Ping Pong Persuader* – and he's been spreading his influence in the corridors of power!

The 15-year-old, who is the youngest of Table Tennis England's Young Ambassadors, took on his local MP Sir Roger Gale – and the long-serving Conservative declared himself a fan of the sport.

The contest came about after Hugo launched a campaign on Twitter to promote the sport and encourage people to play, using the hashtag #pingpongpersuader.

Having [previously faced Minister for Sport Tracey Crouch](#), Hugo challenged Sir Roger, who has represented the North Thanet constituency in Kent since 1983.

They rallied and Hugo, who has just started his training to become a young coach, passed on some coaching tips to the MP during the match, which took place at Hugo's school, St George's in Broadstairs.

Sir Roger said:

I thoroughly enjoyed the chance to play table-tennis with Hugo and congratulate him on his work to promote a sport that is fun, inexpensive to participate in and great exercise.

I was surprised – and pleased – to discover that ping-pong skills, like riding a bicycle, don't disappear with age – although I was no match for Hugo!

Hugo, who plays at the Thanet Vikings club, said

I'm really pleased that Sir Roger agreed to play me. I enjoyed rallying with him and think he's got some potential. I'm happy to keep coaching him whenever he gets a chance.

The fact he found it fun does prove my point: that it is easy to start and fun to play. I would say to everyone – give ping pong a go.

Mr Wood, Head of PE at St George's, was quick to praise the achievements of Hugo, saying:

It was great to see Hugo and Sir Roger playing here at St George's.

We already know how committed Hugo is. He is a credit to our school in the way he promotes table tennis and an active lifestyle, something we believe passionately in.

We want to thank Sir Roger for giving up his time to come in to our school and support the work Hugo is doing. We remain really proud of Hugo.

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