

Legal Structures

Getting the right legal structure for your club

It is important that your club is structured, from a legal perspective, in a way that best suits your needs now and in the future. The Sport England Club Matters website provides guidance to help clubs make the right choice.

Unincorporated or incorporated

There are a number of reasons to get your club structure correct including:

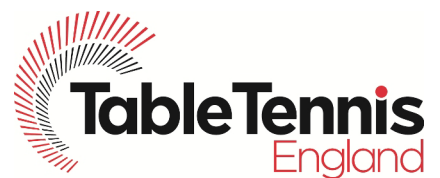
- It determines whether your club is a separate legal entity or not
- It has an impact on members' liability
- There are different rules and legal requirements depending on how your club is structured
- It can have financial implications
- It can influence how your club is viewed by others (e.g. banks, funding providers, the public)

Clubs can either be structured as unincorporated or incorporated organisations. Many sports clubs set up and continue to run as an unincorporated association, bound together by common rules. Becoming incorporated makes the club a separate legal entity which means club members are not personally responsible for its debts.



There are several different incorporation structures to consider. Clubs may also be eligible to adopt charitable status or Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) status, regardless of their legal structure. These offer benefits to clubs but also require meeting certain rules and obligations. Whatever structure or status you choose, make sure you understand what the implications are and you may want to consider updating your constitution to reflect your new structure.

The club matters [Club Structures Online Module](#) and [Introduction to legal structures workshop](#) investigate the pros and cons of each legal structure. As this can be a complex area, your [Active Partnership](#) may be able to provide further support and in some instances, you may need to seek professional advice.



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