



PATHWAY & PERFORMANCE PLAN

2023-2025 | tabletennisengland.co.uk



PATHWAY & PERFORMANCE SYSTEM VISION

A progressive, coherent, and smart pathway system capable of recognising and developing players with the potential to excel at senior international level.

- **We have redesigned our pathway and performance system and are excited to present some of the work we intend to do over the next few years to support our ambitions set out within Table Tennis United.**



PATHWAY & PERFORMANCE CORE OUTCOMES

● Our pathway and performance programmes will have a series of outcomes, these include, to:

Produce senior level athletes capable of international podium success at European, World, and Olympic Level

Provide meaningful life experiences for players and support skill development that will transfer to wider settings

Support player exit pathways for meaningful long-term engagement in the sport

Develop coaches with expertise at specific stages of the player journey, capable of providing the right environments and skill development that is age & stage appropriate

PATHWAY & PERFORMANCE

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To achieve our ambitions, we have set out a number of guiding principles that will help support us along the way:

SHARED GOALS & CLEAR OBJECTIVES

- Everyone in the pathway is clear what our goals are and how to get there

COHERENT ACROSS ENVIRONMENTS

- It's clear how players transition through the system, and stakeholders are aligned at the correct points

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE & PROGRESSIVE

- Tasks, activities, and benchmarking is appropriate for the age and stage of a player's development

PLAYER CENTRED

- We care about our players and their welfare and give them a voice to input back into the system

HOLISTIC

- Player development is shaped by the interaction between biological, psychological, behavioural, social & environmental factors

LIFE BALANCE

- Consideration is given to how players' education and wider activities fit into their development. A renewed attitude on the role of personal development for talented table tennis players and the positive impact wider identity can have on performance

SMART IDENTIFICATION

- How we recognise capacity for development is smart and evidence informed

COLLABORATIVE

- Best practice sharing becomes commonplace, and the performance team is dedicated to working closely with clubs, schools, and other talent development environments

PATHWAY & PERFORMANCE THE SYSTEM



Key priorities:

• Fostering a culture of excellence

We aspire to foster a culture of excellence across our pathway and performance system. Our ultimate goal is to win an Olympic medal, and to do this, we need everyone in the table tennis community to join us on this journey.

• Redesign of our England performance programmes

We have redesigned our performance programmes, each with a programme of camps and events that vary depending on the age group and level. We feel that the new programmes better support the key transition points of our players, and we will ensure that players showing the potential to progress are provided with exposure to the next level. The standards

and expectations to be selected into a squad will be made clear in our published performance standards, and there are appropriate induction processes in place at various stages in the pathway to ensure players are 'ready' for the journey ahead.

• Establishing our pathway development centres

Our goal is to establish a series of pathway development centres (PDCs) that underpin talent activity pre-England performance squads. These centres will cater for players between the ages of approx. 8-15 and include two distinct phases – the early development group (8-11) and the pathway group (12-15). The PDCs will not only play a crucial role in player development but will also act as hub for coach development.

• Establish our national training centre

By 2025, we aim to have secured a home for our elite players by establishing our national training centre, where players will have access to a full-time training programme, alongside flexible schooling and further study opportunities.

• Launch our pathway guide

A new pathway guide is being developed and will clearly highlight the journey from entry into the pathway through to the England senior team. This will include an overview of the pathway journey, key transitions of players, core support available, commitment and expectations of players, pathway environments, ways of balancing table tennis with education, exit routes, case study examples, and more.

• Ensure close collaboration with the area network

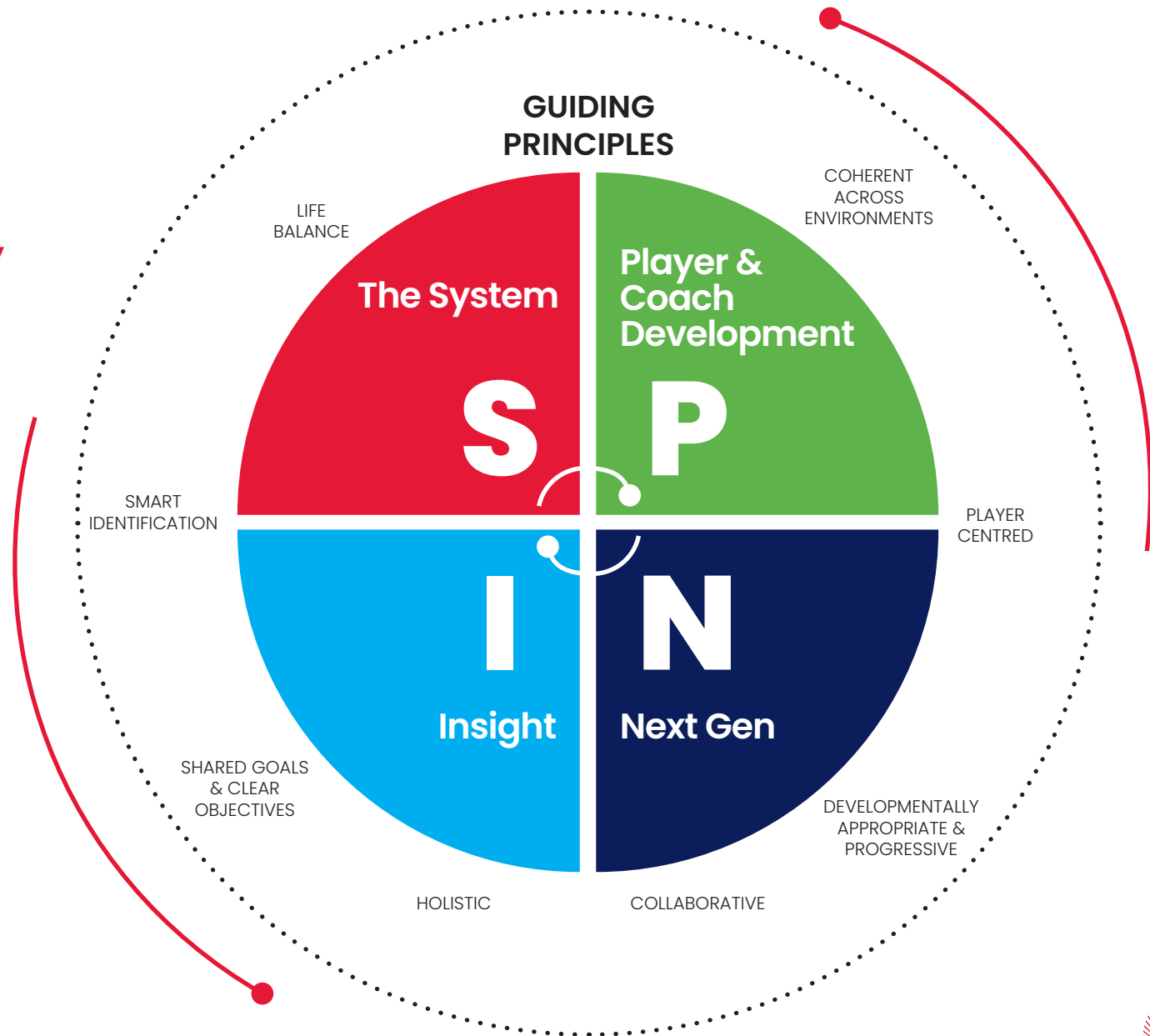
We will work in close collaboration with our area network to ensure we are aware of all talent activity, and area managers have a clear understanding of all pathway and performance developments.

• Focus on making our system as inclusive as it can be

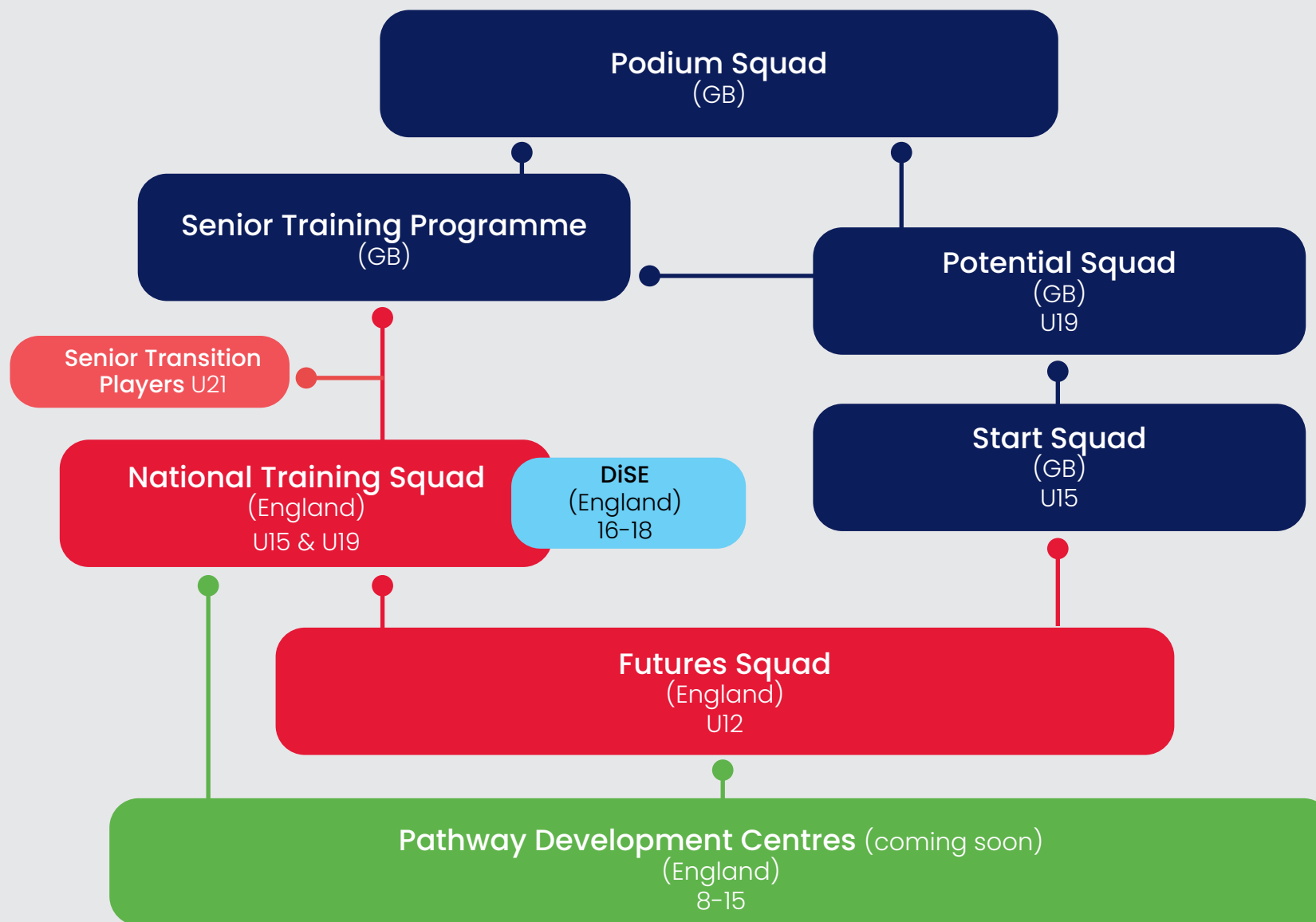
We will look to undertake targeted talent inclusion projects to understand the barriers players face to progress within our pathway, with the aim of ensuring we do not exclude players with potential. Focused work will also take place to enhance female participation and progression in the talent pathway.

PATHWAY & PERFORMANCE SPIN

Our SPIN strategy represents our core focus areas for pathway and performance development over the next two years.



PERFORMANCE PATHWAY



PERFORMANCE PROGRAMMES

● Futures Squad

The first step on the England performance pathway, this group includes the best U12 players in the country.

● Start Squad

The first step on the GB performance pathway, a group of players showing promise on the world stage at the U15 level.

● Potential Squad

The second step on the GB performance pathway, a group of players showing promise on the world stage at the U19 level. These players are working on a trajectory of top 150 on the senior international stage.

● National Training Squad

The highest squad on the England performance pathway that caters for the best players in the country in the U15 and U19 age categories.

● DiSE (Diploma in Sporting Excellence)

A two-year educational and training programme for current and aspiring performance players aged 16-18 in further education.

● Senior Transition Players (U21)

This group helps to bridge the transition from the junior to senior level by providing training opportunities with the senior squad.

● Senior Training Programme

The best senior players from across GB.

● Podium Squad

An Olympic medal hope for the cycle.

PLAYER & COACH DEVELOPMENT

Key priorities:

• Establish our player development framework

We want to provide clear guidance on how a player progresses from an excited and committed 7-year-old all the way to senior international level. A table tennis player development framework covering development within technical/tactical, physical, medical, social/lifestyle, psychological, nutrition, key behaviours, and competition is in development. It will become clear what players should be working on at different stages in their development from entry to the pathway, through to the England senior programme. Once complete, there will be an implementation education plan with all necessary stakeholders in the pathway.

• Make player personal development a priority

For squad-based players, we will deliver a holistic athlete development programme called 'BetterME' focusing on aspects such as nutrition, psychology, personal development & lifestyle, anti-doping, and more, to help our players make marginal gains in areas that will support their development as both an athlete and a person. A core value of our performance environment is that we believe that every player in should be involved in meaningful personal development activity. Whether this is studying or another core activity that the player is passionate about and will support their future career development away from table tennis.

• Design a fundamental skills programme

We want to place an increased focus on the role of fundamental skills during the early pathway phase for players. Fundamental skills will be a key focus area within our PDCs and Futures squad, we want to ensure that coaches are well educated on how to incorporate key fundamental skills training into their sessions is important to ensure that players have the appropriate foundations to build on.

• Increase the number of U10s competition

We recognise how critical it is for our players to be competing earlier. We will work with our area network to ensure that there are increased opportunities for players to compete locally in the U10 age group.

• Redesign of our coach development pathway

We are planning to redesign our coaching pathway and want to invest in a coaching system that promotes long-term engagement and

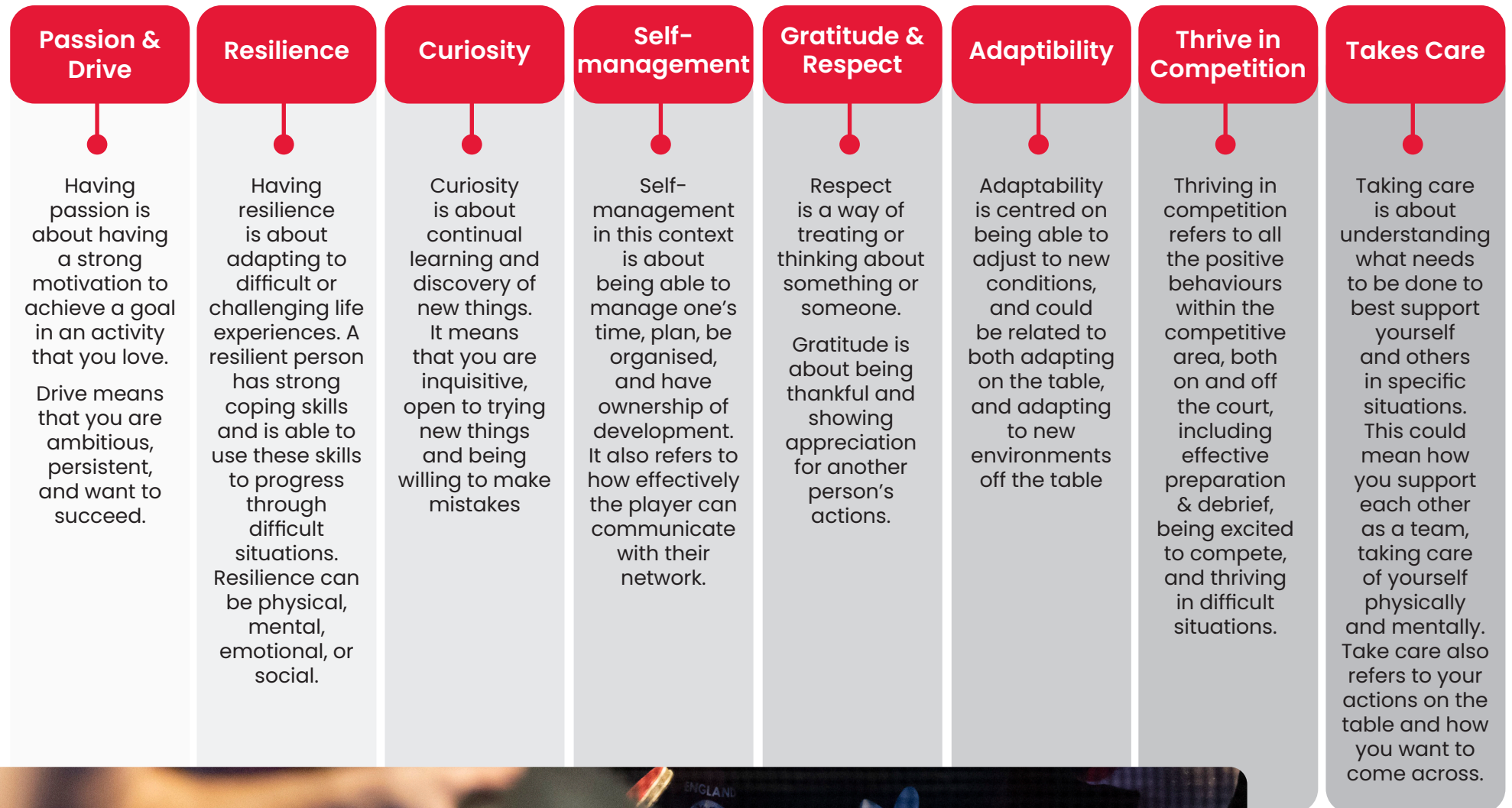
personal development. We understand that the skills and knowledge that coaches require are different across stages of the player journey and want to support coaches to develop 'specialisms' within specific areas (e.g., grassroots, pathway, high performance). Coach development will be clearly aligned to the stages of our player development framework, ensuring that coaches have a clear knowledge and understanding of how to support player development that is age and stage appropriate. For current qualified coaches, clear coach development opportunities will be presented.

• Provide coach collaboration opportunities in the national squad environment

Coaches within our PDCs and the home club coaches of our national squad players will be presented with opportunities to come into national squad training to work closely with us on the development of players.

BEHAVIOURS

An overview of the key behaviours we expect players to show as part of our performance programmes. What these look like in practice across age groups and how coaches/parents can support their development will be discussed in the Player Development Framework.





INSIGHT

Key priorities:

- **Gather player insights (The Athlete Panel)**

It is incredibly important to us that our players have a voice in our system. Our newly established talent and performance athlete panel will regularly seek to understand the views and experiences of our players and we will make a commitment to actively take feedback on board where we can.

- **Undertake influential pathway & performance research projects**

We will establish key research links with universities to deliver innovative projects that support player selection and progression. Example projects that we are currently exploring are centred on the transition from the junior to senior level within table tennis and talent identification processes.

- **Begin player monitoring**

We will start to become more systematic with our data. Collecting data on current performance squad athletes can support progression and help us to understand trends. This will include regular tracking of athlete training hours, time lost to injuries, wellbeing, and more.

- **Undertake a pathway analysis**

A database of talent activity across England will be mapped to ensure we know where all of our pathway activity is taking place. We will also aim to monitor player touch points and ensure we understand the numbers of players progressing in our system, and the barriers players face that can hinder progression.



NEXT GEN (TALENT ID & EARLY PATHWAY FOCUS)

Key priorities:

- **A focus on finding the NEXT GENERATION**

A key focus will be on understanding the types of environments we can detect talent and working with them to ensure there is an awareness of how to progress in the sport. Key focus areas will include:

- **Developing a talent identification framework** – a key document that will explain the key indicators to look for when spotting a player that has potential
- **Establishing the national hopes week** – One week that is blocked out each year and centred on finding the next generation of talent! It will include aspiring youth players coming together for a series of fun training activities and competition, attended by our national coach team. The aim will be to find the next group of players to select for our England Futures Programme.
- **Formalising links with TT Kidz** – ensuring that everyone that undertakes the TT Kidz programme is aware of progression opportunities, and there is a clear pathway link.

We will work closely with our Area Network team to uncover further opportunities to spot and identify players with potential!

HOW WILL DEVELOPMENT, PATHWAY & PERFORMANCE INTERACT

- Example areas where development, pathway, and performance interact to support our long-term performance ambitions.

