

# Chair's Report



<b>Presented by:</b>	Sandra Deaton, Chair
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As I write this report I am at the European Championships in Malmo Sweden.

It is an outstanding event with a high level of facilities and presentation. European table tennis continues to raise the standard of their events and competitions as well as increase the international opportunities for the younger players from all member associations.

England women qualified for the event but were unable to field the strongest team and as such found their group stage difficult, losing both matches. England men on the other had finished first in their group to reach the last sixteen. Drawing Hungary gave a real possibility of a quarterfinal place. It was close fought match resulting in a 3-2 win for Hungary. Throughout the event there has continued to be a buzz and recognition of England winning the bid for the 2026 World Team Championships.

The last few months have been very much centered around the bid and presentation to secure the 2026 ITTF Centenary World Team Championships. The positive result in Bangkok means we can now move forward to establish the New Co and start to begin to deliver our major events strategy. The WTT Feeder event in Manchester February 2024 will initiate the strategy.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Adrian and the team for all the hard work they have undertaken over the last few months to enable the delivery of a first class bid and presentation. This combined with extensive networking to all the ITTF member associations gave us the desired result.

The award of the 2026 World Championships sitting central to our major events strategy gives the sport the exposure it needs to increase participation, expand the fan base, and inspire numerous talent and performance opportunities. English Table Tennis now has the chance to unite and grow across the sport.

The content of our Annual Conference the morning of our AGM was very well received and highlighted the great work being carried out by each of our departments. The actual AGM later in the day passed without any significant difficulties.

The meeting with members to discuss the Chair position clearly demonstrated that there are differing views on the skills required to hold the position. The second process is well underway and the decision the Board reaches must be on the basis of the skill and ability to carry out the role.

Over the last few months, I have also attended a number of European Competitions where England have had representative players. The standard of European junior players continues to rise, and we must make sure we prioritise our own junior talent and performance pathway if we want to be amongst the best.

This will be my last Board Report as Chair of Table Tennis England. It has been an honour and privilege to serve our wonderful sport. I have learnt so much during my tenure. I have made so many new friends and been given many fantastic opportunities.

I have sat alongside some incredibly talented individuals all of which have a passion and dedication to drive the sport forward. I have had the privilege to work closely with two amazing Chief Executive Officers, an incredible number of hard working committed staff members and of course hundreds of outstanding volunteers.

As a Board we have been central to the metamorphosing of the governance and structure of the Association. Change is never easy but we have aligned in the belief of the necessity to bring about new concepts so we can deliver a sport fit for the 21st century. If table tennis is to remain significant, this momentum must not only be maintained but expand and grow. This can only happen with a united force.

So, thank you all, past and present for being part of my amazing journey and my wish is that our wonderful sport continues to be a " sport for all for life", united in every way.

Sandra