

# #Level TheTable

4-year update  
Sept 2022-April 2025



[tabletennisengland.co.uk](http://tabletennisengland.co.uk)





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## INTRODUCTION

**Level the Table (LTT) is Table Tennis England's five-year Diversity and Inclusion strategy.**

It is made up of five interrelated phases designed to tackle inequality, provide equity and gender parity, and ensure that the sport is representative of the demographic of England

This report comes 4 years after the launch of the strategy and two and a half years after our previous [12-month update](#). This report showcases the results against our objectives, goals and guiding principles, highlighting the Table Tennis England's progress across our key areas of work.

We are proud of the progress made to date and the significant achievements. We recognise however, we have more work to do to achieve all our goals and we are determined to ensure Table Tennis is a sport where everyone belongs.

I'd like to thank all the team, volunteers, partners, and contributors who have helped support our progress to date.

**Sally Lockyer**  
CEO



# OUR GENDER PARITY JOURNEY

**To achieve gender parity, we have an unapologetic focus on increasing the number of women and girls involved in the game, making table tennis a space where women and girls feel welcomed, valued, visible and have the opportunity to progress.**

**Here's what we have achieved since Sept-22:**

In April 2023 we published a report in collaboration with Women in Sport, looking to better understand how table tennis can encourage women to be active through midlife and menopause. The research highlighted how table tennis has vast potential to attract women at this stage of their lives, with the sport having many characteristics that women look for during midlife – such as being fun, social and accessible for everyone. The findings from the report will be considered for any future plans to target women in this phase of their life. [You can read the report here.](#)



**Amanda Worne, Women and Girls Ambassador**

In 2024 the Women and Girls Ambassador programme was re-launched, with the focus on raising the profile of the Ambassadors and helping build their voice within their local area. The Ambassadors have joined their Local Organising Groups (LOGs), which support the work our Area Managers are driving forward locally, and are working to understand the landscape in their local area, supporting projects and reporting any barriers back to be to allow for positive change

During the second half of 2024 and into early 2025, we hosted several workshops with various groups of women and girls to gather insight into table tennis playing kit. Feeling uncomfortable in kit, or a lack of suitable playing kit, can be a barrier to participation for women and girls, this insight therefore looks to combat this barrier and understand what women and girls in our sport require and desire.

Our Women and Girls Kit Insight will be presented to our current suppliers to determine if a solution can be reached to improve the kit available to women and girls in table tennis.





# COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS

## Women and Girls' 1\* Competitions

In March 2023 the first ever Women and Girls' competition for the North was held at Brandon Community Hall, Durham, attracting 24 out of a possible 25 players. After its success, a second Women and Girls' 1\* competition was held in Sheffield, attracting 28 players from several surrounding counties.

The competitions have allowed players to compete against others who are of a similar ability and encourage lots of matches in a fun, social and safe environment – run by women, for women.

## Norwich Inclusivity Festival

In late September 2024 the East region hosted an Inclusive Table Tennis festival in Norwich, run in collaboration with Active Norfolk and local organisations that support individuals with a variety of disabilities in and around Norfolk. Four different organisations attended, bringing 23 participants with them, all of whom highly rated the event.

You can see more about the event and its impact in [this video](#). Due to the success of the event, three future events are planned for 2025.





# PARTNERSHIPS

Key to our success against our goals and objectives is working in partnership with organisations who have expert knowledge around and access to the groups we wish and need to target. Here's how we have worked with others to make progress and Level the Table:



In July 2024 we again supported the WheelPower Junior Games held at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, where young people with physical disabilities take part in a variety of sports over three days. We have supported this event for several years now, sending coaches to the event to provide a positive and supportive experience of table tennis for the young people in attendance.



In 2021 we partnered with Parkinson's Table Tennis UK to raise the profile of the sport among People with Parkinson's, and to create and enhance opportunities for those with the condition to participate in table tennis.

After publishing a partnership review in 2022, our partnership with Parkinson's UK has further developed. In summer 2024 a deliverer and participant survey was created to gather insight on how to best deliver a session for, and support people with Parkinson's. This insight has been used to create a [toolkit to guide and inspire venues or coaches to offer sessions for people with Parkinson's](#), or ensure their existing sessions are inclusive.

We also visited Leeds ParkyPING! In December 2024 and showcased the impact table tennis has on players with Parkinson's in our [video](#). Our connection with the Players with Parkinson's community has also grown, which has allowed us to share player stories and report on successes, such as at the [PingPongParkinson World Championship in Slovenia](#) in late 2024.



In January 2025 we signed an agreement to work with Special Olympics GB on a range of projects, including supporting the upskilling of their coaches, aligning our performance pathways, creating a table tennis module in their activator training and sharing our membership systems with their clubs. As table tennis is one of their top participation sports, we are excited to see what this partnership brings over the next year and beyond.





# REPRESENTATION AND LEADERSHIP

This data table shows our progress since our 12-month update of the Level the Table strategy, up until 30th June 2024. Changes can be identified by looking at the increase (↑), no change (→) and decrease (↓) arrows. Changes will be influenced by sample sizes, which are constantly fluctuating, as well as the activities undertaken to improve diversity and inclusion among the listed groups.

	Women & Girls 51% of the national population	Ethnically Diverse Communities 18% of the national population	Disabled People 18% of the national population
<b>Board</b> 12 people	33% (↓) (amber)	16.6% (↓) (green)	0% (→) (red)
<b>Senior Leadership Team</b> 6 people	66.7% (↑) (green)	0% (→) (red)	0% (→) (red)
<b>Staff*</b> 32 people	43.7% (↓) (green)	9.3% (↑) (amber)	0% (→) (red)
<b>Officials</b> 618 people	16.6% (↑) (red)	9.8% (↑) (amber)	9.3% (↑) (amber)
<b>Coaches</b> 3400 people	14.7% (→) (red)	8.4% (↑) (amber)	3.6% (↑) (red)
<b>Licensed Coaches</b> 759 people	18% (↑) (red)	13.4% (↑) (green)	4.8% (↑) (red)
<b>Current Volunteers</b> 3093 people	17.6% (↑) (red)	15.5% (↑) (green)	7.3% (↑) (amber)
<b>Members - Compete Plus**</b> 2994 people	16.6% (↓) (red)	30.8% (↑) (green)	3.2% (↓) (red)
<b>Members - Compete**</b> 18593 people	8.4% (↑) (red)	14.3% (↑) (green)	3.5% (→) (red)
<b>Members - Club Play**</b> 3799 people	26.8% (↑) (red)	13.6% (↓) (green)	4.6% (↑) (red)
<b>Members - Supporter**</b> 684 people	32.1% (↑) (amber)	12.7% (↑) (amber)	5.2% (↓) (red)
<b>Social Participants</b> 2612 people*	47.1% (↓) (green)	18.3% (↑) (green)	14.4% (↓) (green)
<b>England Squads</b> 156 people	44.8% (↑) (green)	25.6% (↑) (green)	4.9% (→) (red)

**RAG system:** We continue to use a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) system to determine how groups from the table tennis community compare with the national population, based on findings from the most recent Census:

## Women and Girls 51% of the national population\*

- Green: 40% or more than (within 11% of the national population)
- Amber: from 30 to 39% (from 12 to 21% under the national population)
- Red: 29% or less than (more than 22% under the national population)

## Ethnically Diverse Communities 18% of the national population\*

- Green: 13% or more than (within 5% of the national population)
- Amber: from 6 to 12% (from 6 to 12% under the national population)
- Red: 5% or less than (more than 13% under the national population)

## Disabled People 18% of the national population\*

- Green: 13% or more than (within 5% of the national population)
- Amber: from 6 to 12% (from 6 to 12% under the national population)
- Red: 5% or less than (more than 13% under the national population)

\*according to the 2011 Census

**Notes:** This table contains self-reported data, given in response to questions with an answer option of 'Prefer not to say', which may lead to under-reporting. In some cases, individuals will crossover between groups.

\* Based on staff survey completed in Sept-2024 with 32 responses

\*\* As of Oct-2024

\*\*\* Based on survey samples up to Oct-2024

# PHASE DEVELOPMENTS



## Strategic goal 1:

**Continue to listen, connect and develop a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of different communities in our sport**

### Objective:

Provide regular opportunities to continue the dialogue around sharing experiences. Being committed to listening to the thoughts, emotions and experiences of our communities.

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- March 2024; Hosted an International Women's Day event at the Manchester Ping Hub, which saw over a dozen women come together in workshops to support the shaping of the Women and Girls offer and provide insights that have subsequently been implemented in pieces of work
- July 2024; Relaunch of the Women and Girls Ambassador programme, appointing 12 Ambassadors to lead and become the voice for women
- April 2025; Launch of Women and Girls podcast, interviewing women in table tennis and sharing their experiences

### Objective:

Develop a better understanding of communities we don't currently support to learn how to improve our services

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- June 2024; Commissioned Sported to undertake a research piece on participants and communities from deprived backgrounds. A learning report was created and the recommendations from these have been implemented into our local work



# PHASE DEVELOPMENTS

## Strategic goal 2:

**Educate the table tennis community about what diversity and inclusion means and how inclusive opportunities can be created**

### Objective:

Support the education of volunteers, coaches, officials and staff, through resources, and courses to better understand and improve knowledge and confidence around equality, diversity and inclusion

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- October 2023; Nine coaches from deprived backgrounds who work with women and girls, disabled people and other deprived communities were funded and trained through the Charlie Childs grant programme. As a result, there were more coaches from these communities coaching in environments they understand
- March 2025; Since April 2024 26 new female umpires have been trained, a 115% increase in the number of female umpires. One new Level 3 female umpire has been trained and 12 new female Tournament Organisers have been trained. This gives a larger voice to women officials, with some providing support to others and acting as role models to other women officials

### Objective:

Create more inclusive and welcoming environments to work, play, coach, volunteer and officiate table tennis

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- February 2024; The Level 2 Umpire course was delivered in Manchester with a greater focus on supporting participants with learning disabilities. The exam was rewritten to use similar language and participants could have support if required, with participants also being supported with a mentor in the practical exam. As a result more people with a learning disability have passed in the last 12 months than ever before



# PHASE DEVELOPMENTS

## Strategic goal 2 (cont'd):

**Educate the table tennis community about what diversity and inclusion means and how inclusive opportunities can be created**



### Objective:

Work with the table tennis community to ensure that there is suitable kit/uniform in place and equipment for players, coaches, volunteers, officials and clubs

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- In 2021 the playing kit rules at events were changed to allow full-length clothing in competition without needing to seek permission from the referee. This was then proposed at an international level
- In 2024, after learning that kit was still a barrier to participation for many women and girls, we held a focus group with women and girls from across the sport to understand more about their barriers and needs. The key themes from the insight will be taking to our kit suppliers to improve the current kit on offer
- We have committed to signing the Inclusive Kit wear Charter developed by Tess Howard, outlining our commitment to improving kit wear and the work completed on this to date

### Objective:

Ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is a part of everything we do, and it remains a critical area of work to be discussed and progressed across the sport

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- September 2023; Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity became a formal part of the Area Team's work programmes, with aspirations created to ensure all work undertaken considers a wider audience
- October 2024; The Inclusivity Group undertook EQIA training and a structure was implemented so any new projects, programmes, strategies or policies undertake this process. This ensures staff consider all aspects of equality whilst designing or implementing changes to deliver our strategy



# PHASE DEVELOPMENTS

## Strategic goal 3:

**Increase the diversity of volunteers, coaches, officials and staff across all levels to be more reflective of the sports participants and the population in England**

### Objective:

Increase the visibility of different communities within table tennis so there is a less intimidating first step on the ladder to become involved in table tennis

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- We continue to brief our event photographers to ensure they are capturing a range of images to show the diversity of those involved in the sport
- We have launched a Spotlight On content series, which features projects individuals from different communities within table tennis, highlighting their involvement and the impact the sport has on their lives

### Objective:

Improve the diversity of the officiating and coaching workforce to better reflect the participants that play the sport and the wider England population through targeted initiatives and partnerships

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- Our new Coaching Learning and Development Strategy has been approved and will begin implementation from 1st April 2025. Our strategy is underpinned with the pledge *Build Inclusive, Valued Coaching Workforce*

### Objective:

Review our recruitment methods and improve the diversity of Table Tennis England to be reflective of the population we serve

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- We have diversified our distribution of job adverts and show share on sites such as Women on Boards, Dynamic Boards, iSport and Evenbreak



# PHASE DEVELOPMENTS

## Strategic goal 4:

**Grow participation in the sport to be more reflective of the different backgrounds and communities in England**

### Objective:

Working across the sport to ensure that playing kit is made available at all levels of the game that it is suitable for people from all backgrounds and communities

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- In 2021 the playing kit rules at events were changed to allow full-length clothing in competition without needing to seek permission from the referee. This was then proposed at an international level
- In 2024, after learning that kit was still a barrier to participation for many women and girls, we held a focus group with women and girls from across the sport to understand more about their barriers and needs. The key themes from the insight will be taken to our suppliers to improve the current kit on offer
- We have committed to signing the Inclusive Kit wear Charter developed by Tess Howard, outlining our commitment to improving kit wear and the work completed on this to date

### Objective:

Improve the diversity of the officiating and coaching workforce to better reflect the participants that play the sport and the wider England population through targeted initiatives and partnerships

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- October 2023; Nine coaches from deprived backgrounds who work with women and girls, disabled people and other deprived communities were funded and trained through the Charlie Childs grant programme. As a result, there were more coaches from these communities coaching in environments they understand
- In 2025 21% of the coaching and officiating workforce are women and girls, with 12% being from ethnically diverse communities





# PHASE DEVELOPMENTS

## Strategic goal 4 (cont'd):

**Grow participation in the sport to be more reflective of the different backgrounds and communities in England**

### Objective:

Working to ensure that opportunities to play, coach or officiate in the sport are economically efficient to ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- January 2024; The Ping Hub was opened in Manchester, in partnership with the Great Northern Warehouse, MCRactive and Cornilleau. The project is designed to bring table tennis to the Manchester public, with no barriers to taking part. In the first year of launch 13,600 people have played at the Hub, with the free to access model enabling no financial barriers to participating

### Objective:

Supporting the table tennis community to grow the number of people playing table tennis

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- Between March 2024 and March 2025, 37% of participants that have started playing through interventions implemented by the Development team are Women and Girls, with 35% of those being from the top 30% most deprived communities

# PHASE DEVELOPMENTS

## Strategic goal 5:

**Establish clear processes and support mechanisms to act and challenge discriminatory behaviour**

### Objective:

Provide support for people who are affected by discriminatory behaviour

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- We have improved our mechanism for people reporting on discriminatory behaviour

### Objective:

Update our current provisions ensuring this is communicated widely

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- We promote any changes to key procedures and regulations through our monthly CRO updates

### Objective:

Implement and promote a systematic zero tolerance approach to discriminatory behaviour with a clear process for reporting, sanctioning and education

### What we've done since Sept-22:

- We have worked with a legal team to ensure our Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Regulations and affiliation regulations are most robust to deal with poor behaviour of all types, and have a workforce protection policy





# TERMINOLOGY

**Disability:** Within this document, the term Disability includes long-term health conditions that may or may not meet the legal definition of a Disability

**Inclusion:** Creating an environment that is respectful and welcoming to all, and where people feel confident to be themselves and make a full contribution

**Gender:** Refers to socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men

**Women:** Refers to a gender identity and/or female adult person. In this publication it has been used as a gender identity

**Gender Parity:** Equal participation and representation of women and men in all areas of work, projects, programmes or communication

