

# CLUB DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the club development handbook is to act as a guide and reference point at each stage of your club development.

It serves to steward on the following:

## HOW TO START

Promoting best practice on how to start and run a club.

## ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Providing advice and guidance on the different areas of club development and management.

## ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS

Outlining the importance of the role of volunteers in the day-to-day running of the club.

## SUPPORT

Providing support, such as links, and templates, for existing clubs to encourage growth.

## PLATFORM

Creates a platform for the creation and emergence of new clubs.

## NETWORK

Help to grow a flourishing network of Table Tennis clubs in Ireland.

## FUNDING

Give structural & technical support to clubs to boost the chances of obtaining funding.

# MESSAGE FROM TTI



## Welcome to Table Tennis Irelands first Club Development Handbook

We hope that this will help all clubs in the Table Tennis Community to assess their governance structure, look at Health and Safety within the club environment, recruit and develop volunteers across all positions within the club. Developing your club, especially a junior section, can seem like a very daunting task but with the aid of this Handbook plus the support from the staff in TTI we should be able to help you work through any of the sections outlined in the contents below. We also aim to support clubs with webinars and additional training on the various sections of the Handbook to continually up-date volunteers in their relevant roles. A big thank you to all those (volunteers and staff, you know who you are) who have contributed to this Handbook – it is much appreciated. If you are a new to Table tennis and are considering forming a club or already an affiliated club with TTI and need additional help please contact your Community and Club Development Officer in the first instance.

We intend for this Handbook to be constantly evolving and changing, so we welcome any feedback or ideas for how to improve sections of the Handbook, so please don't hesitate to contact us on [info@tabletennisireland.ie](mailto:info@tabletennisireland.ie).

**Table Tennis Ireland Directors and Executive team**

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# TABLE TENNIS IRELAND

The Irish Table Tennis Association (ITTA) CLG T/A Table Tennis Ireland was formed in 1937 but has been in existence for over 85 years. The Irish Table Tennis Association CLG, trading as Table Tennis Ireland (TTI), was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in 1987. It is responsible for the management and overall development of all areas of the sport on the Island of Ireland. The continued existence and growth of TTI is thanks to the dedication and support of our executive staff and more importantly all the volunteers, who coach, sit on committees, umpire, referee, organise, facilitate, and administer local clubs. It is a great privilege to have staff and volunteers throughout Ireland, who take on the significant responsibilities to grow the game of Table Tennis on the Island of Ireland. Volunteers share passion, knowledge, and experience, which helps TTI to continually improve and grow.

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2028

The current Strategic Plan launched in 2022 outlines the vision, mission, and values of TTI. It also includes four primary strategic themes.



If you would like to take a deeper look at the strategy, please [click here](#).

## VISION STATEMENT

We firmly believe that Table Tennis is the most inclusive sport on the Island of Ireland. Our sport actively involves and provides a meeting place and outlet for people of all ages and abilities who intermingle without regard to generation, grade, or geographical background. Our vision statement says it all, A Sport for All, a Sport for Life.

We want to see table tennis played widely through a large network of self-sufficient community clubs and for it to be recognized as both a sport that brings active fun to all but also as a performance and Olympic Sport.

# BENEFITS OF CLUB AFFILIATION TO TABLE TENNIS IRELAND

Table Tennis Clubs who affiliate to TTI can avail of the following benefits:

1. Use the [Just Go Platform](#) to manage the membership of the club.
2. Club contact details are advertised on the [TTI website club section](#).
3. Complimentary vetting (Garda and Access NI) of volunteers to ensure compliance with Sport Ireland and Sport NI codes of ethics.
4. We will advise the Club Administrator when their Local Sports Partnership or Council are making grants available for sport clubs or community organisations.
5. Continued support and updating of the TTI Club Handbook which will support good governance and the development of the club.
6. Opportunity to apply for TTI grant and equipment lottery schemes.
7. Clubs can apply for Sports Capital and Equipment Grants once affiliated to TTI (applies to clubs in ROI only).
8. TTI to update all Northern Ireland Clubs on funding initiatives and links with NI Sports Forum.
9. Insurance policy in place for all clubs (only if all members of the club are affiliated) – TTI will provide an Insurance Webinar to update Clubs on the policy ahead of the season and subsequent seasons if required. TTI Policy cover includes but is not limited to: club training, league matches, club competitions sanctioned by TTI and ancillary activities to do with the promotion and development of the sport in Ireland.

# BENEFITS OF INDIVIDUAL AFFILIATION

1. Personal accident insurance cover when attending Irish tournaments and leagues.
2. Personal accident cover is provided. It is advised that players travelling overseas obtain their own travel insurance.
3. Access to Coach and Official Education programmes and seminars.  
Can compete at Irish tournaments and leagues.
4. For further information on Memberships benefits, check out our [website](#).

# STARTING A NEW CLUB

Opening a table tennis club allows you to combine your passion for the sport with the opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of others, foster a sense of community, and contribute to the promotion and development of table tennis in your area. TTI is committed to expanding the number of affiliated clubs on the Island of Ireland and we hope this handbook will assist you with your plans. If you are considering opening a table tennis club it is recommended that you contact TTI in the first instance and arrange a call to discuss how to move forward. We can help guide you in terms of funding, insurance and links to your Local Sports Partnership or Local Council.

## THINGS YOU SHOULD CONSIDER BEFORE STARTING A NEW CLUB

### DEMAND

Is there a demand for a table tennis club in your area? Have you checked if there is a similar club already running in this area? How many members will you need to get started? We recommend speaking to your local community centres and schools about recruiting potential members.

### VENUE

Do you have access to a facility with a suitable area for training? Consider factors such as accessible toilets and changing facilities (if required), parking facilities, and proximity to public transportation.

### VOLUNTEERS

Where will you recruit your coaches and volunteers? Do you have enough volunteers with the necessary skills and time to fill the roles of Chair, Treasurer, Secretary? Are you a qualified Table tennis coach or have a qualified coach willing to take the sessions?

### EQUIPMENT

Do you have access to tables, nets, barriers, bats and balls and adequate storage for them? Minimum requirements to get started are bats balls and some stretchy nets that can fit on any table (until you can afford to buy table tennis tables) Find specifications on equipment [here](#).

### DOCUMENTATION

Have you prepared rules & regulations for how the club will operate? A sample Club Constitution can be found [here](#): Appendix 1 Sample Club Constitution.



# TYPES OF TABLE TENNIS CLUBS >>>>

**JUNIOR CLUB** CATERS  
FOR PLAYERS **UNDER**  
**18 YEARS OF AGE.**

**SENIOR CLUB** CATERS  
FOR PLAYERS **OVER**  
**THE AGE OF 18.**

**JUNIOR & SENIOR CLUB**  
CATERS FOR PLAYERS  
**BOTH OVER AND UNDER**  
**18 YEARS OF AGE.**

## INITIAL CLUB DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

1.	Do we have <b>enough coaches</b> ?
2.	Do we have <b>contacts with local</b> schools, community groups and Sports Partnership/local council
3.	Do we have <b>sufficient volunteers</b> ?
4.	Do we have <b>sufficient facilities/equipment</b> ?
5.	Are we adequately <b>catering for all sections of the community</b> e.g., young children, teenagers, adults, masters, disability etc.?
6.	How much should we <b>charge to cover initial costs</b> of running the club e.g. hall hire etc.
7.	Do we have <b>enough funding</b> or is there access to funding to help get the club off the ground?
8.	Do we have a <b>child protection</b> officer in place, and have they (along with all coaches) completed relevant <b>safeguarding training and vetting</b> ? (TTI can advise)
9.	How and who shall <b>communicate with the community</b> to recruit new members (e.g. set up a come and try it session in the club or in conjunction with local school?
10.	How soon can we <b>get coaches qualified</b> and how many do we think we will need?
11.	How can we get <b>parents to volunteer</b> e.g., committee members?

# GOVERNANCE

## CLUB CONSTITUTION

Every Club must have a club constitution, a set of rules and regulations in place to govern your club. A club constitution clearly states how the club should operate, and it is usually adopted at an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting.

A sample club constitution can be found [here](#).

## CLUB STRUCTURE

Creating a club structure is the most essential factor in the success or growth of any table tennis club. The main reason to create a structure within your club is to ensure that the workload is spread adequately and that a single person is not overloaded with work. This process should involve an adequate number of people. In order to do so, a club needs to set up a committee.

The **responsibilities of the club committee** are as follows:

**MANAGE** THE OPERATIONS AND AFFAIRS OF THE CLUB.

**ENHANCE** THE CLUB'S ACTIVITIES BY ADOPTING PROPER POLICIES AND PRACTICES.

**OVERSEE** CORRECT USAGE OF THE CLUB'S RESOURCES.

**IMPLEMENT** A CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY.

**DEVELOP** A HEALTH & SAFETY STATEMENT.

## ORGANISING A MEETING

The Secretary is responsible for organising meetings. The Chairperson is in charge of running committee meetings and should always indicate a start and finish time. It is important to aim to start and finish meetings on time so as not to frustrate and exhaust your committee members. Should items on the agenda not be discussed, they should be placed at the top of the agenda for the next meeting.

### A MEETING GENERALLY RUNS AS FOLLOWS:

1. A **meeting agenda** is a list of topics to be discussed at the meeting in order of their appearance on the agenda. The Secretary should issue this in advance of the meeting, with any supporting information relevant to the topics being discussed. A sample meeting agenda can be found [here](#).
2. The **order** of discussing topics should follow the order on the agenda. The chairman of a meeting reserves the right to change the order of items on the agenda. Each issue should be resolved, if possible, before moving on to the next.
3. A **motion** is a proposal brought to the meeting for debate and decision.

4. The **proposer** is the person who proposes the approval or rejection of a motion to the meeting and the **seconder** is another person who expresses support or rejection of the motion. Normally clubs would require a seconder for a motion to be discussed.
5. **Voting rights** can differ from club to club and there are several ways of approval or rejecting a motion.
  - A show of hands for majority supporting or rejecting.
  - A secret ballot is required for issues of sensitivity or where voters wish to keep their vote anonymous.
  - The Chair may have a second/casting vote for use in the event of a tied vote.
6. A **quorum** is the minimum number of members needed to make a decision. This is normally stated in a club's constitution.

## THE SECRETARY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR

taking notes and preparing the minutes at the meeting, which should contain the following:

1. Date, time and location of the meeting.
2. List of attendees and apologies from those who are absent.
3. Distribute the minutes of the last meeting.
4. Discuss matters arising from those minutes which are not covered on the agenda for this meeting.
5. Under each topic/agenda item, a summary of the discussion should be noted, decisions taken, and actions assigned to be taken following the meeting.
6. The recording of the minutes should be an accurate record of what was discussed and not be in any way biased.
7. It is recommended that the minutes are prepared as soon as possible after the meeting while the proceedings are still fresh in your mind.
8. The Secretary should circulate the minutes to all the committee members, so they are aware of their action points before the next meeting.

Find **tips for writing meeting minutes** [here](#).

## CLUB ROLES

Club committees are generally broken into a number of roles. Below is a recommended list of non-exhaustive club roles. This list can be expanded upon or broken down into further roles should your club be able to do so.

1. CLUB CHAIRPERSON

4. CHILDREN'S OFFICER

2. CLUB SECRETARY

5. DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON (DLP)

3. CLUB TREASURER

6. PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER (PRO)

## ROLE OF THE CLUB CHAIRPERSON

The role of the Club's Chairperson is to manage the club in an efficient and effective manner in line with the club constitution and regulations. They have overall control of the club and should provide direction & guidance.

A Chairperson must be elected at an AGM or EGM. At meetings, the Chairperson will take control of and manage these meetings whilst ensuring that all members have a fair and equal opportunity to express his or her views.

**DUTIES:**

- Chair meetings including Annual General and any Extraordinary General Meetings.
- Ensure appropriate documents, including minutes, are available for members.
- Ensure that committee members are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Act as the ambassador and/or spokesperson for the Club.
- May be called upon to act as mediator.

**QUALITIES:**

- Confident and effective communicator.
- Good organisational skills and ability to delegate duties.
- Ability and knowledge to act as spokesperson for the Club.
- Unbiased and impartial, but able to make decisions when required.
- Be able to facilitate discussion and keep the debate focused.
- Be well informed about all aspects of the club.
- Be able to involve all Committee members in the decision-making process.
- Be able to maintain harmony within the group even when there is a disagreement.

## ROLE OF THE CLUB SECRETARY

The role of the Club Secretary is to deal with all communications on behalf of the club. The efficiency of your club will depend greatly on the efficiency of your club Secretary.

**DUTIES:**

- First point of contact for all enquiries.
- Potentially be the club administrator on the Just go system.
- Organise meetings, taking and distributing minutes.
- Handling correspondence (record date received and respond promptly).
- Create template letters which can be used (amend dates, names etc. when required).
- Review the content on the club's website and social media.

**QUALITIES:**

- Excellent organisational skills and communication skills (written and spoken).
- Be able to maintain confidentiality.
- Reliable and able to work to timescales.

## ROLE OF THE CLUB TREASURER

The role of the Club's Treasurer is to keep accurate financial records of all club transactions. The Treasurer is responsible for the safekeeping of club funds as well as the collection of membership fees, depositing monies in the club bank account/s, issuing receipts, payment of invoices and preparation of end of year accounts. The Treasurer must not commit the club to any expenditure which has not been approved in advance.

**DUTIES:**

- Managing all income and expenditure, including banking arrangements.
- Reports regularly as required to the Committee/Chairperson on the club's financial status.
- Prepares /presents financial year end report to AGM.
- Financial planning, budgeting, and monitoring throughout the year.
- Managing legal requirements where required.
- Manage and keep up to date with membership database and enquires.

**QUALITIES:**

- Be well organised.
- Be honest and trustworthy.
- Diligent and confident when handling monies and able to keep accurate records.
- Keep up-to-date information and be able to answer any questions on finance.

## ROLE OF THE CLUB CHILDREN'S OFFICER

A club must appoint a Children's Officer if they intend to have players under 18 years of age. The Club's Children's Officer acts as a resource regarding issues concerning children and young people at the club. The Children's Officer should be aware of the safeguarding policy, the code of ethics in relation to young people, check that all activities are safe, fun, and run in the spirit of fair play. The Children's Officer should also be informed on how to deal with any issues that may arise concerning the protection of children and young people.

**DUTIES:**

- To implement and promote awareness of safeguarding statements and the code of ethics within the club.
- To influence policy and practice within the club in dealing with allegations of abuse or misconduct, bullying and safe recruitment of volunteers and training.
- Ensure that all volunteers are vetted, complete reference checks and attend safeguard training.
- Establish contact with the TTI National Safeguarding Officer.
- Ensure all children/athletes, volunteers and parents agree to abide by and sign up to the Code of Conduct.
- To ensure that children are aware of how to make concerns known and ensure that children have a voice in the running of their club.
- To report regularly to the Club Management Committee.
- Monitor and promote the correct use of content on websites and social media channels.

**QUALITIES:**

- Have completed both Safeguarding 1 and 2 training.
- A good knowledge of current guidelines in the safety and welfare of children and reporting procedures.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality.
- Organised record keeper.
- Competent communication skills.

## ROLE OF THE CLUB DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON (DLP)

Each club should appoint a Designated Liaison Person who deals with any concerns relating to the protection of children at the club. The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for reporting any allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the HSE/Túsla/Gardaí or Social Services/PSNI. This role is automatically assigned to the Chairperson unless officially assigned to another member of the committee.

**DUTIES:**

- Have knowledge of the safeguarding statement, code of ethics and statutory guidelines.
- Support the Club's Children's Officer.
- Have a knowledge of categories and indicators of abuse.
- Be familiar with and able to carry out the reporting procedures.
- Communicate with parents and/or agencies as appropriate.
- Be aware of local contacts and services in relation to child protection.

**QUALITIES:**

- Have completed both Safeguarding 1 and 3 training.
- A good knowledge of current guidelines for the safety and welfare of children.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality.
- Organised record keeper.
- Competent communication skills.

## ROLE OF THE CLUB PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

This person deals with the publicity of the club. The Public Relations Officer is responsible for the running of the club's website and social media accounts. It is recommended that this officer prepares a promotional plan and online strategy. A key task is the sharing of club information with members and the local community by using newsletters and e-zines in addition to liaising with local newspapers and radio stations.

**DUTIES:**

- Regular updates/press releases/e-zines about club activity in local media to assist recruitment of members.
- Ensuring results of competitions are given to the local newspapers and radio stations.
- Establish and monitor club website and social media accounts.
- Liaise with club sponsors to keep them informed of club activity and promote their sponsorship.
- Collaborate with volunteers to ensure fundraising activities are successful.

**QUALITIES:**

- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Knowledge of posting to websites and social media platforms.
- Knowledge of marketing tools.
- A general knowledge of the sport and club policies.

## SUCCESSION PLANNING

As your club grows, the appointment of assistants or junior position holders will become important. These people would be trained by the current position holder in each area to learn each of the responsibilities associated with that role. The idea is that they can take over from the position holder after a period of time. This provides a pathway for volunteers to enter and exit the club system without feeling they have become essential to the club's existence. It also ensures no one person becomes overworked or burnt out, which can happen within sport clubs, and these volunteers become lost to your club going forward.

Examples or ideas for other roles which could be created in a club are - Social Media Manager, Volunteer Recruitment Officer, Fundraising Officer etc.

## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

At TTI, volunteers are the backbone of the association. Most clubs could not exist without the help of volunteers. Giving time and energy to your local club is a wonderful choice and is encouraged. It is important to remember that the volunteering experience is to benefit both the club and the volunteer.

Essential in sport, volunteers help to increase operational capacity, add additional skills and competencies, increase diversity and build connections in the local community. At times it may be challenging to acquire and/or retain volunteers. As such, it is important to remember this simple **3 step process**:

**1. RECRUIT**

**2. RETAIN**

**3. REWARD**

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

1. Provide a positive volunteer experience and emphasise the importance of volunteering.
2. Appointment of a coordinator to distribute workloads and volunteer roles.
3. Communication and involvement between stakeholders (Parents, Members, spectators etc.) and volunteers.
4. E.g. a short workshop around conflict resolution within the club, or a posted statement at the club about the importance of volunteers.
5. Reinforce the social and community experience gained through being a volunteer.
6. Implement a mentoring programme for volunteers to take part in.
7. Recognise and appreciate initiatives (e.g. social media appreciation posts, thank you lunches etc.).
8. Provide volunteers with training and education to combat potential concerns among volunteers and build on available experience, skills or knowledge to help them play an integral role at the club.
9. Exert influence over “masters” players, returning players and parents, who may be in a position to ‘give back’ to the club.
10. Prioritise ruthlessly to adequately manage time and minimize unnecessary bureaucracy.
11. Give support to volunteers and respect the hours they are available.

## THE CHALLENGES OF RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

1. Often people think that volunteers are paid to run clubs so there is no need for them to help or offer their time.
2. Often volunteers will be parents, and they can be stretched across more than one sport or activity.
3. In table tennis, players can play well into retirement age and have limited time available to volunteer.
4. Some people are afraid of all the rules and regulations in place, but the club should explain the need for them.
5. Due to the small pool of volunteers, a large workload can be placed on those who volunteer, this can lead to volunteers becoming overwhelmed and leaving the club or stop getting involved.
6. Often volunteers don’t get involved for fear of being sued. They are often afraid of the liability they may be exposed to.
7. Fear of abuse. Volunteers are often afraid of suffering abuse at the hands of others involved in the sport. E.g., the verbal abuse of an umpire or referee at a tournament.
8. A lack of recognition in their role can often deter volunteers.
9. Ambiguity between paid roles and voluntary roles.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

Many clubs will be hiring an area or facility from a community facility or school. The club should ensure that the facility/schools have the following documentation in place:



If a club hires a facility which they are the only user of, they are obligated to ensure that they produce the documentation listed above on request. A sample health and safety check list can be found in appendix.

## PROVISION OF FIRST AID

A facility should ensure that there are adequate First Aid kits and a Defibrillator available and that they are restocked/charged on a regular basis. A club should enquire from the facility if they have qualified First Aid qualified staff available during the times their club uses the facility. It is recommended that club coaches or volunteers are also Sports First Aid qualified.

Details on the contents of a First Aid kit are available on the [Health & Safety Authority web-site](#).

# FIRST AID KIT



## FIRE SAFETY

It is essential that club coaches and volunteers are familiar with the fire safety arrangements in a facility. They should be aware of the location of fire exits, evacuation route(s), location of fire extinguishers and fire assembly point(s). It would be recommended that the club conduct fire evacuation drills, in conjunction with



staff from the facility, every six months. If a club coach or volunteer has concerns over fire safety or spots obstructions along an evacuation route, they should report this immediately to a member of facility staff.

## MANUAL HANDLING

Some clubs may have the use of a multi-purpose facility. In which case the club may have to set up/ take down equipment for every session. Club coaches and volunteers should be aware of the risk associated with manual handling of loads. This can involve the transporting or supporting of a load by one or more volunteers which could include lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving a load. Manual handling involves risk, particularly of back injury to volunteers. Assessment of manual handling tasks should be conducted, and control measures put in place to mitigate the risk.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

There is a legal requirement for a club to identify hazards, assess the risks associated with that hazard and put control measures in place to mitigate some or all of that risk. A risk assessment template can be found in Appendix 4 Sample Risk Assessment Template.

## INCIDENT AND ACCIDENT REPORTING FORM

An incident report form is used to document any event that may or may not have caused damage to property or equipment. An accident report form is used to document any event which that may have caused an injury or illness to a person or people. Most hired facilities will want the club to fill in their own Incident and Accident report form. In the event the venue doesn't have a report template one can be found in the [Appendix here](#).

If an incident or accident occurs, it is essential that it is accurately documented. The Chairperson or Secretary should contact their insurance provider as soon as possible about what occurred. They will be able to advise the club on the steps to follow.

## INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

It is best practice that clubs hiring a facility look for proof of insurance cover from that facility. They should have a Public Liability policy with a limit of indemnity of €6,500,000. A club should also have its own Public Liability cover in place through their affiliation and membership of TTI. Most venues or facilities will look for a letter of indemnity which can be given to the club once the club and all members of the club are affiliated with TTI.

To view Webinar on Insurance for Clubs and Members of TTI please click [here](#).

# COACHING

Coaching is an imperative element of players' development, quality coaching at each level of the Player's Development Pathway is one of the key elements necessary to achieve success. Club coaches play a paramount role in establishing fundamental skills and fostering a robust foundation for a player's future development. Coach Education and Development are essential for continuing club development and membership growth.

## COACHING FRAMEWORK & COACH EDUCATION

The following stages of Coach Development offer guidance for clubs and/or individuals who are interested in coaching from grass-root level through to pursuing and excelling in coaching as a profession. Please note the minimum age for taking a coaching course is 15 years old (Activators Award) and 16 years old (Level 1).

### ACTIVATORS AWARD / INTRODUCTION TO COACHING

This course offers ideas for fun-based table tennis activities and basic table tennis skills at grassroots level. No table tennis background is required to take the course and it is suitable for teachers, parents, volunteers, and any enthusiasts who are interested in becoming coaches and helping promote the sport. On this first step of the Coach Development Pathway, coaches with this qualification will be able to introduce and coach table tennis in schools, youth centres, community hubs etc. and become assistant coaches in clubs.

#### LEVEL 1

The Level 1 Coaching qualification provides trainee coaches with the necessary skills to work independently in planning and delivering table tennis coaching sessions in the club environment. The course is suitable for Junior (16+) and Senior players, qualified Activator Award Coaches (recommended to have 1-2 years coaching experience), club volunteers and parents with a table tennis background. Qualified Level 1 coaches may also progress to assist with provincial/national training camps and act as Non-Playing Captains (NPCs) for Junior teams.

#### LEVEL 2

The Level 2 Coaching Award is a more advanced standard in coaching. It provides a more indepth knowledge of table tennis, including advanced technical and tactical elements of the game as well as an awareness of the physical and mental requirements. Candidates are required to hold the Level 1 Coaching qualification and have obtained at least 2 years' experience in coaching. This qualification is suitable for coaches who want to expand their in-depth knowledge of table tennis and provide support to player development by applying sports science in their games.

Qualified Level 2 Coaches will play an important role in the Player's Development Pathway at club, provincial and national levels. They could be involved in coaching junior and/or senior players at High Performance standard and progress to be NPCs for provincial or national senior teams.

Coaching courses are organised when there is sufficient interest from members, anyone who would like to attend a coaching course should [contact us here](#) to register their interest.

## MEMBERSHIP, SAFEGUARDING AND INSURANCE

All coaches must be affiliated members with TTI and have an up-to-date Safe-guarding check, Garda Vetting (Republic of Ireland) or Access NI (Ulster). Coaches who carry out national duties are covered by TTI insurance, but coaches are advised to have individual insurance cover for all their coaching work.

## CONTINUOUS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) OPPORTUNITIES

TTI aims to provide regular CPD training opportunities throughout the year for coaches at each level of the pathway, including online and/or in-person seminars, workshops, and practical sessions in the training hall. These sessions will offer “learning and sharing” experience and networking opportunities. The aim is to maintain and enhance knowledge for a modern sport, and thus contribute to players’ development and the achievement of results at performance level.

For further information, guidance and support please [contact us here](#).

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## OFFICIALS

We would not be able to run any of our competitions or tournaments without volunteers who are trained and qualified as umpires or referees.

## BECOME AN UMPIRE

We recommend that each club has at least 2 qualified county umpires. Having an umpire in your table tennis club can assist with maintaining order, fairness, and professionalism in matches and events that you run. Their presence contributes to a positive and enjoyable experience for all participants, fosters player development, and upholds the values of the sport. Opportunities to use umpiring skills are available in school competitions, clubs, leagues and in many competitions across Ireland. There may even be possibilities to umpire international matches, World Championships and even at the Olympic Games.

We encourage volunteers to consider becoming a qualified table tennis umpire. This role is suited to coaches who wish to further their knowledge of the rules or anyone with a keen interest in the sport. There are 4 categories of umpires:

## JUNIOR UMPIRE

The junior umpire award is designed for young people under the age of 18. It can be used in a school, club or community setting to improve the young person's understanding of the rules of the game and to begin their journey on the officiating pathway.

## COUNTY UMPIRE

The county umpire course provides the participant with a broad set of skills and knowledge to become a confident umpire. When qualified the County Umpire can umpire at events up to and including the national championships.

## NATIONAL UMPIRE

After experience and proven ability as a County Umpire a member may take the examination to qualify for the national umpire category. National umpires can umpire at Irish competitions and some tournaments across Europe. Qualified national umpires are also able to act as referee to events within Ireland.

# BECOME A REFEREE

We encourage qualified umpires to consider becoming a qualified table tennis referee. This role is suited to those with experience of being an umpire and aspire to become a referee at club, provincial or national tournaments.

## NATIONAL REFEREE

Examinations for this category are conducted by an external tutor and examiner. Qualified national referees can act as referee for events within Ireland.

## INTERNATIONAL REFEREE

As with the international umpire category above, candidates for this category of international referee must pass an examination organised by the International Federation (organised every 2 years) to be permitted to referee events outside Ireland.

Anyone wishing to have further information on training and qualifying as either an umpire or referee should [contact us here](#).

# DEVELOPING A JUNIOR SECTION

It is recommended that every club develops a junior section. Young people are the future adult members of any club and ensure that the club is financially sustainable going forward. If a club decides not to develop a junior section, a club could struggle to recruit enough members to make the operations of a club viable and fill roles on their committee in the future.

Developing a junior section provides for the future development of the club and can get existing club members the chance to develop specific skills rather than just playing table tennis for fun. It will also help generate more income for the club by increasing the overall membership. It will give you access to another pool of volunteers as children's parents should be encouraged to get involved in their child's activities.

Funding agencies are also more willing to fund clubs that show that they are ensuring their future by providing sporting opportunities for young people and developing their club with sustainability in mind.

Children join table tennis clubs for several reasons, and these should be kept in mind when developing the youth section of a club:

- To be with friends.
- To improve their skills.
- To experience the excitement of competition.
- To play sport.
- To receive encouragement from parents and friends.
- To become part of a team.

Competing in competitions should not be the main focus of a junior section within a club. While it may be one of several activities offered by the club, too much emphasis on this aspect can lead to many junior players leaving the sport:

- If they are not picked for a team, they may feel that they are being left out or that they have failed, which can lead to them feeling isolated from their friends.
- If too much emphasis is placed on winning, losing can affect their confidence and self-esteem.
- By emphasising the importance of participating rather than the outcome of matches, the overall experience is a much happier one for any young person.
- Pressure should never be placed on a child to compete or win – this situation will lead to that child quitting the sport at the earliest opportunity.
- Table tennis should be promoted to young players as an enjoyable, fun and sociable activity.

## WHAT DOES A JUNIOR SECTION NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

- A separate junior committee with a similar structure to the adult section.
- A nominated coordinator who will often be part of an adult clubs committee acting as a link and sharing information between the two.
- Volunteers to organise and supervise training sessions. These roles can often be filled by parents who may not have the necessary expertise to coach, but who have good organisational skills.
- Trained coaches to develop the skills of the junior players.
- Ask the parents of players to get involved in some capacity.

- Develop links with local schools and youth groups to ensure that new members are always coming through the door.
  - Arrange demonstrations and try out sessions by club coaches and members in schools.
  - Keep the PE Teacher/Principal in the school informed as to local table tennis competitions, etc.
- Links with an adult club, if not already a part of one, so that there is continuity for the young people involved once they turn 18 years old.
- Create two junior positions on your club committee so that young players are represented and have their say on how the club is run.
- Get older youths from the club to "shadow" the committee positions in the adult club so that they understand what is involved and will be more willing to take on posts in the fu-ture.

## SAFEGUARDING

TTI is fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of its participants. Every individual in table tennis should always, show respect and understanding for participants' rights, safety and welfare. All members should conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the organisation. When working with young people or vulnerable adults, our priority is their welfare.

TTI is committed to providing an environment that will allow participants to perform to the best of their ability, free from abuse, neglect, bullying and intimidation. TTI have appointed Clair Hughes as the National Safeguarding Officer. She can be contacted on [safeguarding@tabletennisireland.ie](mailto:safeguarding@tabletennisireland.ie) with any queries you may have. Each province has appointed a Safeguarding Officer who is also available for assistance. Their contact details are available on [here](#).

The Sport Ireland "Safe Sport" app is an information and guidance tool for everyone involved in sport for children and young people. The app is aimed at creating greater awareness and understanding about safe-guarding and best practice principles in children's sport. There are four key areas of the app which can be accessed from the home screen:

**LEADER/COACH**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN**

**CLUB/ORGANISATION**

**CHILD/ YOUNG PERSON**

**Click to download the "Safe Sport" app →**

## GARDA VETTING (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016 provides a statutory basis for the vetting of persons carrying out relevant work with children or vulnerable persons. If you are seeking employment or intending to volunteer with an organisation or club which conducts relevant work, you may be asked to make an application to be vetted.

The Act stipulates that a relevant organisation shall not permit any person to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of the organisation unless the organisation receives a vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau in respect of that person. Further details on Garda Vetting are available on the [National Vetting Bureau website](#).

## **GARDA VETTING THROUGH TABLE TENNIS IRELAND**

There is a nominated Person for processing applications for TTI and all queries or applications can be sent to [info@tabletennisireland.ie](mailto:info@tabletennisireland.ie).

Applicants (over 18 years of age) complete the “NVB 1 Vetting Invitation Form”. If the applicant is under 18yrs old, they must also submit “NVB 3 Parent/Guardian Consent Form” signed by a parent/guardian. Applicants must review the “100 Points Document” and choose which documents they are submitting to meet the criteria. Copies of the documents must be submitted with your application.

The cost of processing an application is free for affiliated members of TTI and **€45 for non-members**.

A Step-by-Step guide on the Garda Vetting Process, along with the Invitation Forms, can be downloaded here:

**A Step-by-Step guide on the Garda Vetting Process →**

## **ACCESS NI THROUGH TABLE TENNIS ULSTER**

Regulated activity involves working frequently (once a week or more) or unsupervised with children. For example, you work in regulated activity if you: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children. An Enhanced Disclosure check for regulated activity will include a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which keeps lists of people who are unsuitable for working with children.

When appointing staff or engaging volunteers to work with children and young people, employers need to obtain an AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure check to ensure that the individual is not barred from working with children and young people.

When applying for an AccessNI check, Table Tennis Ulster require all applicants to complete an application form and produce identification. The application form can be accessed [here](#).

1. Log onto AccessNI website @ [www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni).
2. Select the option – Apply for an enhanced check through a registered body.
3. Register your details by creating a user ID and password.
4. Once you have created a new account, AccessNI will forward you an email advising that a new account has been created.
5. Log onto to your account and follow the online instructions, select ‘Apply for Disclosure Certificate’ and the ‘Enhanced’ option.
6. During the process you will require a Registered Body name (TTU) and PIN (470445).
7. Complete the remainder of the online form and click on SUBMIT to finish the process.
8. Once the process is complete you will be given a ten-digit reference number – make a note of the reference number.
9. The form will then be checked by TTU’s Safeguarding Officer and forwarded to AccessNI for processing.



## SUPERVISION

There should be two adults present during all children's activities and when mixed gender activities are taking place and where practicable, there should be one male and one female adult present. All children's activities must always have the proper adult supervision. From the perspectives of safeguarding, health and safety and to reduce/minimise any potential risk of injury to a child or young people, while ensuring adequate cover remains in case of an emergency, when working with children and young people, Sport Ireland have recommended the following ratios:

### UNDER 12 YEARS

**1 SUPERVISOR PER 8 CHILDREN/YOUNG PERSONS**

### 12 YEARS AND OVER

**1 SUPERVISOR PER 10 CHILDREN/YOUNG PERSONS**

[Table Tennis Ireland child protection policies →](#)

# DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE CLUB

Sport and physical activity are central to the fabric of life on the Island of Ireland. As citizens, people with disabilities have a right to be active within their local communities. TTI supports an inclusive approach to club operations and development throughout the Island of Ireland. Clubs wishing to start as, or to become, inclusive can receive support from a number of external agencies such as Active Disability Ireland in the ROI, Disability Sport NI, Local Sports Partnerships in the ROI and District Councils in NI. Within TTI clubs will find support from the Para Committee, while Table Tennis Ulster have a specific Participation & Inclusion Officer to provide advice. [Contact us here](#) for Table Tennis Ulster clubs.

## ACTIVE DISABILITY IRELAND

Active Disability Ireland (ADI) is a pan-disability sport organisation for the ROI providing a collaborative and partnership platform to increase sport and physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities across Ireland. ADI can provide training and education workshops in disability inclusion, sport inclusion and autism in sport. The two main features of ADI support for clubs are the Support Inclusion Disability Charter, which is a mark or standard of excellence for inclusive clubs. Secondly, ADI provides the Xcessible Club Toolkit as a guided resource to empower clubs to provide meaningful participation opportunities to people with disabilities. Further information on these can be found on the [website here](#).



# ADI SPORT INCLUSION DISABILITY CHARTER

As citizens of this state, people with disabilities have a right to be active within their local communities. The Sport Inclusion Disability Charter outlines the five key areas that organisations should consider in order to facilitate physical activity and healthy lifestyles for all individuals with disabilities. Sport is vital to all individuals; therefore, many organisations should consider the implementation of the Sport Inclusion Disability Charter.

- **Openness** – Organisations need to be understanding and considerate of any individuals with a disability wanting to participate in Sport.
- **People** – Provide training for staff/volunteers to facilitate the inclusion of individuals with disabilities.
- **Activities** – Development and delivery of inclusive sport for all individuals with a disability.
- **Facilities** – Review and alter facilities and equipment to allow for better access and inclusion for individuals with a disability.
- **Promotion** – Organisations promote the inclusive nature of their activities, in a variety of formats. Promote that their sport is an inclusive sport for all individuals.

## DISABILITY SPORT NI

Disability Sport NI is Northern Ireland's main disability sports charity working to improve the health and wellbeing of disabled people through sport and active recreation. To inspire, facilitate and encourage people with disabilities to participate in sport and active recreation by engaging with disabled people and the broader community, by delivering inclusive training and by promoting the social model of disability. Disability Sport NI's Inclusive Club Award is a fantastic opportunity to recognise and celebrate sports clubs that positively include people with disabilities in the club environment. The development of Progressive Disability Sports Hubs, inclusive training and education courses are provided.

[Disability Sport NI website →](#)

## LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIPS (ROI)

Each Local Sports Partnership has a Sports Inclusion Disability Officer to assist clubs with measures to increase the participation in sport of people with disabilities. These measures range from promotional, material to financial.

## LOCAL COUNCILS (NI)

Each council has a Disability Officer, who works closely with Disability NI in relation to promoting greater participation and inclusion of people with disabilities. There are also sports advisors to assist athletes playing at representative levels through grant assistance.

## PARALYMPICS IRELAND

Para Table Tennis is the third largest Paralympic sport in terms of athlete numbers and is practiced in over 100 countries. Para Table Tennis allows someone with a physical impairment, intellectual disability or autism to compete in the sport. Players with a physical impairment can compete in sitting (Classes 1-5) or standing (Classes 6-10) classes. Those with an intellectual disability or autism can compete in class 11. Players can compete in individual, doubles or team events.

TTI is a member of Paralympics Ireland. They are the National Paralympic Committee (NPC) for Ireland, which is recognised by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC). They provide support and advice to us in the development of high-performance and development structures for athletes with a disability. Paralympics Ireland gives top performing athletes the opportunity to represent their country in the Paralympic Games. Further information on Para Table Tennis can be found on the [Paralympics Ireland website](#).

## TABLE TENNIS IRELAND PARA COMMITTEE

TTI has a Para committee who are available to offer support and advice to any club wishing to cater for players with a disability. Please contact [para@tabletennisireland.ie](mailto:para@tabletennisireland.ie) with any queries that you may have. The Para Committee comprises of each of the provincial Para representatives and others with an interest in the operation of Para table tennis activities within TTI and in the international arena also. Further details about the organization and activities of Para table tennis can be found on the TTI website [here](#).

## WOMEN IN SPORT

Female participation in sport is disproportionately low compared to male participation. TTI's Women in Sport Strategy is focused on improving the current lack of female participation in Irish Table Tennis and is aligned with TTI's Vision and Mission Statement in its Strategic Plan, and the Sport Ireland Women in Sport Policy. It aims to create equal opportunities for females and to attract them to take part, in various capacities, within the Sport of Table Tennis and retain their interest, leading to a lifelong involvement in sport.

The Women in Sport programme is focused on increasing female participation through collaboration with Local Sports Partnerships/Councils, Schools and other organisations, and will be linked to clubs with female specific training programmes and the evolution of female only events. A structured pathway will streamline differing sporting abilities into the most appropriate part of the sport to secure long-term commitment for the benefit both the participant and the sport.

## THE VISION

To create a structure and pathway to facilitate female participation in sport and to develop disciplines and skills which will benefit female athletes throughout their lives.

# AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

To help achieve this vision, we have established the following aims & objectives:

- **INCREASE PARTICIPATION** and membership in the sport – From “Newcomers to new Members”.
- **CREATE A CULTURE** of sport among females – Expand image of what ‘sporty’ means: “Being part of the community in a sporting environment”. It doesn’t always mean “Medals”!
- **DEVELOP STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS** specifically targeted at females – Give “Women a Voice & a Choice”.
- **DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS** and empowerment among females – Identify and support females to develop coaching, officiating and leadership roles.
- **IDENTIFY ROLE MODELS** to ensure long term sustainability – Feel a sense of pride, be recognised, and contribute to personal development.

## KEY AREAS TO PUT WIS STRATEGY INTO ACTION

Through provincial branches to work closely with clubs in delivering quality “Participant-Centred” projects at local level. Programmes will be designed to create a positive environment, ensure participants have an enjoyable experience, and events are organised to cater for all ages and abilities.

### ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Introduce the sport to young people to foster a “Sporting Culture” from a young age. Encourage and promote the sport to female adults to contribute to mental and physical well-being, thus increase the number of participants and create active communities.

### COACHING AND OFFICIATING

Provide support and training for female volunteers and parents; ensure gender balance in coaching and officiating and enhance capacity; increase number of female coaches and organisers at all levels to support growth in female participation in general.

### LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Build “Organisational Strengths and Capacity”. Work closely with Branches and clubs to establish Structures and Systems to underpin the WIS Development Pathway including players, coaches, officials, and volunteers. Offer Continuous Personal Development (CPD) training opportunities for female coaches, officials, and volunteers; build self-confidence and feel empowered, thus enhance their ability to fulfil leadership positions at each level of the organisation.

### VISIBILITY

Recognise and acknowledge the importance and contribution of females in table tennis. Explore opportunities to improve communication between Branches, Clubs and Members using digital platforms; promote WIS events, share outstanding performance and good practice to continue raising WIS profile.

For further information and support please [contact us here](#).

# REVENUE GENERATION

It is important to consider revenue generation (finance, funding, grants and sponsorship) in all clubs. Most clubs will ask their members to pay an annual subscription, the amount of which will depend on the activities of the club and will be decided at the Club AGM.

However, often clubs require alternative sources of funding for large expenditures such as equipment, clothing, special events etc. From time to time, the Network of Local Sports Partnerships (ROI) and Local Councils (NI) make grants available for club development. Other options of funding are listed below:

## CLUB MEMBERSHIP

When deciding the amount that will be charged for a club membership there are some factors to consider:

- **VENUE COSTS.** How much do you pay each month for rent? Are there light and heat expenses?
- **COST OF EQUIPMENT.** How much has the initial equipment cost, what equipment do you plan to purchase once feasible?
- **COACH COSTS.** Are you paying for a coach to cover classes? Will you need to pay for coach education, safeguarding, first aid training?
- **INSURANCE.** How much will insurance cost? If your club is affiliated with TTI, Insurance may be covered. Please [contact us here](#) to find out more.
- **CAPACITY OF THE CLUB.** How many participants can you cater for per session? How many sessions/ different groups can you cater for?
- **TTI AFFILIATION.** Members of a TTI affiliated club must also be individual members of TTI.

## GENERAL FUNDRAISING

Raising money in the club's locality should be an important part of any club's fundraising strategy. Apart from raising money, it also acts as publicity for your club and raises awareness of what your club has to offer.

There are many ways in which to carry out general fund raising such as:

- Sponsored challenges (e.g., walks, runs, treasure hunt).
- Bring a bag collection (e.g., clothing and mobile phones for recycling).
- Table quizzes and raffles.
- Bag packing in local supermarket.
- Club lottery.
- Social events (e.g., Fancy dress, barbeque, golf classic).

Encourage members involved to bring friends, family and neighbours along to increase the numbers. Supporters can be asked to contribute through donations, subscriptions, and sponsorship in advertising of the event.

## DONATIONS

This is where money or goods are donated with nothing expected in return. Money is often donated to help run certain events, or purchase goods such as sports equipment and local companies often give prizes for

social occasions. The key to receiving donations is to build a good relationship with potential donors, make sure to thank them publicly for their donation and not to ask them too often.

## SPONSORSHIP

Corporate sponsorship is an arrangement between a company and a voluntary or community organisation. The company funds either an event or project in return for the good publicity that it will receive. Sponsorship is not the same as a donation where a gift of money or goods is received without any expectation of return. Sponsorship is a form of marketing for many companies, and they will therefore expect a return such as a guarantee of publicity. Most companies allocate sponsorship once a year so contact them before you send in a proposal to see if they have used their annual budget or not. If it is already allocated, enquire as to when is the optimal time to make a future application. Also, ask if they have any set procedures or sponsorship policy so that you are aware of how the company likes to deal with potential sponsorship partners.

If any club members work for or have links with any companies, these should be approached first as the connection gives a good introduction to any proposal. If you are looking for a large amount of sponsorship, it can help to break these down into smaller sections and apply to various organisations. Research the companies that you are applying to. You are more likely to find a sponsor on your own doorstep so always include the local perspective. This works especially well with companies that are new in an area given that they are trying to build a local profile.

## APPLYING FOR FUNDING

TTI will endeavour to inform clubs of different funding streams, that become available throughout the year. We recommend that you contact your local sports partnership or local authority to ensure that you are notified of any local funding opportunities. Please note that there are different funding pots depending on location e.g. Northern Ireland/ Republic of Ireland.

Before you apply for funding consider the following:

1. Research your proposal before you begin and address it to someone specific in the company you're approaching.
2. Always follow up on a written proposal with a phone call to see if you can meet in person to go through your proposal.
3. Include any information that you feel may be relevant in supporting your application.
  - Club statistics (e.g., number of members, age groups, achievements).
  - Club Development Plan.
  - Publicity from prior events/competitions and highlight your club's website and social media platforms.
  - Benefit to your club due to the sponsorship received.
4. Adapt your application to the specifics of the company/funding agency that you are applying to.
5. Show that you are planning for the long-term development of the club. Companies especially want to see the legacy that their funding will be used for
6. When applying for government funding please read the eligibility criteria before starting your application.
7. Please be aware that in order to avail of certain funding initiatives your club must be affiliated to TTI.

If your application is successful, it is important to keep the company/funding agency informed of progress with regular updates. This creates a relationship that could lead to further funding at a later stage. Invite the company/funding agency as VIPs to a tournament, fundraiser or social event.

Even if your first application is not successful, ask for feedback on your application for future reference. Make sure to keep records of all funding applications, successful or not, as these can help with future applications. Don't come to rely solely on one sponsor as they may decide at some stage to withdraw the funding.

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# COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Good communication processes help manage, protect, and enhance the reputation of a club, its members and its services.

Some of the benefits of online communication are as follows:

- Build an image and raise awareness for your club.
- Reinforce and further your club's reputation.
- Encourage new membership.
- Educate and increase understanding of athletes/participants.
- Is mainly low cost and you can reach a wide audience.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

The use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram & X can benefit your club by enabling users to interact with the club easily and directly in a less formal matter than a club web-site. It is an excellent, low-cost way to engage the community and build publicity for your club.

Social media platforms enable the club to post photos, training reminders, social events and engage in general conversation with a target group of people who are directly interested in what the club is doing. It is possible to receive social media updates on your phone or tablet which makes it very useful for people on the move.

Find a sample social media policy in [Appendix 7 Sample Social media policy](#).

## FACEBOOK

This is an application that allows a club to maintain a friends list and choose privacy settings to tailor who can see what is on your profile. It allows you to post content such as comments, links and videos along with giving you the ability to upload photos and maintain photo albums that can be shared with group

members and friends. Facebook supports groups and pages, allowing organisations to effectively use Facebook as a vehicle for social media marketing. On setting up a business page, users then have the option to 'Like' your page. Facebook then provides insights on those who like and view your page content, allowing you to make more concise decisions and tailor your posts to suit your target audience.

## INSTAGRAM

This is a visual platform to help you form a more personal connection with members. You can share pictures and videos of your club with members to engage your audience. A visual feed can reflect your brand's uniqueness and differentiate your club. They do say a picture is worth a thousand words!

# GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING CLUB MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION PLANS

## MARKETING PLAN

1. Timeline – set out a 12-month timeline of key events and decide how you are going to get the events to the relevant audience at least 2 months ahead of the event or programme. This timeline should be a combination of specific events/programme launches club and community development initiatives, competitions etc.
2. Branding – make sure the club logo is front and centre on all communication along with relevant Branch/TTI /partner Logo also if required. Ensure this is always the case to keep the branding consistent across all platforms. Need to remember to make things as visual as possible, eye catching, use keywords, have a call to action, and use consistent agreed hashtags. #SportForAll #SportForLife #TTInTheCommunity
3. If possible, use local contacts (LSPS) and other community events to help market the event or project awareness – leverage contacts / generate leads or ideas – generate an awareness of the programme/ project/ the club itself in the local community/branches' links with local sports partnerships, local councils, clubs, community groups (LGBTI, Intergenerational, Age opportunity etc.) community Garda (list is not exhaustive).
4. As early as possible (2/3 months) have the marketing ready for your event – social media /blogs/ proactive outreach / count down to a big announcement - create a buzz and a call to action – give the audience a reason to click on the website link to sign up for an event or programme.
5. Event launch – email/ press releases / blogs & social media/ partnerships list all those who will get the press release. Guide how to write a simple press release – [click here](#).  
All press releases to be checked before release.
6. Once launched, on a day-to-day basis promote the event or the opportunity, early bird discounts, regular email blogs, competitions, camp/programme is filling up fast etc.
7. Finally, just before the event or start of the project – Last call – final email blast / social media /blogs/ attendee referrals/phone/influencer outreach – do we have an ambassador or a big name to help promote?



## COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (INCLUDING SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION)

1. All news items and promotions, awareness should be uploaded to the website and social media should direct the audience there. Keep as visual as possible.
2. Follow news agendas for opportunities that may be useful to promote activities or programmes e.g. other Table Tennis or local community initiatives that we can link to?
3. Capitalise on any coverage – other people's news or our own and blow our own trumpet whenever possible.
4. Know our news stories – good news angles, charity, celebrity, sporting hero, key milestones of the project or event – a local celebrity plays Table tennis.
5. Run competitions and giveaways. Example: to generate traffic to the website for competition entry or membership sign up, good for data capture for future use and just generating awareness for future projects.
6. Plan (6 to 12 months) pick out key publications (local – list) you may want to send comms on events, key opportunities – plan these 2 to 3 months in advance of the actual event and put in timelines. E.G – initial advert 2 months out with regular weekly reminders to book.
7. Develop relationships with any key partners and use their comms outlets also and make sure the message is consistent with branding on all platforms /media online or print. E.g. Local Council or Local sports partnership.

## MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION GENERAL POLICIES

1. **Club branding.** Website and any other marketing material should include the logo and any partner logos. **Club brand to stand out the most.**
2. Branding should be consistent across all communications – flyers (graphics pack could be developed) all social media platforms include club logo as a priority and the event being promoted. Posters, flyers and print or online material should be the same layout, (Canva is simple and easy to use) all the time. What we want to create is a recognisable brand and if we constantly change the posters each time then we will lose the identity of the club brand.
3. **Social media.** Develop an effective social media plan (to support social media work) in conjunction with additional training around social media identified as and when for volunteer communications officer.
4. Encourage the use of google reviews (check Google business profile) and use of Microsoft or Google forms, using QR codes or other such links following events/ programmes and getting feedback which can also be used in releases and promotional materials.
5. What should we share and like through our social media and/or our website:

**MUST BE A STRONG LINK TO TT - CUSTOMER /LOCAL GROUP/LSP**

**TTI AND BRANCH INITIATIVES / PROGRAMMES WIS ETC**

**LOCAL WELLBEING OR COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

**MAIN PROFILE PICTURE - LOGO**

**BACKGROUND PICTURE - PLAYERS IN ACTION (ENSURE PERMISSIONS FOR PHOTOS ARE SOUGHT)**



# YOUR CLUB DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A club development plan is a very important tool for a club to succeed in being viable and expanding its' membership. A club development plan will provide a template to build, strengthen and improve the structure of the club and ensure that it can cater for the needs of its members. The process of preparing a plan will involve an analysis of the club's current situation. This is a fundamental piece of planning which a committee should undertake. The process of planning should promote healthy discussion among members and identify areas for improvement that may not have been apparent or feasible previously.

A development plan provides a focus for club activities and ensures that the members are working towards a common purpose and can serve to re-energise the members. Club membership can be on the rise but there could be a high turnover amongst members, but only in a particular category e.g., teenagers. Clubs need to consider this and implement strategies to retain members.

When applying for funding, a club development plan will greatly enhance any application, as it will demonstrate that a club is organised and that any funding received is part of a long-term and sustainable scheme. Drawing up this plan does not need to be a long or complicated process. Involve as many people as possible in order to include the views of all involved in the club. The following three questions will get the discussion started:

**WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

**WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?**

**HOW DO WE GET THERE?**

This process will involve creating an overall strategy to take the club forward. The first step will be to analyse the current situation. A SWOT analysis is a useful tool to assist in this process. SWOT stands for:

**S**

## **STRENGTHS E.G.**

The club may have a large number of volunteers.

**W**

## **WEAKNESSES E.G.**

Only a few qualified coaches so may only be able to deliver a small number of training sessions per week.

**O**

## **OPPORTUNITIES E.G.**

potential to establish annual fundraiser to boost club finances.

**T**

## **THREATS E.G.**

club may close for a period during the year and some members may not return when it reopens.

This will assist in getting a comprehensive picture of the environment that the club finds itself in. To develop your club, it is a good idea to carry out an analysis of the club's current position and review periodically. This will give an idea of areas that are progressing well and highlight areas which need improvement. These areas can be listed and prioritized by the committee.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT

The following questions could be used when establishing where the club is now:

1. Do we have enough coaches?
2. Do we offer events which suit all our members or just a small section?
3. Do we have sufficient volunteers?
4. Do we have sufficient facilities/equipment?
5. Are we adequately catering for all sections of our membership e.g., young children, teen-agers, adults, masters, people with disabilities etc.?
6. Are we retaining our membership? What is our renewal percentage?
7. Are we efficient enough in fundraising, etc.?
8. Do we have appropriate links with local schools?
9. Do we have a proper PR strategy?
10. Is there a system in place to develop highly talented and young prospects?
11. Are coaches continually updating their qualifications?
12. How can we get more parents to volunteer, e.g., as officials, committee members?

# CLUB OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the club need to be agreed on by the committee and can be split into short, medium or long-term goals. It would be worthwhile if the club developed a “Vision” of where the club wants to be in the future. The matters which arose during the SWOT analysis should help to develop the aims and objectives.

**1**

## SHORT TERM GOALS

may relate to the current competition season or similar timescale.

**2**

## MEDIUM TERM GOALS

may relate to this season and the following two years.

**3**

## LONG TERM GOALS

may relate to the current competition season or similar timescale.

# ACTION PLAN

A club should create an action plan which lists the actions to be taken, with each action having a deadline associated with it. This will keep the committee focused and ensure that all the aims and objectives are delivered. Each action may have multiple steps to be taken before that action is complete. Responsibility for each step or action should be assigned to a committee member. This eliminates ambiguity about who needs to deliver each step or action.

Find a Sample Club Development Plan template in [Appendix 7 Sample Club Development Plan](#).

# LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIPS AND NI SPORT FORUMS

## LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIPS (ROI)

The network of Local Sports Partnerships supports the development of all clubs that are located within the boundary lines of their county in the Republic of Ireland. They can provide assistance and information on several areas as outlined below:

### CLUB PROMOTION

Your club details can be promoted for individuals looking to get in touch with your club through their website, social media and database etc.

### GRANTS & FUNDING

Local Sports Partnerships can make clubs aware of grant programmes and offer advice on how best to make a successful application. It is recommended that you contact your local partnership to be included on their register of clubs to avail of this.

### TRAINING COURSES

**SAFEGUARDING 1** (Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness Course – 3 hour duration).

This course is aimed at all coaches and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults. This course educates participants on the implementation of best practice in protecting the welfare of children involved in sport.

**SAFEGUARDING 2** (Club Children's Officer - 3 hour duration).

This course is aimed at the person appointed to the position of Club Children's Officer. You must have completed Safeguarding 1 to be eligible to attend this course. This course will help the Club Children's Officer to carry out the duties of their position and support the implementation of best practice in their club.

**SAFEGUARDING 3** (Designated Liaison Person – 3 hour Duration).

This course is aimed at the person appointed to the position of Designated Liaison Person. You must have completed Safeguarding 1 to be eligible to attend this course. This course will help the Designated Liaison Person to carry out the duties of their position and support the Club Children's Officer.

**SPORT FIRST AID** (8 hr duration).

This course covers a range of first aid issues that can arise in a sporting environment.

**DISABILITY INCLUSION** (6hr duration).

This course provides participants with knowledge, skills and ideas on how to adapt and modify your sport sessions to make them more accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities.

**AUTISM IN SPORT** (3hr Duration).

This course provides attendees with an understanding of Autism focusing on the delivery of sport. Recognise and understand key areas of difference as well as looking at practical strategies to include people with autism in sport.

**HOW DO I CONTACT MY LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIP?**

The Sport Ireland LSP Contact Finder has a list of how to get in touch with your LSP.

[Sport Ireland LSP Contact Finder →](#)

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES (NI)

A number of local authorities exist in N. Ireland and are organised on a District Council basis.

These provide generally similar assistance as the LSP mentioned above. They are the recognised umbrella organisation for the voluntary sector of sport in Northern Ireland and act as the Independent Voice of Voluntary Sport in Northern Ireland.

Their website has all the relevant information about how they assist Sport in NI.

[Northern Ireland Sports Forum →](#)

There is also a Female Sports Forum organisation, based alongside the NISF which also liaises with sports promoting female sport.

[Female Sports Forum organisation →](#)

[Contact NI Sports Forum for more information →](#)



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# USEFUL WEBSITES

[Table Tennis Ireland →](#)

[Sport Northern Ireland →](#)

[Table Tennis Munster →](#)

[Paralympics Ireland →](#)

[Table Tennis Ulster →](#)

[Active Disability Ireland →](#)

[European Table Tennis Federation →](#)

[Local Sports Partnership Finder →](#)

[International Table Tennis Federation →](#)

[Sports Forum Northern Ireland →](#)

[Sport Ireland →](#)