

ENGLAND TOUCH ASSOCIATION



2017 ANNUAL REPORT





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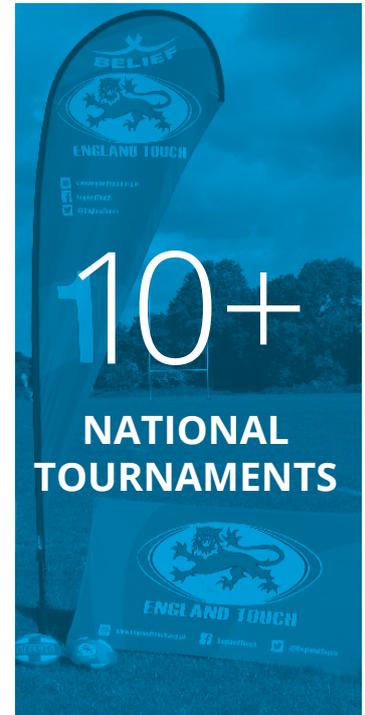
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As we close the door on 2017, it's my pleasure to introduce this year's Annual Report as we look back with a sense of pride in what has been achieved over the past 12 months, and look forward with hope and optimism for our sport's continued progression.

Since first becoming involved in England Touch since 2011, I've seen it grow from an amateur group of individuals to a progressive and professional national governing body in a relatively short period of time. I'm both immensely proud and fortunate to have played my part along the way.

Behind the scenes, last season was a personal struggle. We lost numerous individuals in key roles, which we didn't manage to backfill in time to run the season. However, through a small group of helpful clubs and committed volunteers we still made a success of it and that's testament to the collective community spirit of our sport.

Following this, a huge and directed recruitment drive occurred and this will most definitely come to fruition in the coming year. Our strategic plan is being finalised, which will focus on our people, opportunities to participate, sustainability and delivery.

With no major international events in this period, we focussed our efforts on the newly-created EFT Permit events to develop our male and female athletes, along with our coaching network. This also gave an opportunity to create and send Europe's first dedicated university teams, the England Scholars, to the Championship Permit tournament in France. Our Senior and Masters players headed to Edinburgh competing in the Senior Touch Championships, picking up multiple gold medals, while our Junior players were out in

force throughout the year, with the largest trials attendance ever. Those lucky enough to pull on the England Jersey headed to Dublin and had top three finishes in every division.

We had a number of coaches further develop their knowledge, as they headed to Australia's National Touch Leagues, which will reap rewards in the coming years. We've opened a new England Touch League in the south west, giving additional opportunities to play in the region. We have been recognised by the Sport and Recreation Alliance for our good governance principles and showcased as glowing example and we've added our expertise at Twickenham, as part of the O2Touch takeover at the national stadium.

In recent times our development has occurred somewhat organically in both our regions and in our clubs, with little direction from England Touch as an organisation. While this has been great to watch and is something we are looking to harness further in the future, we have also recognised the need for more structural support. Having an effective regional structure is part of our bigger strategy going forwards, which will help us divest more responsibility and drive local growth across the country. We are aiming to set up more formal 'Regional Hubs', and will also be distributing club toolkits to help all our clubs, especially those who are newer to the Touch family, with their development.



CEO REPORT

GREGG CROPPER



Financially, we have been building cash reserves to ensure we are able to sustain as an Association, along with look at how and where to re-invest. We're working hard on creating simpler and more efficient processes, and finance planning and clearer budgeting is high on the priorities.

We are continually growing our membership base, while improving and rationalising our offers year upon year, which is reflected in the numbers.

Our events are at an all-time high in terms of quality, quantity and engagement, with new venues each year and new teams joining the ranks. The Touch Nationals further expanded, breaking into two weekends, as the number of categories and teams have grown substantially. To put this into context, this year saw an astonishing 61 teams compete across 11 categories.

We are now into the final months before the European Touch Championships come to England, and plans are already afoot to make this the biggest International event in the sport's history, in terms of both number of teams and countries entering. The Euros are being staged at Nottingham University, and with the location right in the middle of the country it would be fantastic to see as many members contribute both on the field and as a volunteer to make it a successful and memorable weekend.

The commercial offerings are continually developing, with lots of partnerships flourishing. Our plans to get more Touch being played and coached at the grassroots and younger ends of the supply line is about to come to fruition, with junior leagues and clubs opening around the country, along with our national schools tournament progressing.

We have made some great strides forward in terms of our robust governance, financial stability, recruitment and retention of volunteers, breadth and depth of player base, along with

our extended reach of our partnerships and communications.

With all that said, much opportunity awaits, and we are working diligently in continuing to move forward in our diversity and inclusivity, breadth and depth of our board expertise as we build our strategy and put plans into action to deliver it.

England Touch has gone through and is still going through impressive growth and not surprisingly the growing pains that are often associated with such a monumental shift have been challenging. Nevertheless, we are in an exciting phase in our history for us all at England Touch as we look forward to building on the success we've enjoyed on the international stage and developing our sport at all levels from grassroots to the elite end.

From a personal perspective I'm relishing the incredible opportunity I've been given as England Touch's new Chief Operating Officer – the first full-time paid position in our history – to play an integral role in our development and I'm looking forward to making a big contribution this year and beyond and excited to see what the future holds.





OUR 2018 BOARD



David Christophi



David Jenkins



Geraint Thomason



Paula Robertson

In late 2017 England Touch conducted an extensive recruitment process for a group of Non-Executive Directors who would have the skills, knowledge and expertise to help the Association achieve all its ambitions, whether related to grassroots development, international success, or commercial sustainability.

David Christophi, David Jenkins, Geraint Thomason and Paula Robertson bring with them a wealth of experience across a range of sectors, and all of them are excited about England Touch's future and helping with the Association's strategic plans.

RETIRING DIRECTORS



Natalie Davis



Mark James



Chris Martin

The 2018 Annual General Meeting marked the retirement of Natalie Davis and Mark James as Non-Executive Directors.

Natalie and Mark, along with Chris Martin, who stepped down in late 2017, were our first ever

Non-Executive Directors and have played a substantial part in helping us begin our strategic journey.

From a personal perspective I would like to thank all of them for their support, help and guidance over the past year, and England Touch as a whole owes them a massive 'thank you'.

Natalie, Mark and Chris will remain familiar faces. Natalie is a player and referee, Mark will remain a source of advice, while Chris's company, Team Kinetic, will support our volunteer management with their software.

GREGG CROPPER COO

NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

Following the 2017 Annual General Meeting, which solidified our new governance framework, the Non-Executive Directors have been busy working behind the scenes to continuously improve the structures and processes which underpin the delivery of all our activities.

Our biggest change has seen the introduction of a new Chief Operations Officer role, the first full-time paid position at England Touch. The sport has experienced significant growth in recent years and the Board agreed that remunerating a member of staff was critical to the ongoing success of the organisation. Our new COO, Gregg Cropper, is now responsible for leading and strategically managing all business operations, working closely with our volunteers to ensure we continue to deliver a high-quality service for all our members.

Alongside Gregg, we have been able to appoint to almost all of the vacant Board level positions and we are developing new policies and codes of conduct to ensure that the sport is run as effectively and efficiently as possible. The new Articles of Association adopted at last year's AGM has provided us with a strong foundation and enabled England Touch to be in a position to work towards the Tier 3 requirements of the Code for Sports Governance. This will be an important next step for the recognition of the sport.

This COO appointment builds on the huge amount of work that is already undertaken by our volunteer workforce. Indeed, England Touch will continue to rely on the dedication and support of its volunteers who are absolutely integral to the success of the sport. In recognition of the hard work of our volunteers, the Board agreed to use unused funds that had been ring-fenced for the COO role to give one-off financial rewards to those volunteers who had gone above and beyond for England Touch in 2017.

Going forwards, we are recruiting a Head of Volunteers to develop a strategy to focus on recruiting, retaining and rewarding our volunteers and to ensure we are drawing on a diverse range of talent and expertise across the organisation.

Looking ahead, 2018 is set to be an exciting year for England Touch, as we host the European Touch Championships in Nottingham. We're really excited about bringing together the best touch players from around Europe to compete at the highest level and celebrate our fantastic sport. We also plan to focus more on developing our programmes in schools and universities to expand opportunities for more young people to get involved in Touch.

We have recently recruited four new Non-Executive Directors to the Board who, between them, have a huge range of professional skills and experience. We are very happy to be leaving England Touch in such safe hands and we look forward to seeing the sport continue to go from strength to strength over the coming years.

NATALIE DAVIS, MARK JAMES, CHRIS MARTIN

OUTGOING NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

WE'VE GOT A DEDICATED GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS HERE TO HELP YOU.
HEAD TO WWW.ENGLANDTOUCH.ORG.UK/CONTACT TO GET IN TOUCH!

HIGH PERFORMANCE



Anthony Atherton
High Performance Director

DEVELOPMENT



Ian Boyd
Development Director



Lois Lau
Head of Elite Logistics

Sammie Phillips
Head of Elite Performance



Harry Grocott
Universities Manager

Tom Humphreys
Schools Liaison Officer

MEDICAL



Cari Thope
Head of Medical, Sports Science and Performance

GOVERNANCE



Julia Kang
Disclosure and Barring Manager

THE TEAM

REFEREES



Nicolas Van De Rijt
Referee Manager

FINANCE



Simon Quarshie
Finance Director



Mark Aldous
Accounts Manager

EVENTS



Zoe Malarkey
Events Manager



Charlie Meredith
Events Assistant

MEMBERSHIPS



Rich King
Memberships, Insurance and Affiliation Manager

COURSES

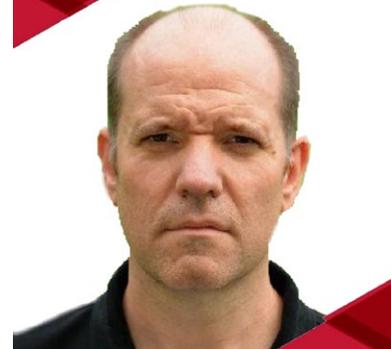


Robin Budd
Coaching Courses Manager



Mike Green
Referee Courses Manager

MARKETING AND PR



Chris Wearmouth
Marketing and PR Manager



The England Touch Association is a not for profit association, a limited by guarantee company, which exists as an association in financial terms for the benefit of its affiliated members.

The results are prepared for the 12-month period from October 1st, 2016 to September 30th, 2017. This has been done to better align with the Touch season and allow the financial changes within a season to be captured within a single reporting period.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

Player contributions and kit sales funded travel, accommodation and kit costs. With no World Cups or European Championships in 2017, the majority of these incomes and expenditures relate to the newly formed EFT Permits. It is the ETA's policy to re-charge high performance campaign costs back to participating players without generating any surplus or deficit.

The increase in the membership base due to growing popularity of touch and addition of the University Touch Series has resulted in increasing revenues. With more events operated and run by the ETA, there has also been healthy growth in the related revenues.

HIGH PERFORMANCE AND EVENTS

High Performance encompasses the annual Touch Nationals competition and the international tournaments. Despite there being no World Cup or European Championships, 2017 included the Junior Touch Championships in Dublin, the EFT Permits in Scotland and France, as well as the Senior Touch Championships in Edinburgh, thereby allowing further development

of the High Performance playing base.

The High Performance financial strategy is to provide the best value for money for the elite player base, while ensuring tournament logistics to enable the Elite teams to achieve the best possible performance. The approach taken to High Performance events is for the costs of events to be funded by its participants.

2017 saw the growth of the University Touch Series, which, in addition to the National Touch Series, Challenge Touch Series and Development Touch series, added a further dimension to the ETA's portfolio of events, thus providing another source of sustainable income.

MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION

ETA membership revenues have continued to grow as membership and affiliation increases allowing the association to have a robust operating model with income being generated from a more diverse base.

SPONSORSHIP

Generating a sustainable income from sponsorship is an essential part of the ETA's strategy to support its activities and to reduce the costs borne by players. The Association has a range of sponsorship and partnership opportunities that it will be pursuing over the coming months for both England Touch as a whole and the European Touch Championships.

FINANCE REPORT



FINANCIAL POSITION AND LIQUIDITY

As the ETA concentrates on continuing to grow, it is critical that any calculated investment is supported by a robust underlying financial model. Central to this is the ability of the ETA to generate sufficient funds to cover its outgoings, and that the source of these funds is sufficiently certain to ensure the future sustainability of the ETA's activities.

In addition, the ETA must maintain appropriate financial liquidity to provide security into the future, as well as covering the working capital cycles associated with the activities of the ETA. Budgets have been consolidated to ensure easier reconciliation along with tighter reporting and a charter of accounts, using standardised descriptions on all requisitions.

Payment policies for the systems used are being re-developed, so clear rules are set and abided by throughout the association.

The ETA's total cash position has decreased from £110,549 to £101,098 despite growth in membership and event revenues. The most significant contributing factor was a payment of approximately £24,000 from the previous financial year which fell due in this financial year.

FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT

As we expand our activities, the range and magnitude of risk exposure continues to increase. To address this, the ETA is developing a

risk management framework to identify key risks and implement suitable controls and insurances to reduce the likelihood and potential impact of the risks identified. These financial controls include:

- Stronger transactional control processes
- Improved budgeting, forecasting and financial reporting
- Identification of key non-financial risks

OUTLOOK FOR 2018

The overall financial objective for 2018 is to continue to grow revenue streams and re-invest in growth of membership and participation. The 2018 European Championships will provide an opportunity to showcase our sport and it is hoped that the success of the event will help further increase the growth in participation, as well as provide further opportunities for additional revenue streams such as sponsorship.

The stronger financial position will enable the ETA to fund a Chief Operations Officer, its first fully paid role, in order to help deliver a more sustainable organisation.

January 2018



ACCOUNTS

	High Performance	Events	Executive	Total
Income				
Player contributions	83,616	0	0	83,616
Kit sales	5,616	0	0	5,616
Sponsorships	0	0	4,500	4,500
Membership and affiliation	0	0	28,383	28,383
Events and tournaments	0	84,790	0	84,790
Courses	1,754	0	0	1,754
Other income	0	0	8,754	8,754
	<u>90,986</u>	<u>84,790</u>	<u>41,637</u>	<u>217,412</u>
Expenditure				
HP participation costs	(105,958)	0	0	(105,958)
Kit costs	(18,107)	0	0	(18,107)
Staff and volunteer expenses	(6,773)	0	(16,504)	(23,278)
Event and tournament costs	0	(63,169)	0	(63,169)
Courses	(701)	0	0	(701)
Other costs	0	0	0	0
Insurance	0	0	(4,125)	(4,125)
Website and IT	0	0	(5,659)	(5,659)
Legal, professional and accounting	0	0	(3,013)	(3,013)
Bank and other fees	0	0	(72)	(72)
Sundry	0	0	(384)	(384)
Equipment	0	0	(2,399)	(2,399)
	<u>(131,539)</u>	<u>(63,169)</u>	<u>(32,156)</u>	<u>(226,863)</u>
	<u>(40,553)</u>	<u>21,621</u>	<u>9,481</u>	<u>(9,451)</u>

Membership growth remains extremely strong in terms of both individual members and broader clubs and leagues.

The number of individual members rose by 23 percent between 2016 and 2017 and now stands at just under 1,300 full members of the England Touch Association. This does not include students who only play in the University Touch Series, a tournament which has also grown exponentially year-on-year.

While the number of clubs that are only affiliated to England Touch has remained the same at 47, the number of University clubs has increased by 50 percent, while the number of O2 Touch Centres who have taken up affiliation with England Touch has doubled.

Meanwhile the number of Leagues – specifically regularly scheduled inter-team competitions run over multiple weeks – has increased from 25 to 27. This number reflects affiliated league operators, with each venue individually affiliated.

Touch remains one of the country's most gender-equal sports, with a 61/39 percentage split between male and female full individual members. In the 25-34 age bracket this breakdown is even more equal, with a 54/46 percent split between male and female members, while there is a 58/42 percent male/female split among our full student members.

While the gender balance of our coaches (79/21 percent) and referees (72/28 percent) is continually improving, there is more to do to ensure we are developing women and girls in both these areas.

Age-wise there are similar numbers in each of the 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34 and 35-39 age groups, with healthy numbers in the 40-and-over age group, another statistic which shows Touch's unique appeal.



MEMBERSHIP



2018

The England Touch Association has announced a streamlined membership structure for 2018.

This streamlining has been implemented both to make the process more straightforward for members and to help the ETA administer what is a rapidly growing membership base.

From January 1st, 2018, there will be one flat price for full individuals, whether you are a player, referee, coach or medic. There will be no supplementary membership fees to add additional categories to your package.

Furthermore the ETA is confirming frozen prices for all club, league, and event memberships.

There is a small increase in individual membership prices for the first time in three years, but members are assured that all revenues are being invested into the ETA's work growing the sport at all levels.

Full individual membership is required by all players, referees, coaches and medics wishing to participate in more than one England Touch event in 2018, including Touch Nationals and tournaments involving England's Elite teams.

One-off membership is available for individuals wishing to participate in a single event in 2018, but this can only be ordered once in any calendar year.

Other notable membership benefits include:

All members are covered by Public and Products Liability and Professional Indemnity insurances; all individual members aged between 14 and 70 and resident in the British Isles also benefit from Personal Accident insurance.

Clubs have their DBS costs included, along with one complimentary place at a Level 1 referee course, access to other development days and specialist coaching from the ETA, and support from the ETA to promote their competitions and other events.

RICH KING MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS MANAGER

Email Membership@EnglandTouch.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP PACKAGES 2018

PLAYERS, REFEREES, COACHES, MEDICS

FULL MEMBERSHIPS

NEW FLAT FEE FOR PLAYERS, COACHES, REFEREES & MEDICS!

INDIVIDUALS £20

OVERSEAS PLAYERS £20

STUDENTS (18-23) £14

JUNIORS (U18) £8

Individuals wishing to play in all England Touch competitions, including Touch Nationals and for Elite teams

Referees wishing to officiate in all England Touch competitions. Does not apply to referees not resident in the UK

Coaches wishing to coach England Elite or Touch Nationals teams

All members are covered by Public and Products Liability and Professional Indemnity insurances; Personal Accident insurance for all British Isles members aged between 14 and 70. Full details are at www.EnglandTouchInsurance.co.uk

For a full list of benefits and to pay online visit www.EnglandTouch.org.uk/individual-membership

UTS STUDENTS £5

Individuals wishing to play in the University Touch Series

ONE-OFF INDIVIDUALS £8

Individuals wishing to play in one England Touch club competition event. This option is only valid for one event per calendar year





CLUBS

PRICES FROZEN IN 2018!

FULL CLUB MEMBERSHIPS £150

UNIVERSITY CLUB £80

SCHOOL CLUB £0

Clubs wishing to take part in events run or hosted by England Touch

Insurance and welfare cover. Full details are at www.EnglandTouchInsurance.co.uk

DBS costs included

Representation within England Touch with voting rights at the Annual General Meeting

Promotion and marketing of club activities and events on the England Touch website, social media channels, etc

One complimentary place on a Level 1 Referee course, and access to development days, education pathways, and specialist coaching days provided by England Touch

FIT and EFT affiliation, governance support regarding safeguarding, equality, inclusion and judiciary matters

Access to England Touch trained referees, coaches and medical staff

For full benefits and to pay online visit www.EnglandTouch.org.uk/club-membership

League and event operators' memberships also available

GOT A QUESTION?

Email Membership@EnglandTouch.org.uk



**DATA
PRIVACY**
ADVISORY SERVICE



**IS YOUR BUSINESS READY FOR THE NEW
DATA PROTECTION ACT AND THE GDPR?**

DATA PRIVACY ADVICE & GUIDANCE

Providing your organisation with an experienced, independent and certified Data Protection Officer through our Data Protection Officer managed services.

Helping your organisation on the road to GDPR compliance through expert advice and guidance, audits, gap analysis, legal & technical assistance, fully compliant GDPR toolkit and virtual DPO services. ,

Offering your organisation DPAS certified Data Protection Officer training, staff awareness training, DPIA training and breach notification training.

**PROUDLY SUPPORTING ENGLAND TOUCH
ENSURING YOUR INFORMATION IS KEPT
SAFE**



SPONSORSHIP



England Touch continues to have good relationships with the Association's long-standing partners, and in 2018 will be actively seeking to grow the sponsorship family for the benefit of the sport as a whole.

BELIEF SPORTS

In addition to supporting the 2017 National Touch Series, Belief Sports has extended its relationship by providing the England Touch national team's leisurewear range as well as the on-pitch apparel.

The deal agreed in 2017 also extended Belief's relationship to include the regional teams at the Touch Nationals, with England Touch also receiving a percentage of all leisurewear sales.

SPORTTAPE

SPORTTAPE remains an important member of the England Touch group of sponsors, and will be an official supplier for the European Touch Championships and our elite national teams.

STEEDEN

The world's biggest provider of Touch balls, STEEDEN has signed a new agreement to be headline official sponsors of the new England Touch National Development Touch Series. STEEDEN will remain as the official ball supplier of England's elite teams and of the 2018 European Touch Championships.

KILSBY WILLIAMS

In 2017 England Touch signed an exclusive agreement with accountancy and tax experts Kilsby Williams to supply advice and guidance. Kilsby Williams also supported England Touch by processing the Association's end-of-year accounts and will continue to be an additional resource in the future.



PREMIERSHIP PERMIT

There was twice the celebration for England Crusaders at the inaugural EFT Premiership Permit competition.

Both the Men's and Women's Open teams took home the Cup finals after four days of intense action, but there were different ways to the titles for the respective sides.

The Women had an outstanding weekend, and aside from a draw with Scotland Kelpies at the end of day one had a perfect run of results, winning their other five pool matches to top the table going into the knockout stages. Another win over the Kelpies in the Qualification match put the Crusaders into the Cup final, where they overcame England Knights to win the trophy.

However the Knights had a good shout to be the team of the knockout stages. After finishing fourth in the table they faced a pair of sudden death games just to get to the Cup final. But while they got the wins when they needed them, seeing off the Frenchies and then the Kelpies, the extra minutes on the field took their toll in the final.

There was more success in the Plate, in which England Royals won both their round-robin games against the Irish Falcons and Scotland Stags to take home their own silverware.

The roles were reversed somewhat between the Knights and Crusaders in the Men's Open, where the former finished top of the table with six wins and one loss from their seven games, while the latter side ended up in third place on touchdown difference.

Scotland Stags may have pipped the Crusaders in the table, but the English team had the better of the two in the semi-final to earn their place in the final.

Meanwhile the Knights were overcome by Celtic Devils in their own semi-final, and the Anglo-Welsh final turned out to be a cracker. With the scores all square at full-time the action entered into a drop-off, and the Crusaders got the crucial score to win 5-4.

England Royals emulated their female counterparts to lift the Plate, completing the clean sweep.

// **TIM OSBORNE** MEN'S OPEN COACH

The 2017 EFT Premiership Permit (EFTPP) competition was a great development opportunity for England Touch's current and aspiring elite level athletes and coaches. The EFTPP had consistently tough games across a four-day tournament - conditions that are usually only experienced at Touch World Cup or by travelling to the Southern Hemisphere.

During the tournament, faced with close, tough and an even level of competition, our players and staff were put under greater levels of pressure to perform game after game after game. In this environment our teams were required to more rapidly improve their core skills, build their mental resilience, as well as deploy and adjust ever more sophisticated game plans.

The review and feedback from the tournament indicated that there was not only significant elite development, but also high levels of enjoyment and satisfaction from competing at a consistently high standard.

This experience and associated benefits will undoubtedly support England's preparation for Euro 2018 and Touch World Cup 2019.



HIGH PERFORMANCE



CHAMPIONSHIP PERMIT

England Scholars came home with silver medals in both the men's and women's categories at the 2017 EFT Championship Permit (EFT CP) in France.

The Men's Cup final was end-to-end stuff, with some great scores from both teams to entertain the crowds. But the boys narrowly missed out on a victory with an 8-7 loss against the experienced and highly capped Nederland Lions side.

The Scholars Women's Cup final went down to the wire, against the Frenchies, where they were locked at 3-3 at full time, the game going to drop-off to find the eventual winner. The Frenchies W27s took the victory in the final stages.

The invitation to the EFT CP came late to England when other European nations had dropped out. The ETA jumped at the chance of putting together a University team and by mid-April the Scholars teams had been put together.

England was the only team in the tournament to have its participating teams made up entirely of students, and by reaching the finals of both the Men's and Women's competitions the Scholars showcased the talent that is coming through the University Touch Series and into the national pathway.

// HARRY GROCOTT ENGLAND SCHOLARS COACH

The players gained an enormous amount out of the Championship Permits in Fontenay le Comte. For the majority it was their first Men's Open and Women's Open tournament, because the current University Touch Series (UTS) is set up as a mixed competition.

The teams both adapted extremely well to the intensity of the games, improving day-on-day, and of course both reaching their respective finals. This achievement was extremely well deserved and should not be overlooked.

Most importantly for me the individual players have gained a huge amount of confidence in their game. I see them at each UTS and the Scholars players have taken on roles of responsibility within their team and are the decision makers. As a pathway into and through the High Performance set up it is extremely encouraging.

It was fantastic to see games played in the correct spirit – testament to the squad's positive approach to the weekend. We also definitely showed the French how to Joué at the post-tournament party! //

ENGLAND IN 2017



JUNIOR TOUCH CHAMPIONSHIPS



It was a busy weekend in Dublin for the England teams in the 2017 Junior Touch Championships.

MIXED 18s

The Mixed 18s arrived at the tournament with hopes of bettering last year's finishing position and delivered on this promise by finishing third overall.

Having got over first game jitters and a slow start, the X18s went undefeated on day one. Day two brought about new challenges and some valuable lessons. After beating Jersey and Guernsey, we came up short against well organised and experienced Scottish and Welsh sides, leaving us in a bronze medal match on day three in which we came out 5-4 victors against a spirited French side.

Undoubtedly there are some very talented youngsters in this X18s side who have gained valuable experience over the tournament and will be pushing for selection to open sides in the coming year.

BOYS' 18s

The boys had a tough first day, narrowly losing to Scotland and Wales. Then after losing to Scotland first on day two they focused on defence and comfortably beat Wales.

Unfortunately, results didn't go England's way, and the team did not make the final, ultimately finishing third overall. However the squad came together superbly, and 12 out of the 15 will be around next year. This was a great building block for their development and they will move on to bigger and better things in their Touch careers.

GIRLS' 18s

The England Girls' 18s have had a long journey to their successful 2017 Junior Touch Championships.

They each represented their region and or participated in regional discovery days, with 16 of the 30 girls initially selected in the wider England junior training squad then continuing their commitment during the winter and spring months, through important exam periods and all-important holiday time before heading to Dublin.

Their coaches could not be prouder of them, wearing their well-deserved England jerseys great pride and showing fantastic sportsmanship to win this year's competition

MIXED 15s

The X15s started working well together in the build-up to the tournament as they got to know each other and even more so during it en route to a third place overall finish. There was a lot of potential on show! They also learned how to handle the pressure of close matches and how to take a win from being behind. Most importantly the players had a great time together. The coaches all look forward to seeing how they progress through the age groups.

SENIOR TOUCH CHAMPIONSHIPS

England's teams had a varied weekend in Edinburgh at the inaugural Senior Touch Championships.

SENIOR MIXED

This was a closely-fought tournament throughout, with none of the three competing teams from Wales, England and Ireland establishing dominance.

England won two of their six matches, losing three and drawing one. However neither Wales nor Ireland would win more than three matches themselves in the pool stage, and ultimately England lost out on a place in the final by just one league point.

Wales consolidated their position as table-toppers by beating Ireland 8-7 in the final.

MEN'S 45s

Scotland dominated the pool stage, winning all of their six matches. But for England their two defeats against the hosts were their only two reverses in the group, with the team seeing off Ireland and Wales in their other four matches to finish a comfortable second in the pool.

England then met Scotland in the final, but could not reverse the outcome of their previous two games earlier in the weekend, losing 3-6. Ireland beat Wales 9-1 in the 3rd/4th place play-off.

MEN'S 30S/35s

The Men's 30s and 35s teams were grouped together in the pool stages, with England Men's 40s also joining the tournament.

England M30 and M35 finished first and second

in the group, with the M35 inflicting the only defeat of the weekend on M30 (youth and energy overcome by age and experience!), with the M40 in a tough battle with Wales M30, Wales M35 and Scotland M30 for the other positions.

England M30 then saw off Scotland 11-6 in their final, with England M35 beating Wales 5-2 in their category.

WOMEN'S 27S/35s

England dominated these categories, both in the number of teams sent – three of the five participating groups came from south of the border – and in the overall results.

England Bangers 27s won all four of their pool matches, inflicting the only loss of the group stage on England Mash 27s in the process. England W35s finished third with two wins and two losses.

The tournament then divided up into its respective age groups, with the 27s and 35s having further round robins.

England Bangers 27s continued their perfect record in this second stage, while England Mash 27s lost both of their matches to miss out on the final. However the Bangers ensured that the title came south with a comfortable 10-4 win over Scotland W27s.

The Women's 35s title was decided by three further matches between England and Scotland, with the visitors winning all three to take home the trophy.

// BYRON TIBBITTS SENIOR MIXED CAPTAIN

Action aside, this competition highlighted some key things to me. Firstly, there is never a context in which pulling on your country's colours 'doesn't really count'. It is a thing of intense pride every time, and it can be a humbling experience when you realise you have not treated it with the respect it deserves. Secondly, that you're never too old to do something with passion and reckless abandon. I saw enough injured but smiling 'seniors' last weekend to support that view. Thirdly, no matter your team's track record, there is always more to learn. //





2018

The aims and ambitions for 2018 are quite simple - win the Euros at all levels and build on this toward the World Cups!

Saying the words and typing them are a lot easier than the steps we'll need to take to get there. However, we are working to control the things we can control and have the squads in the best shape they can be for both tournaments.

The medical team is fantastic in the provision they afford to the players. We are regularly testing, making informed interventions and using prehabilitation programmes along with nutrition and conditioning guidance to look after the fitness of our players.

Meanwhile we have a wealth of coaching experience to call upon and this is starting to reap benefits. We aren't prepared to rest on our laurels and are looking into everything we can to make marginal gains, from session planning, referee interventions and player interactions.

The rationale behind wider High Performance Training Squads for this year is to expose more players to elite environments more often and allow them to develop and learn from one another. We are looking to the Euros and the 2019 World Cup cycle and beyond so we have contingencies in place for all eventualities. The supply line needs to be constant, so working to grow our talent pool and providing more opportunities to play at younger ages all fit into the strategy.

**PLAYER FOCUSED
COACH ENHANCED
ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTED**

Any successes we have will truly be a collaborative effort and it is England Touch that has recognised the importance of getting players/coaches, medics/conditioners/sports science and referees to be working together. The programme needs to be player-focussed, coach-enhanced and environment-supported. This means making sure that every environment is geared towards the Euros and World Cup, and encouraging the coaches to test and enhance the players mentally, physically, technically and tactically.

We'll be looking at some new ways to do things in 2018 and will create a player development framework that supports coach education and helps players get the right coaching at the right time to make the progression from club player, through regionals to elite.

The team that takes to the field will know they are the representation of tens of thousands of hours work. It is a true privilege to play a part in and to be working with the wider team, in particular Sammie Phillips (Head of Elite Performance) and Lois Lau (Head of Elite Logistics) to ensure our players are ready!

ANTHONY ATHERTON HIGH PERFORMANCE DIRECTOR

Email High.Performance@EnglandTouch.org.uk

VOLUNTEERING AT THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN NOTTINGHAM

In mid-July England Touch is hosting the 2018 European Touch Championships, and is now seeking volunteers to help make the tournament a success.

The European Touch Championships is the largest international tournament outside of the World Cup and this year over 15 countries will be represented. The 2018 tournament, which runs between Tuesday, July 17th (opening ceremony) and Saturday, July 21st at the University of Nottingham, will be the biggest ever edition and delivering it will require a dedicated group of volunteers to work as an efficient team across all aspects of the event.

England Touch is seeking volunteers across three areas:

Field of Play including the set-up and clear-down of fields before and after play, reporting scores and incidents during games, and maintaining safe playing areas, communicating to teams, officials and spectators as required

Tournament Control including the input of results and scorers, collating statistics, and managing team requests and enquiries

Media including the creation of content for social media and websites, supporting the live filming and streaming of games, and setting up photo opportunities and interviews for print and web

England Touch and the European Federation of Touch will provide support and guidance before and during your appointment, and while tournament organisers will take into account skills and experience when assigning roles candidates should be able to display the following:

Effective verbal communication and negotiation, including across a language barrier

Be customer service oriented, showing patience, initiative and an ability to successfully resolve problems

Be a team player

Have a professional approach to be a face of the tournament

Adaptable to switch between roles

IT skills where the role requires

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EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS



Following the successful bid to stage the European Touch Championships, England Touch has been very effective in delivering the requirements and personnel necessary for us to enjoy a fantastic week of Touch in Nottingham this July.

From securing a top class sports facility at the University, which allows affordable accommodation close to the venue, to ensuring the infrastructure that many of us are familiar with having taken part in England events over the years is stepped up yet another level for the best Touch players, referees, coaches and spectators from over 14 countries to perform at their best in unique surroundings, we are confident that 2018 will see the finest event we can deliver for our sport.

We are anticipating 60 teams, nearly 800 athletes, and 80 referees to represent countries including Belgium, Chile, Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Guernsey, Ireland, Italy, Jersey, Middle East, Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Wales.

To help both England Touch and the EFT deliver a successful tournament we need a dedicated group of volunteers to cover a variety of areas, from tournament logistics to media coverage. There is still time to put your name down, so if you are not in a squad, or are a friend or relative of someone who is in a squad, you will be welcome!

I wish all participants a great preparation period prior to the Championships and the committees and commissions at Touch Europe will be working just as hard in partnership with England Touch to ensure everything is in place for a memorable summer!

KEVIN HILL EFT EVENTS DIRECTOR

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2017 CLUB STANDINGS

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Bareback Riders 2 Wigan Touch Warriors 3 London Scorpions 4 Cambridge Hornets 5 London Galaxy 6 Thames Valley Vikings 7 Canterbury 8 CSSC Phantoms 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Bristol Fijians 10 Nottingham Hoods 11 Manchester Chargers 12 Hot Custard 13 Oxford 14 CSSC Shadows 15 Cambridge Bees 16 London Galaxy Knights
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Wigan Touch Warriors 2 Bournemouth Titans 3 Nottingham Mavericks 4 Green and Gold 5 Crewe and Nantwich Blaze 6 Percy Park Pirates 7 Halton Storm 8 Thames Valley Vikings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Bristol Fijians 10 Orrell St James 11 Lincoln 12 Northampton COYS 13 Chester Cheetahs 14 London Galaxy 15 Manchester Turbo Chargers
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 CSSC Spirits 2 G:Force 3 Nottingham Sheriffs 4 Hit N Run 5 Canterbury Cubs 6 Norwich Rebels 7 CSSC Spectre 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Warwick Knights 9 Thames Valley Vikings 10 Oxford 11 Cheltenham 12 Yorkshire Thorns <p>*More than 30 league points across the 2017 season</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">MEN</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 London Scorpions 2 London Galaxy 3 Thames Valley Vikings 4 Tumeke 5 Hot Custard 6 CSSC Phantoms 7 Cambridge 8 Nottingham Hoods 9 Oxford 10 Manchester Chargers 11 Chester Cheetahs 	<p style="text-align: center;">WOMEN</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 London Scorpions 2 Hot Custard 3 London Galaxy 4 Cambridge 5 CSSC Valkyries 6 Bareback Riders 7 Thames Valley Vikings 8 Nottingham Hoods 9 Oxford 10 Chester Cheetarahs

2018

England Touch is revamping its national club tournaments with the introduction of a consolidated National Touch Series brand. This will have sub-categories of Elite Mixed, Premiership Men's and Premiership Women's, Championship Men's and Championship Women's, and Development Mixed.

The Elite Mixed and Premiership single gender tournaments will be played over the course of two full weekends, with a one-day Finals Day, giving players experience of the kind of multi-day format seen at representative and international level.

The Championship Men's, Championship Women's and Development Mixed competitions are designed for clubs who are seeking to introduce their players to competitive action, and will be one-day tournaments at regular intervals during the season.

This new structure brings greater cohesion to the Mixed and single gender competitions at the elite end of the club game, while also providing the opportunity for clubs to develop within a larger national framework throughout the course of the season.

EVENTS

CLUB COMPETITIONS



England Touch's national club tournaments continued to go from strength-to-strength in 2017 with a record number of teams and players taking part.

Bareback Riders had a superb season, winning three of the four Belief NTS titles on offer during the season – coming second in the fourth – and going on to lift the overall title after overcoming a spirited Wigan Touch Warriors outfit that pushed them right to the wire in a fitting climax.

Finals Day had a new format, with the 10 top teams from the Belief NTS taking part in the Elite 10s, with the remaining six Belief NTS teams being joined by the top four SPORTTAPE CTS teams in the Super 10s.

The other 10 SPORTTAPE CTS teams were joined by the top four finishers from the STEEDEN DTS in a 16-team tournament.

With 36 teams taking part, there was plenty of action in Nottingham. A global audience was exposed to our best club action thanks to the live streaming provided by 24/7 Media and Unilad, and England Touch is exploring options to expand this coverage in 2018.

Other winners on Finals Day included CSSC Phantoms (Elite 10s Plate), Hot Custard (Super 10s Cup) and Manchester Chargers (Super 10s Plate). In the SPORTTAPE CTS it was Green and Gold who finished top of the pile with the Cup, with G:Force winning the Plate, CSSC Spirits the Bowl and Orrell St James the Plate.

2017 saw England Touch expand its club tournaments into single gender competitions, the Men's and Women's Touch Cup, which was played out over three rounds during the course of the year.

London Scorpions, who along with Bareback Riders had been one of the top teams in the mixed Belief NTS, showed that they are one of the top all-round clubs in England by finishing top of the standings in both the men's and women's tournaments.

2017 ROLL OF HONOUR



Men's Open North-West Blades

Women's Open Midlands Tigers

Mixed Open North-West Blades

Men's 30s South-East Samurai

Men's 35s London Dragons

Women's 35s South-East Renegades

Men's 45s West Wildcats

Mixed 15s Southern Mavericks

Boys' 18s Northern Stars

Girls' 18s Northern Stars

Mixed 18s Northern Stars



UNIVERSITY TOUCH SERIES

The University Touch Series is becoming an increasingly important part of the England Touch tournament framework.

This competition follows the academic year rather than the annual calendar with three rounds in the autumn term and three more in the winter term.

The number of participating universities has increased by 40 percent from 2016/17 to 2017/18, with several universities sending multiple teams to tournaments, meaning that up to 30 individual squads have been vying for the silverware at individual events.

Exeter University leads the way with five competitive teams, but Bath Hawks are the outfit to beat on the pitch, winning the 2016/17 UTS and continuing that form in the first half of the 2017/18 campaign.

The UTS is also contributing to the player development pathway, with all-student squads chosen to represent England in the EFT Championship Permit in France in summer 2017. In 2018 the men's and women's England Scholars squads will be joining the rest of the High Performance Training Squads at the annual Welbeck training camp in April.

New universities are expressing their interest in joining the UTS all the time, and in 2018 growing this tournament is one of England Touch's key focus points.

Email University@EnglandTouch.org.uk

TOUCH NATIONALS



As with all of the England Touch tournaments, the Touch Nationals has grown rapidly over the past few years, and 2017 saw the event split for the first time, with the juniors and masters categories given their own specific event.

The main three-day tournament in St Ives, Cambridgeshire, saw a double success for the North-West Blades, who took home two trophies.

In the Men's Open the Blades had set their stall out over days one and two, finishing second in the seven-team group. So it was no surprise that they made the final, where they turned on the style in the second half to overcome the South-East Taipan.

Plenty of credit to Taipan, though, as they pushed the Blades all the way through the 40-minute showpiece that was the 113th match of the weekend.

The Blades' other trophy came in the Mixed Open, where their team shrugged off a fourth-place finish in the group stages to win both their semi-final and then the final against Midlands Tigers, who themselves had finished third in the group.

Meanwhile the Women's Open stayed local, with Midlands Tigers seeing off South-East Sharks in another closely-fought final.

The Men's 30s category also stayed in the bottom half of the country, South-East Samurai finishing both top of their group and then holding off both the Northern Monkeys and Southern Suns in a three-team play-off that decided the overall champions.

Twenty-eight teams competed across the four categories, and the standard of play and stamina shown by all the players in the Cambridgeshire sun and heat was superb, as was the positive attitude.

Forty-one referees were on duty – some of whom travelled from various European countries to

officialiate – and the event's success would not have been possible without them, and the outstanding and medical team. Thanks, too, to One Leisure St Ives for providing an outstanding venue and perfect pitches.

There were even more teams in the Juniors and Masters Nationals in October, which was played at Droitwich RFC in the West Midlands.

In all 33 teams took part across the seven categories. There were separate competitions for Boys' 18s, Girls' 18s, Mixed 18s and Mixed 15s for junior players, with Mens' 35s, Women's 35s and Mens' 45s for seniors.

The Northern Stars were the dominant group at Under-18 level, taking home all three titles on offer. The Southern Mavericks lifted the Mixed 15s trophy, with the senior titles shared between London Dragons (Mens' 35s), South-East Renegades (Womens' 35s) and West Wildcats (Mens' 45s).

All of the junior games were double or triple-refereed by the qualified TeamRef crew, with equal emphasis placed on encouragement and enjoyment as well as giving the young players the experience of playing under competitive tournament conditions that they will encounter as they progress through the age ranks.

With the exception of the Girls' 18s, which was played out solely on a round-robin basis, all of the categories had a league section which determined who progressed to which final, and then a final match to decide the final rankings.



MEDICAL

2017 has seen a significant growth in the ETA Medical Team, supporting the domestic club, national and international competitions.

The wave of recruitment has secured three sports therapists and five physiotherapists, increasing the medical team to 17. This increasing role has ensured consistency and continuity in management of players' health and safety to a level beyond that of most professional sports teams and in accordance with standardised protocols.

We would like to say give a warm welcome to our newest team members: Amber Griffiths, Bridget Higgs, Claire Lawson, Thea Jackson, Verity Morrall, Chris Gillespie, Danny Parkinson and Paul Wheatman. As of February 2018, all 17 of the team have decided to remain and continue supporting us for the 2018 season.

Our team continues in full force and work alongside Nick Dobbin (Lead Sport Scientist) in the continued monitoring and assessment of fitness as a regular component to England Touch all-squad training sessions. Our continued collaboration has seen successful and timely management of players within competition, and we therefore aim to develop this relationship between physios, strength and conditioning staff and the coaches.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

While continuing to work on conditioning our players appropriately for competition, the team are continuing to look in-depth to minimise injury risk. The injury surveillance data collected has provided an insight into the common complaints. Our previous use of GPS and functional screening has begun to lead into our more focused conditioning/pre-hab programmes.

2018

Cari Thorpe continues to take her team forward and ensure that all protocols and procedures are up-to-date and in line with other major sports within the UK.

A training and team development session was held in January 2018 alongside fitness testing of our Men's and Women's Open squads. This session aimed to ensure all newly appointed staff and existing staff collaborate in order to provide the best care for our players.

A restructure and extension of the team has now been completed. The reconfigured Medical, Sport Science and Performance Department has successfully recruited of two lead sport psychologists and four strength and conditioning personnel, taking us into the 2018 season.

From a research perspective, we will continue to profile our players, monitor adaptations to training programmes and develop a sport-specific screening programme. We will continue to work together to inform coaching staff, ensuring appropriate conditioning and enhancement of performance in line with the demands of the sport.

Finally, despite seeing large reduction in the number of injuries since the team was established – an achievement testament to the work done by our staff and the positive attitude of players – they continue to be a burden for coaches. We will continue to monitor injuries and determine the key risk factors during domestic, national and international tournaments.

CARI THORPE HEAD OF MEDICAL, SPORTS SCIENCE AND PERFORMANCE

Email Medical@EnglandTouch.org.uk

The creation of the ETA Referee Committee has been a resounding success, meeting our dual aims to increase the number of new recruits and to upskill the existing ETA referee pool.

This is reflected in growth at all levels of the referee pathway; more active referees, increased number of higher badge levels, increased income and membership revenue and increased engagement throughout the England referee community.

ENGLAND TOUCH EVENTS

In 2017 we managed the largest referee squad in England Touch history, with more than 115 referees participating at England Touch events, and the referee squad at the [Ryvita] England Touch nationals almost doubling in size from 2016. This growth has been made possible by the dedication of our referee coaches, both for elite referees (five full-time referee coaches at the ETA Nationals) and developing referees (full-time coaches attending all national DTS and some regional DTS events).

REFEREE COURSES AND DEVELOPMENT

In 2017 we delivered 22 referee courses in England, reaching 229 participants and helping us to increase the number of active referees participating across the country. The majority of the courses were Level 1 and resulted in L1 qualifications for over 50 new referees. A key focus for 2017 was strengthening the referee pathway through delivery of Level 2 courses. We reached 25 participants across the year and enabled 12 Level 2 upgrades, totals similar to 2015 and 2016 combined. We were pleased to see this success replicated at the elite level, with the European Referee Commission confirming six Level 3 and two Level 4 upgrades.

OPERATIONS

In 2017 we re-launched the referee newsletter, the most effective tool in reaching out to referees across the country. The newsletter ensures that key information (such as tournament and course registration) is consistently delivered, and drives up engagement with our referee community, reflected in subscriber growth of 39% within the first month. The increasing growth and influence of the ETA Referee Facebook group allows us to communicate more directly with our referees than ever, and encourages engagement from across the wider referee community. This not only cements the ETA's position as the leading Touch nation in Europe, but assists events planning by ensuring we have maximum exposure to the European Touch community.

An assessment of costs and expenses for courses ensured we could continue to deliver courses at a low cost and with no price increase to participants. Course and equipment sales continue to provide a stable income, allowing us to invest over £1000 in referee coaching and equipment. In 2018 we will aim to continue our policy to fully reinvest all profits in referee development.

EUROPEAN ENGAGEMENT

The National Referee Manager has played a leading role at European level, driving creation of a Europe-wide 'National Director of Referees' group. This enables the national heads of referees to share expertise in referee development across Europe, and ensures England develops its referee governance in line with best practice. We built a constructive relationship with the European Federation of Touch Junior Referee Academy in order to support the development of junior (under-20) referees within England, leading to the implementation of an active mentoring scheme. The National Referee Manager also contributed to the drafting of the new Disciplinary Policy being developed by the Federation of International Touch.

REFEREES



2018

With England hosting the 2018 European Touch Championships, we have the opportunity to strengthen and expand our referee community, and we hope that England will contribute the largest national referee squad in ETC history.

The hard work and dedication shown by the referee coaches across the season has led to four England referee coaches being upgraded at the end of the season. This is a significant milestone in referee development, and means that all elite England Touch events should be opportunities for Level 2 upgrades.

To support this growth, the ETA Referee Committee will be expanding from four members to seven, including the creation of a Referee Pathway Coordinator role focused on elite development and supporting junior (under-20) referees. This will ensure that we can successfully deliver a strong referee structure at all England Touch events, support growth at local level and provide consistent and tailored development and support to referees across the country.

NICOLAS VAN DE RIJT NATIONAL REFEREE MANAGER

Email Refs@EnglandTouch.org.uk

The last 12 months have seen a review and re-focus on how England Touch communicates both to its members and external stakeholders.

As with so many areas of the organisation, the growth of the England Touch brand had been somewhat organic, but in 2017 we built on the solid previous work to consolidate how we covered our events and promoted the sport as a whole.

This year there was full coverage of our flagship events on our website and social media channels, including the Welbeck High Performance training weekend, both of the Touch Nationals tournaments and the Belief NTS/SPORTTAPE CTS and STEEDEN DTS Finals Day.

This latter competition also featured a first for England Touch – live streaming of our matches on YouTube. This was supplemented by the Unilad channel showing the action, giving the sport greater exposure to a larger audience than ever before. This initiative also included match commentary and was received very positively by participating clubs and the viewing public.

We have proactively connected with national and regional media organisations, and created a library of content that will enable us to better present our sport to the wider world.

There has also been a review of the England Touch brand, with a new look starting to be rolled out – including with this report – that will see more consistency and coherence across all our channels, as well as internal documents and external material such as sponsorship propositions, posters, and so on.



MARKETING AND PR

2018

2018 is going to be a busy year, as it will be across the entire England Touch organisation.

We have identified six main areas of focus.

DIGITAL

We are streamlining our digital channels, making the England Touch main social media sites the prime means of distribution, and removing the individual team pages. This will help make the England Touch social media more dynamic and engaging.

We will be reviewing our website to make it better serve our players, clubs and partners, along with people who are new to the sport, and more akin to a major national governing body.

EVENTS

We are exploring expanding the live streaming of our events.

We will aim to provide full coverage of all our National Touch Series, University Touch Series, domestic representative and international competitions.

REDUCING COMMUNICATION SILOS

In any large volunteer organisation it is essential that communication channels are kept open to make sure that information is shared between those people who need it, especially if they are in different areas. Over the next 12 months we will work hard to ensure that silos are reduced as much as possible; this process has already started with the England Touch social media sites, as detailed above.

SUPPORTING OTHER DEPARTMENTS

As well as the public facing areas of the organisation, we will be supporting other areas, too. Examples include new-look sponsorship documents; promotion of courses; advertising the England Touch Belief leisurewear; a brand new club toolkit for our existing and new clubs; designs for our schools programmes, and so on.

MARKETING

We will be reaching out to those O2 Touch Centres who are not currently affiliated to make them aware of all the benefits of being a part of the England Touch family, from referee and coaching courses to opportunities to represent England on the international stage. This will help to grow our numbers of clubs and players.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The European Championships are the biggest Touch event to be staged in England, and we will be working with the EFT team to provide the coverage that it deserves with a dedicated media team across the week.

CHRIS WEARMOUTH MARKETING AND PR MANAGER

Email Marketing@EnglandTouch.org.uk



The focus in Peterborough has been on developing junior Touch in the city, with the club running a satellite centre with their local school (Ormiston Bushfield Academy) as well as working with local rugby clubs over the summer to establish a junior squad.

A total of 13 players went on to play at the Junior Touch Nationals and nine are currently training with the Junior High Performance squads. For 2018 Peterborough is extending this schools initiative to work with other schools in Peterborough, starting with Hampton College.

This work has resulted in a squad of about 20 U18s and U15s who train weekly with the club through the year.



Thames Valley Vikings partnered with RFU Berkshire and In2Touch Thames Valley to run the inaugural Berkshire All-Schools Touch Tournament in the summer of 2017.

Six girls teams and five boys teams took part, with the majority of the Year 8 and Year 9 students trying out Touch for the first time. The winners of both the boy's and girl's divisions came from Pangbourne College, with the girl's division final going to a tense 3 v 3 drop off which lasted over 10 minutes.

Vikings also provide an exit route for youngsters keen to continue learning about the game with a view to developing a Junior section of the club in 2018.



DEVELOPMENT

Our affiliated clubs are our lifeblood, and across the country excellent work is being done by players, coaches, administrators - all volunteers - to grow our sport. Here is a flavour of the initiatives currently being undertaken.

ENGLAND TOUCH LEAGUES CHELTENHAM

They say you never lose the skill, and this was certainly true in Cheltenham as a team including former professional stars took home the inaugural England Touch Leagues: Cheltenham Cup title.

Nick Wood, Nicky Robinson and Olly Morgan – who all have plenty of Premiership and international appearances under their belt – were part of the A Touch Passed It team that won the main prize, but despite this experience they were pushed all the way in the final by CO2T, and only a couple of late touchdowns brought a touch of gloss to the eventual score.

It was an appropriate way to end the tournament, as A Touch Passed It had ended the league stage with a perfect record of nine wins from their nine games.

Over 70 players took part in one of the six competing squads, and shows how much the England Touch Leagues can help develop a competitive environment among local teams.



ENGLAND TOUCH CAN HELP ANY AFFILIATED CLUB DEVELOP ITS OWN SCHOOLS, YOUTH OR ANY OTHER INITIATIVE.

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Manchester Chargers is continuing with the club's successful Touch Rugby Boot Camps. It started with the idea of getting people within the Manchester community more involved in Touch while being in a friendly and enjoyable environment.

The Chargers' management also wanted to get people up and moving, due to it being the new year, while also learning a new sport. Everyone was invited to come to the Boot Camp, from seasoned Touch players, 'retired' sport players, social Touchies, all the way down to people who had never touched a rugby ball before.

Sessions are tailored with all these different skill levels in mind. Every session is planned with some fitness, Touch drills then games, all of which brings out everyone's competitive edge, even if it has laid dormant for a while.

With the ultimate goal of gaining new players and working towards the first Touch tournament in February, it was great to hear that Boot Camp participants couldn't wait to get involved more or take what they have learnt to their own social teams. The success was shown when in our first session in 2018 produced over 40 participants.





The south coast has been a busy hub for Touch over the past 12 months.

In February 2017 Bournemouth Touch Centre launched Walking Touch in conjunction with BH Live Active sports centres. Since the launch

of the initiative patient referrals, injured and older players have all participated.

At the other end of the age spectrum Allan Read, co-founder of Bournemouth Touch Centre, commenced coaching Touch in schools on a weekly basis. The Centre also ran an afternoon session for 200 girls from Avonborne School.

Several Touch sessions were also staged at Family Fun days that had 10,000 visitors and such was the interest in Touch a youth session was launched alongside Bournemouth's O2 Touch social sessions.



The third annual Norfolk primary school touch rugby festival took place in May 2017 on a scorching hot day.

The festival was hosted by Spooner Row Primary School and was organised by Russell House of Norwich Rebels with coaching support from Mark Scott, Andy Wells, Claire Wells and Ed Miles. Sixty children aged between 7 and 11 were taught to play Touch and then organised into eight teams for a tournament.

The teams were carefully selected to ensure that they were roughly equal in terms of overall ability. This led to a very competitive tournament. The format of the day allowed teachers to select children who don't usually get picked for school sports teams and give them a chance to shine.

As well as medals for all players in the first, second and third-placed teams, prizes were also given for players who improved most throughout the day and showed good team spirit.

The children's Touch skills and understanding improved massively during the day. They showed great teamwork and fair play and had a lot of fun. Following the festival, many of the children took part in the free junior touch rugby coaching that was delivered by Norwich Rebels throughout summer 2017.

The fourth annual school touch festival is planned for May 2018. The Rebels also plan to expand their junior section in summer 2018 and start a junior league.



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2018

We have four main goals within our strategic plans for 2018/19.

SCHOOLS

This year with our new team in place, we are really aiming to develop a new structured schools approach. As well as promoting the many wonderful benefits of playing Touch Rugby, this will help us grow our supporter and membership base.

As we target teachers and schools on a local, regional and national level we aim to create and distribute new material aimed specifically at schools, giving them every reason to take part in and enjoy Touch rugby.

This will include new training and coaching opportunities for both teachers and pupils and for the pupils our key focus groups will include: U12 Mixed; U15 Boys, Girls and Mixed; U18 Boys, Girls and Mixed. For the teachers this will also include plans for creating and hosting regional continued professional development (CDP) sessions, ensuring teachers stay engaged and motivated.

Through engaging with these younger age groups we will not only ensure that we consult with our more youthful members, ensuring our offer stays fresh and appropriate, but we are also ensuring that the pipeline for emerging, developing talent through the age groups is well populated and supported.

These younger members will be our universities, ETL and DTS players in the future. We aim to explore our contacts and knowledge around sponsors, trust and foundations, local councils and other funding streams needed to help take this Touch in schools work to the next level.

REGIONS

We will explore a new way of working with clubs, leagues and members on a regional level, looking into developing 'regional hubs' in order to empower work on a local level. This will give members the chance to network, mentor, share best practice and be acknowledged for their excellent work on a regional level.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

We aim to support the wider Touch England team in delivering a successful and memorable European Touch Championships in Nottingham over the summer and use that tournament as a spring board for showcasing our excellent work regionally and nationally and developing new opportunities to help keep our future sustainable.

We will actively be looking to use this opportunity to leverage new partnerships, members, sponsors and any other wider business benefits that may present following on from the successful delivery of the European Championships.

FUNDING

Over the course of the year we will look to create a database of business development opportunities through a variety of funding avenues including Trust and Foundations, Corporate Sponsorship and other partnership opportunities.

This will include the design of new material aimed at showcasing our work as an NGB and the considerable impact and benefits of taking part in Touch Rugby for people of all genders, abilities and ages.

IAN BOYD DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Email Development@EnglandTouch.org.uk



We are England Touch.

We are the players. We are the supporters, willing us on. We are the medals, waiting to be won. We are the Touchdowns, waiting to be scored.

We are the men and the women of all ages.

We are the talent of today. We are the potential of the future. We are one team.

We are England Touch.

VISION

**TO LEAD THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOUCH AND TO BECOME ENGLAND'S
LEADING RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY**

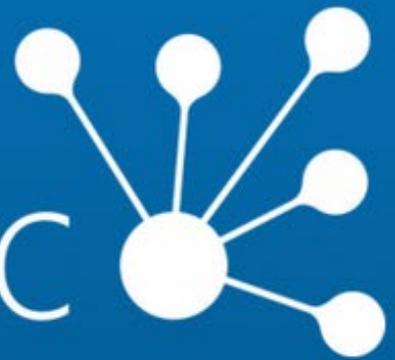
MISSION

**TO LEAD, INSPIRE AND ENABLE EVERY PARTICIPANT TO ENJOY TOUCH
AND RECEIVE ITS BENEFITS TO ENRICH THEIR LIVES**

VALUES

**DEFINING THE VALUES THAT ARE CORE TO OUR SPORT
INCLUSIVE / TRANSPARENT / AMBITIOUS / UNITED / RESPECTFUL**

TeamKinetic



Building better volunteer communities

“TeamKinetic are proud to be providing the volunteer management software for England Touch Rugby. Using our software will help recruit more volunteers than ever before, whilst rewarding and recognising their efforts”

- Chris Martin, Founding Director

TeamKinetic.co.uk
info@teamkinetic.co.uk
0161 915 5757

TeamKinetic is FREE.

Pop along to the website to find out how it works and register

It Works For /
NGBs



"VolunteerKinetic offers by far the best solution for volunteer management."

It Works For /
Local Authorities



"TeamKinetic gives me the ability to reach more people, and build a better programme."

It Works For /
Universities



"I advise you to take a look as it is superior to anything else I have come across."

OUR SPONSORS



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