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England Touch Annual Review 2024



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**PICK UP
A BALL
AND PLAY**





Annual Review 2024

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Overview from the Chair Tim Loveridge

Delivering the largest TWC ever (by some mile) and receiving such positive feedback from FIT, NTOs, players, support staff and spectators, has reinforced England Touch's position as a Tier 1 Nation



Wow! What a year it was for Touch in 2023-24.

The Touch World Cup (TWC) dominated the year from both an organisational perspective as well as High Performance, but it was well worth it.

Delivering the largest TWC ever (by some mile) and receiving such positive feedback from Federation of International Touch (FIT), National Touch Organisations (NTOs), players, referees, support staff, volunteers and spectators, has reinforced England Touch's position as a Tier 1 Nation and an organisation that can deliver large scale events. I would personally like to take this opportunity to thank Chris Simon and Sammie Phillips for their immense efforts in making the TWC such a success. Obviously, they didn't do it all by themselves! A massive thank you must also go to Louis Treays, Kathy Van der Rijt and the array of volunteers that all helped make TWC the unbridled success that it was.



From a High-Performance perspective, our England Touch teams delivered far more than we imagined possible. Out of the 13 categories, we won two Silver medals and eight Bronze medals, five times the number we won at TWC 2019. A truly remarkable achievement.

Of particular note were:

England Women's 40s became the first team at a TWC (other than Australia) to defeat New Zealand.

England Mixed Open and **England Women's Open** achieved the first ever medals at Open's Level for England at a Touch World Cup.

Huge congratulations must go to all of the **300+ players, coaches, support, medical staff and referees** who worked so hard to make this possible.

While TWC 2024 dominated the year, England Touch has continued to make great strides forward in delivering in our areas of key focus: Growing the Game; Developing the Sport; and Evolving the ETA.



From top: England W40s / England XO / England W0



Overview from the Chair Tim Loveridge

Board/Management

At the end of 2023, the Board took the opportunity to have a Strategy Weekend to allow us to review the ETA's medium to long-term strategy to ensure we remain focused on our goals and objectives. During this we reaffirmed our focus on the areas of Growing the Game; Developing the Sport; and Evolving the ETA.

In February 2024 Chris Simon and I attended the FIT Members Forum in Singapore which was a great opportunity for England Touch to influence the global game and assert our position as a Tier 1 Nation.

There have been a number of changes to the Board during 2024, most specifically with the departure of Chris Simon as our CEO.

Chris has played a massive role in driving England Touch forward over the past five years, no more so than in the last 18 months leading the delivery of TWC 2024. He will be a significant loss to England Touch but it is great that we will have him in a very influential position in FIT.

Chris – a massive thank you for all you have done at England Touch.

Following an extensive recruitment process, we have been very fortunate to appoint Vince Mayne as our new CEO as of December 2024. Vince joined us with a wealth of experience across a variety of sporting organisations, notably British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) and I am sure will lead us forward and build off the strong foundations that we have established.

I must congratulate Geoff Karikari on his appointment to the Board last year and it has been great working with him during the year.

During the year we have seen two Directors stand down from the Board at the end of their terms. While it is always difficult to lose good people and their contributions to the ETA, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Emma Hardaker and Amy Gardner for all they have given to the ETA, the Board and the wider sport. I know both Emma and Amy retain a strong interest in our sport and still remain party of our family. Thank you for your valuable contributions – we all appreciate it.

We have a number of both Elected and Appointed Director vacancies which we are

seeking to fill at the AGM and immediately afterwards, specifically in Performance Sport, Marketing & Communications, Business & Commercial Development, Governance & Safeguarding, and Education Policy.

Growing the Game

We continue with our focus on Growing the Game and seeking to introduce as many people as we can to our great sport.

To that end we hosted 1,200 school children at TWC 2024 to broaden the reach to schools across the country. Our University programme continues to go from strength-to-strength with an increasing number of universities taking up the sport as well as existing University clubs rapidly expanding.

We continue to seek sponsorship opportunities to develop local programmes for growing the game and a continued dialogue with Sport England to explore funding opportunities aligned with our strategy.



Hosting 1,500 school children at TWC 2024 to broaden the reach to schools



Overview from the Chair Tim Loveridge

Developing the Sport

We had another very successful year with our National events, attracting wider participation and increasing opportunities for playing.

We have sought to broaden our local leagues programme primarily in partnership with In2Touch and other affiliated operators.

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We have also added to our voluntary workforce with some key appointments to ensure we continue to focus on the right areas and provide the support needed across our players, coaches, support staff and referees

Evolving the ETA

As we look to grow the game and develop the sport, we also need to ensure that we evolve the ETA as an organisation with a strong financial base and governance structure.

Following on from the Covid years, we have needed to stabilise our financial position. TWC 2024 was a financial success for us and has allowed us to accelerate the building of our reserves to ensure we have a strong financial base.

We have also added to our voluntary workforce with some key appointments to ensure we continue to focus on the right areas and provide the support needed across our players, coaches and support staff.

None of what we do would be possible without the massive contribution that so many of you give to the sport that we all love. I would like to take this opportunity to say a **VERY BIG THANK YOU** to all of you for everything you do and hope we can continue to move forward this year.



Another very successful year with our National events, attracting wider participation and increasing playing opportunities



At TWC24 our England Touch teams delivered far more than we imagined possible. Out of the 13 categories, we won two Silver medals and eight Bronze medals, five times the number we won at TWC 2019. A truly remarkable achievement.

CEO's Statement

Vince Mayne

We will look at our competition offering to ensure it meets our needs and aspirations and that the range of events covers the entire membership and creates excellent value for you as a player



It is somewhat difficult to write this having only been in post for three months, none of which occurred during the year under review, a year dominated by the hosting of the largest Touch World Cup so far! What I will do therefore is take a slightly different approach.

Firstly, to all the Board members, staff and volunteers who've made me so welcome, a huge thank you. Joining a well-oiled team is a difficult thing. To have it made so much easier is a blessing and I'm very grateful to everyone who has gone out of their way to ease the transition.

Secondly, rather than look back I wanted to take a brief look into the future and what the art of the possible just might be. The potential for England Touch is huge. Building on the foundations of a hugely successful World Cup, and with a sport which is inclusive, high-intensity, accessible and social means that a lot is already going in our favour.

Driving participation of new people to get them involved in Touch, from whatever their geography or demographic background gives them, is both a need for the ETA but is also the right thing.

We want **a sport which is for all**, wherever and whoever they are.

We need to grow the data we hold on our members to enable us to understand more about who is involved (and who isn't!), what they want from us as their National Governing Body, how we improve their experience, and how we offer the right things which increases our commercial income and thus maintains the cost at as low a level as we can to people playing Touch.

In three years, we should be closing in on **75,000 people engaged in Touch**, a substantial growth, but one that is very much in our control. We will look at our competition offering to ensure it meets our needs and aspirations and that the range of events covers the entire membership and creates excellent value for you as a player.

Building **a sport which is well governed**, by the right people for the right reasons is already at the core of the ETA. We need to develop this at regional and club level to support everyone who is delivering touch to existing and new players, officials and coaches, to enable us to grow the game still further.

Our coaching and officials courses are already the best in Europe; we need to maintain and build on this still further.

We will review our affiliation model to give us certainty in the offering to external bodies, in their delivery as ETA affiliated bodies and ensure equality of access to those who we give affiliated status to. Our comparison needs to shift from the RFU and RFL to those activities which are growing rapidly both in terms of numbers and commerciality.

Touch is competitive, high-intensity, skilful, requires teamwork, is inclusive, so potential our comparators are padel, "Hyrox", outdoor exercise classes, as these are what are attracting huge numbers. Rugbys Union and League have dropped out of the EY Sport Participation Index for Gen Z, potentially our big growth area.

Finally, we want to maintain and **grow our status as a Federation of International Touch Tier 1 nation**, with teams competing for medals in all events we enter, and in particular building towards the potential of **medals at an Olympic Games in Brisbane in 2032**. If the goal of an



CEO's Statement Vince Mayne

Olympic Sport doesn't come off, the journey will not have been wasted in building a player pathway from talent ID, through performance development and our junior academies, up to our full England teams.

We should aim to be the **leading nation in Touch** in the way in which we develop and support our players, from beginners to elite players. We are already close to this in many areas, but we must not rest on our laurels, we have to keep pushing forward.

So, the future is very bright. England Touch is in a good place with some firm foundations. As we continue to build, we will need to strengthen some of these, **develop some new ways of working**, adopt some new systems and processes so that we can move towards being a mid-sized NGB. It will not all be straightforward, and **change is not always comfortable**.

I would simply ask you to continue supporting England Touch on its journey, **ask questions, be relentless in asking us to be the best we can be as an organisation, and match that with your efforts and determination.**

We have an amazing workforce, both paid and voluntary, who go way beyond in their delivery for the ETA. This, together with a united sense of purpose, will enable us to achieve so much.

I look forward to working with you all as we head towards 2028 and 2032, with more members, more matches and more medals!

We should aim to be the leading nation in Touch in the way in which we develop and support our players, from beginners to elite players



A bright future – continue supporting England Touch on its journey

Reflections from the former CEO Chris Simon (COO, FIT)

I am still amazed at what was achieved with The Touch World Cup 2024, with so little budget and in a sport that is almost entirely participant funded



It seems a lifetime ago that we were standing in front of the Vaughan Parry Williams Pavilion at Highfields Sports Ground celebrating a raft of England medals alongside the most successful World Cup event. Eight months later, it has taken the need to write an update for both the England Touch and FIT Annual Reports to remind myself about one of the most memorable weeks of my life.

The Annual Report should cover the whole year, but please forgive me if I focus on a specific seven-day period in July 2024.

Touch World Cup, 15-21 July 2024

Before putting fingers to keypad, I started by watching back the six episodes of the fantastic Touch World Cup Daily Show – one of many firsts for the sport during this phenomenal event last year.

Watching and listening to FIT's Adam Collins and James Preston, alongside England's Chris Wearmouth, Joe Wright, Ben Meakin and Mel Day, and NextGenXV's Wilf Kemsley, was just one example of how the World Cup success was down to one HUGE team effort.

From the 187 teams, 3,000 players and 1,000 support staff brought in by the 39 NTOs taking part, to the 210 referees and officials, 250 volunteers, 35 media crew, 60 event staff, 20 event partners and sponsors and over 50 suppliers, I am still amazed at what was achieved with so little budget and in a sport that is almost entirely participant funded.

Success for England came in many ways – medals on the field and event delivery off it, but also commercially, as the event helped to continue the recovery post pandemic, ensuring a little more breathing space on the balance sheet.

Commission from drink and food sales, parking, Inferno merchandise, e-coffee cups, World Cup whistles, after party tickets, ice baths (just), tram cards and packed lunches, all helped generate a little income alongside an agreed event management fee with FIT. We certainly had to work for our money, but that feels right to me in a sport so underfunded.

Success for the sport of Touch was also high on our agenda, and I think overall we got there....

The largest World Cup in history, with 70% growth from Malaysia five years ago.

1,100 matches in 13 categories of competition, including three new age groups.

Increase in women's participation to 31%, including a new Women's 40 division.

Over 1,200 school children participated in taster sessions, many experiencing Touch for the first time.

Over 12,000 spectators attending the finals weekend each day, many watching the sport for the first time.

An online audience with 1.7 million impressions, 35,200 hours of watch time, and 280,000 views across digital platforms.

A HPU (Hydrogen Power Unit) solution for power enabling zero emissions and an estimated saving of over 4,750kg of CO₂ from diesel generators. Massive thanks to the sponsors who made this happen – GeoPura, Hydrex, Energy Research Accelerator, Mapei and Vermeer.

£10million of economic impact across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Reflections from the former CEO Chris Simon (COO, FIT)

Other event success

I should also say that 2024 was the organisation's biggest domestic year with success across the Men's, Women's and Mixed National Touch Series, spanning five months for the first time, and the largest combined number of teams in Nationals – with Opens and Seniors in May and Juniors at the end of August.

The junior and student game continues to grow and thrive with the biggest (weather affected) BUCS University Touch Championships, a developing Try Sports series of schools competitions, the first Junior Touch Cup club competition and success in Vichy (again), when our juniors dominated the European Youth Championships.

Looking ahead

As I approach four months into my new role, I am so excited about where Touch can go. From an affordable and accessible grass roots game that is starting to be played in many more countries across the globe, to an increased profile around the world's biggest sporting occasion in Brisbane 2032, the potential is huge, and I am delighted to get the opportunity to shape the next period for our sport.

We have a very exciting year ahead with more international competition than ever before and an increasing number of new nations affiliating to the Federation. I have no doubt the sport will be played competitively in 100 nations and rival other mainstream games in terms of participation numbers very soon – if it doesn't already.

Whilst, I may now have a different employer and a different set of kit, I still expect to see many of you during 2025 – from BUCS, to NTS, Nationals to the European international events, you won't get rid of me that easily. Those that know me, will realise that I like to keep busy, I plan to fill my 'free time' by helping Nottingham and the Midlands to achieve success this year. So, please excuse me if I am a little more competitive in 2025.

Thanks to everyone who played their part in 2024 – what a year, what a team.



Nationals / MO Final



2024 was ETA's biggest domestic year with success across the Men's, Women's and Mixed National Touch Series, spanning five months for the first time, and the largest combined number of teams in Nationals, across Opens, Seniors, and Junior divisions.



High Performance Ben Powell

The 2024 Touch World Cup will go down as a historic milestone for England Touch. Hosting the tournament on home soil in Nottingham, we had the unique privilege of showcasing the full depth of our programme—and we delivered a record-breaking campaign that will be remembered for years to come.

With 208 athletes across 13 squads and over 300 personnel involved, England Touch fielded the joint-largest playing contingent in the competition, alongside Australia. Across the board, our performance was the most successful in our history: we secured 10 medals — two Silver and eight Bronze — across all categories. This marks a 400% increase in medals compared to each of the previous World Cups in 2011, 2015 and 2019.

Critically, we also achieved a win percentage of 74% across all games, a significant jump from previous campaigns (42% in 2011, 54% in 2019). We met four out of our five high-performance objectives, including medals in every female division and at least five medals across Senior and Masters categories.

One of the most significant breakthroughs was earning our first-ever medals in the Open divisions. The Mixed Open and Women's Open squads both captured Bronze, making England just the second European nation to do so in these categories. These results underscore the rising standard of English Touch at the highest level of global competition.

Our Women's 40s also made history by defeating New Zealand — a feat no other women's team outside of Australia had previously accomplished at a Touch World Cup.

From our elite squads to our Masters teams, every player and staff member contributed to what was a collective step forward for the

Across the board, our performance was the most successful in our history - a 400% increase in medals compared to 2011, 2015 and 2019



TWC / Our competitiveness increased against the other Tier 1 nations / England W27 v Australia / England M0 v Australia M0



High Performance Ben Powell

programme. Additionally, both the Women's 27s and Women's 35s achieved historic silver medals in their divisions – both teams were beaten by the powerhouse of Australia, but both games were highly competitive and showcased the strength of the women's game here in England.

The data tells a powerful story of growth. Our average margin against Australia and New Zealand decreased from 9.2 tries in 2015 to 7.3 in 2024. Our average tries scored against them tripled since 2015. These improvements reflect our investment in athlete development, coaching excellence, and holistic support.

Beyond the results, this tournament was a test of our systems and our people. Every squad had access to their own physiotherapist, S&C coach, team manager, and psychologist—all volunteers who worked tirelessly. The professionalism shown by our logistics, medical and coaching and teams was nothing short of outstanding.

To everyone involved—athletes, coaches, staff, volunteers, and supporters—thank you. You made history, and you laid a foundation for even greater success.

Let Nottingham 2024 be a springboard, not a peak. England Touch is moving forward, and the future has never looked brighter.

Youth Programme

The 2024 Junior European Touch Championships in Vichy, France was hugely successful. It was not just about medals, but about a demonstration of the culture, resilience, and talent that has been cultivated through years of structured investment in our junior pathway.

England Touch competed in six categories: Mixed 15s, Boys 18s, Girls 18s, Mixed 18s, Men's 20s, and Women's 20s. I'm proud to report that we achieved podium finishes in every division – securing Gold in five and Silver in one – an outstanding achievement that reflects the strength of our youth development system and the dedication of our athletes and support staff.

This success was not accidental. These squads are the product of our England Touch Youth Academy – a structure built to prepare athletes for the demands of international sport. Many of the players involved in Vichy have progressed



England enjoyed success both on home soil and in Vichy, France



High Performance Ben Powell

through years of regional development, national training camps, and exposure to high-level coaching.

Our preparation included not only technical and tactical development, but also a focus on mental skills, nutrition, and injury prevention. Each squad was supported by an experienced and passionate staff team, including our brilliant coaches, team managers, analysts, physios, and psychologists.

No high-performance journey happens in isolation. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to the parents and families of all our athletes. From logistical support, travel and fundraising, to encouragement during the highs and lows of performance sport—you have been an integral part of this journey. The maturity and professionalism displayed by our young athletes in France is a reflection of the values instilled by those closest to them.

This tournament also gives us a glimpse of the future. Many of these players are now ready to transition into senior programmes, including the 2025 Atlantic Youth Touch Cup and beyond. The

performance in Vichy shows that our systems are working—but we're not standing still. We will continue to evolve our curriculum, enhance international exposure, and refine our development pathways.

To every athlete who wore the England jersey in Vichy — thank you and well done. You played with heart, humility and courage. You represented your country, your region, and your families with pride.

Thank you

A very special thank you to all of our staff, but in particular to **Pippa Bourke** (Head of Elite Logistics), **Sammie Phillips** (Head of Elite Coaching and England Touch General Manager), **Cari Thorpe** (Head of Medical), **Peter Bell** (England Touch Head Coach), **Matt Harper** (Head of Coach Development), **Becca Hickman** and **Hanna Gildam-Clark** (Lead Sports Psychologists) and **Chris Simon** (Former England Touch CEO) – without all of these individuals, our success would not have been possible.



JTC / England's players and families all contributed

The England Touch Youth Academy – through innovation, inclusion, and high-performance coaching, we are building the future of England Touch.



Financial Report

Will Tenbroeke

2024 was an exceptional year for England Touch, both on and off the field.

Much has been said about the World Cup elsewhere in this report but the financial impact was equally important. The event, while a huge success, also came with significant extra demands for our largely volunteer workforce and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved and their extraordinary efforts.

Our post-Covid recovery plans continue to make positive steps in securing the future financial stability of the organisation and we anticipate generating a surplus for the first time since 2019, an indication of the long road it has been to get to this position. The accounts are still being finalised but we anticipate the surplus contributing somewhere between £15,000 and £45,000 towards our reserves (the draft accounts presented show £19,000).

Cash presented in our accounts is only a snapshot of the position at 30th September but the closing balance of £97,000 was more than double the £39,000 we reported in 2023.

Due to the cyclical nature of the Touch calendar, September also tends to be the highest cashpoint of the year and we still have work to do to build our reserves to a year-round minimum of £100,000 but we are clearly moving in the right direction.

The World Cup boosted income by nearly £900,000 on 2023 and provided a small but useful contribution towards overheads and the overall surplus generated by the Association this year.

Stripping out the impact of the event, our revenues were largely comparable with 2023 and with the underlying business generating a surplus.

Without the focus of a World Cup, management attention in 2025 is switching to growing the game and I believe we are now well positioned over the coming two to three years to see revenue growth and further improved surpluses that can form a strategic reserve and also be reinvested in the game.



The World Cup boosted income significantly

Finance Report

Profit and Loss / Balance Sheet

Draft results for Financial Year to September 30, 2024

Profit and Loss	30/09/2024	30/09/2023
<i>All figures in GBP £</i>		<i>Per PY Stats</i>
Turnover	1,524,914	623,371
Cost of sales	(1,275,224)	(511,904)
Gross surplus	249,690	111,467
Administrative expenses	(220,007)	(118,156)
Operating profit/loss	29,683	(6,689)
Profit/loss on ordinary activities before taxation	29,683	(6,689)
Tax on surplus (loss) on ordinary activities	(10,418)	1,246
Surplus (loss) for the financial year	19,265	(5,443)

Balance Sheet	30/09/2024	30/09/2023
<i>All figures in GBP £</i>		<i>Per PY Stats</i>
Current assets		
Inventories	6,065	7,545
Debtors	38,502	35,135
Cash at bank and in hand	96,723	38,966
	141,290	81,646
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(111,200)	(70,822)
Net current assets	30,090	10,824
Net assets	30,090	10,824
Reserves		
Profit and loss account	30,090	10,824
Members' funds	30,090	10,824

What would you consider the best part of the 2024 season?

"Getting to watch the best players in the World at the World Cup on home soil. And ETA and England showing the world what we have to offer on and off the pitch!"





Schools & Universities

In years to come the England Touch community may look back at 2024 as a seminal year for the Association's youth development, both at schools and universities.

Schools

Touch World Cup 2024 had youth engagement as one of its core delivery pillars, and we welcomed approximately 1,200 school children and teachers to Highfields Sports Complex for two hours of coaching and game play, followed by watching matches.

During the year England Touch also provided resources for teachers, such as lesson plans, and supported this with new dedicated Schools Development and Youth Development roles within the ETA workforce.

In February 2024 we announced a partnership with Priority Touch, who have developed an online platform of teaching/coaching resources based on Priority 10 (P10), a conceptual framework for Touch which reinforces the priority or the "non-negotiable" elements of the game.

Our School Delivery Partners, Try Sports UK, expanded their tournaments significantly in 2024, with 1,212 players from 70 schools taking part across five events.

The Schools Touch Championships was open to girls, boys and mixed teams, with age groups from Yr 7 to Yr 13. Gender parity was nearly equal, with a 52.5/47.5 percent split boys/girls.

The appetite for such tournaments can be seen in the expansion of the South East events alone:

- 2022 - 8 teams, girls only
- 2023 - 24 teams, girls and boys
- 2024 - 43 teams, girls, boys and mixed

Feedback was really positive:

- 93% plan to return next year (2025)
- 9.2 (NPS) stating they would recommend Touch to another teacher, friend, family member. "Excellent competition, lots of opportunity for students to develop and play"

In 2025 Try Sports UK is expanding even further to seven regional events and a national finals.

There are challenges in a competitive marketplace, but we are confident in our product and for Touch to be the rugby code of choice for schools.



We are confident in our product and for Touch to be the rugby code of choice for schools



Schools & Universities

Universities

The British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) University Touch Championships (UTC) continues to go from strength-to-strength.

Nottingham Trent University lifted the title for the first time, breaking the south west stranglehold of Exeter and Bath. Unfortunately the UTC fell foul of the terrible weather of the winter of 2023/24, which forced the postponement of several events.

Nevertheless the number of participants continued to grow beyond the previous year. Wolverhampton joined the UTC as a new club, and it was fantastic to see increased participation numbers from Loughborough and Birmingham.

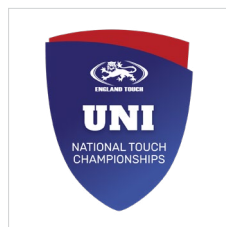
A record number of players were chosen for England's High Performance squads, and there has been interest from multiple universities to enter the 2024/25 season.

At the end of the 2023/24 campaign Jack Harris moved from University Liaison Manager to become National Referee Manager. In his five years in the role Jack spearheaded not

just a 75 percent expansion in the number of teams entering into UTC events, but was also instrumental in the successful application to join the BUCS programme.

By the end of 2024 our growth in universities was also beginning to attract interest from potential sponsors, such as AICPA&CIMA.


Ian Tankard took over as University Liaison Manager ahead of the 2024/25 season.



Despite the terrible weather of the winter of 2023/24, the number of participants continued to grow beyond the previous year



An increase interest and numbers of team competing in the UTC



What would you consider the best part of the 2024 season?

"First ever experience of Touch as a family was when we watched the Euros in Vichy, our daughter was inspired and has now started playing!"

Women & Girls

England Touch's Women and Girls Working Group, led by Raffaella Baby, is working hard to accelerate action for gender equality within Touch at all levels.

Participation in Touch, as a player, referee, coach and volunteer can be very empowering for females and we are working hard towards gender parity across the board. We are also fortunate that females participating in Touch are supported by people of all genders involved in our sport and gender equity is a collective effort.

Females are currently engaging with Touch as:

- Players
- Coaches
- Referees
- Volunteers
- Staff
- Board members
- Supporters

It was fantastic to have a Touch World Cup with not just a new division - Women's 40 - but also an increase of women's participation at the global showcase to 31 percent. To all of those people watching either online or in person in Nottingham, to see so many women play our sport at the highest level is an inspiration.

All of England's teams, including the Mixed Open and Mixed 30, medalled, with the Women's 27 and Women's 35 teams playing in their first ever World Cup finals, indeed England's first ever World Cup finals!

Other highlights include:

- Girls and Mixed teams in schools competitions, delivered in partnership with Try Sports UK
- Mixed gender teams in the BUCS University Touch Championship
- Women's club teams in regional competitions, including Midlands Ladies Touch League (20 teams)
- Women's teams in Nationals (14 regional rep women's teams and 8 mixed teams)

- Girls teams in Junior Nationals (9 girls teams in 2024)
- Women's teams in the National Touch Series (32 teams in women's comp and 64 teams in mixed comp)
- Girls and mixed teams in Junior Touch Cup
- Women's and Mixed teams in local leagues
- Girls and Mixed teams in the new High Performance Youth Academy at 12s, 15s, 18s and 20s, with a holistic approach including health and wellbeing in addition to coaching and playing development
- The launch of a new Women's Touch Festival in April 2025 in London
- Our second Women in Business and Sport Conference, featuring contributions from, among others, rugby legend Maggie Alphonsi MBE, transatlantic rower Felicity Ashley, and golfer Nicola Bennett



Womens NTS / Womens Seniors at Nationals



Membership & Demographics

For another year, England Touch experienced a 10 percent increase in the number of individual members.

During 2024 the membership and communications team refined and improved communications to the membership, with weekly ezines throughout the year. All new ezine signups are now being sent to the JustGo platform, increasing the potential for participant/customer data capture and possible conversion to membership.

Focuses for 2025 include:

- How best to retain community clubs and increase the number of new clubs
- Take a new look at individual regional level memberships
- Work with League Operators (professional and amateur) to increase our understanding of the broader participation landscape
- Generally improving systems and procedures to support a better customer and participant experience



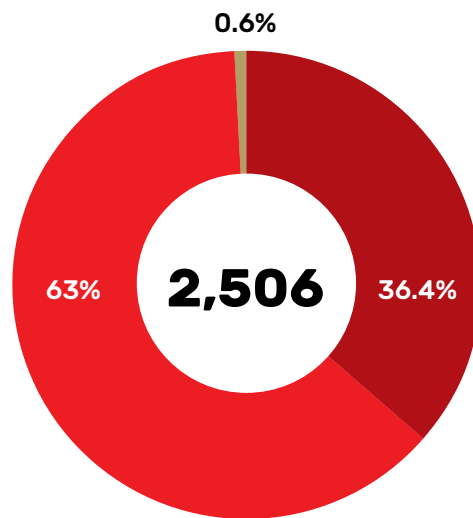
A 10 percent increase in individual members



Membership & Demographics

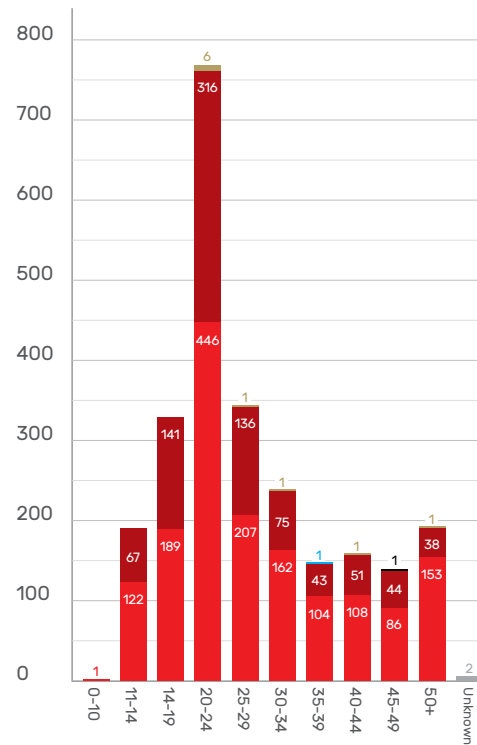
As of the end of this reporting period: September 30, 2024

Members by gender



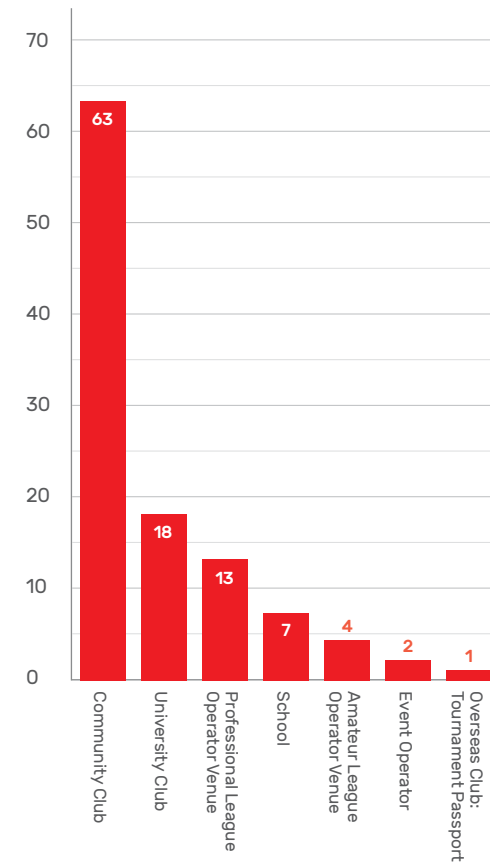
- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer
- Non-binary
- Gender diverse

Members by age



- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer
- Non-binary
- Gender diverse

Clubs by type





ETA Workforce

ETA's workforce delivered an immense workload in 2024, delivering the largest ever Touch World Cup, and ensuring we performed well in it. We continued to grow our membership numbers and offered more events than ever.

Given that the workforce is almost entirely volunteer – and that most people take on multiple roles – the commitment they have and quality they deliver is something that ETA should continue to celebrate.

As is natural after such a significant achievement, there has been some turnover across the organisation.

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2024 staffing changes to note:

Departure of Chris Simon from the Chief Executive Officer's role – Vince Mayne has since been appointed, as mentioned elsewhere in this annual review

Appointment of Kathy van der Rijt as Operations Manager. Kathy has a comprehensive knowledge of the domestic and international Touch world, and has contributed significantly to the Association.

Appointment of Louis Treays as Operations Manager, Touch World Cup (fixed term role). Louis has since been appointed as In2Touch's Leagues and Events Operations Manager. We are delighted to see him continue his career path in one of the key areas of growth for Touch as a whole.

Departure of Aisling Musgrave from the Events Manager role after more than five years' in the position. In that time England Touch not only navigated its events programme successfully through the pandemic challenges but came out with a stronger structure which in turn attracted more clubs and teams to enter the

National Touch Series and Nationals. Aisling was also a key part of the delivery of the 2022 European Touch Championships, 2023 Atlantic Youth Touch Cup and 2024 Touch World Cup. Kevin Hill has re-joined the Association to lead the events delivery, something which he did for three years, in addition to helping to deliver multiple international events for the Federation of International Touch.

Appointment of Ian Tankard to the University Lead role, with Jack Harris moving to become National Referee Manager.

We carry a number of vacancies into 2025, including both strategic and operational roles. As we look ahead to what we need to deliver next, we will take these opportunities to ensure we are appointing the right people into the right roles, and ensure our workforce is mobilised and empowered to deliver.



ETA Workforce continued to facilitate excellent events across our calendar



Coaching

As of 2024, we have 458 people within our coaching database, while 573 out of 2,500 registered members noted their involvement in coaching. This covers all levels of our coaching pathway, from foundation level to the few elite coaches we have within England Touch.

Over the season we delivered four Level 1 courses, three safeguarding in Touch courses and two CPD workshops delivered by Peter Bell designed to introduce teachers and coaches to the Priority 10 framework. However course delivery was limited due to the majority of our voluntary course presenters and workforce being involved in the delivery of the Touch World Cup.

During 2025 we are hoping to increase the delivery of our courses across all levels within the pathway. We have planned a CPD workshop schedule that we will run throughout the year. These workshops will include topics such as how to recruit & retain female players, fundamentals within the Priority Touch framework, Strength and Conditioning, club

resources, platform tutorials, and much more. We plan to use the feedback from our coaches survey to tailor the topics covered across our workshop schedule.

As we now have a larger group of coaching course presenters across all regions, we are planning to deliver L1 courses more locally, with a target of at least one L1 course per region. We will be introducing three new L1 CPD courses, focusing on the principles of mixed touch, game plan principles & foundations and advanced midfield principles. We are also hoping to relaunch our schools coaching courses to align with the work we are doing to develop and promote Touch in schools and for junior players.

We have plans to grow and develop new initiatives for our coaching community, such as a Coaches Community newsletter. We also have a plan to run a coaches survey, aiming to get feedback from our coaches on what resource areas interest them and the ways we can support and develop touch coaches throughout England.

High Performance

Our High Performance Coaching Staff have grown to 60 coaches in the previous competition cycle, including all Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Coach Developers, the Head of Elite Coaching and Team England's Head Coach for 19 Youth, Opens, Seniors and Masters teams in Boys/Men's, Girls/Women's and Mixed Formats.

Coach development has been an important focus within High Performance following the 2019 Touch World Cup in Malaysia and with the further integration of sports psychologists and performance analysts, our coaches were more supported in the 2024 Touch World Cup than ever before.

There have also been also increased online and in-person CPD to cover a number of key areas identified as needing work from coaching interventions to game planning and many technical areas of the game. Much of this work has been led by Team England Head Coach, Peter Bell, who – although based in Australia – has gone to great lengths to help support

and develop England Touch's High Performance Programme.

High Performance Coaching continues to be an area of huge growth for England Touch and with the establishment of the Youth Academy and even more squads in the next competition cycle, there is much opportunity in this area and the connection of the regional and club coaching pathways.



What would you consider the best part of the 2024 season?

"The combination of all of it is what makes it so special. There is something for everybody of all abilities to be able to get involved and develop. The relationships between the players and teams is extremely supportive and positive and creates a really inclusive environment. Keeping that is critical to the future growth and getting new people involved in the game."



Referees

The huge success of the England teams at Nottingham 2024 was matched by TeamRef!

As part of a team of 180 top-level officials, the 18 English referees more than held their own across the week, achieving many significant milestones. These included:

First European female referee appointed to an Open division final

Scooby Watchorn

Youngest ever Level 5 referee in Europe

Theo Edwards

Ranked and appointed to finals

Gold Medal Finals:

- Scooby Watchorn (W0)
- Gareth Hines (M30)
- Nicholas van de Rijt (W27)
- Kevin Hobbs (M45)

Bronze Medal Finals:

- Jordi Bitlloch (X0)
- Dan Harrison (X30)
- Dominic Shaw (W35)
- Julian Edwards (M55)

Milestones and upgrades

50 international caps reached:

- Layo Aromire
- Oliver Exton
- Fergal Evans
- Jack Harris
- Dan Harrison

Upgrades to Level 5:

- Mike Davis
- Julian Edwards
- Theo Edwards
- Fergal Evans

Upgrades to Level 4:

- Matt Emerson
- Chloe Spencer

Domestically there were also significant achievements, including:

Nationals

- Full referee contingent of 60+ referees.
- Selection process necessary with all referees being L2 or above

Junior Nationals

- First Junior Nationals to be fully staffed
- Facilitation and support of the first European Junior Touch Championships

National Touch Series and BUCS University Touch Championships

- Increase in average level of referees attending events has increased (2.1 to 2.4)
- Maintained engagement from Referees at UTC
 - increased at Regionals



W27 Final Appointed / England's TeamRef's Nicholas van de Rijt

What would you consider the best part of the 2024 season?

"Getting to come back and referee and being made to feel welcomed and supported from the referee team and ETA staff."





Events

2024 Champions



Nationals

Opens

Men's Open

South East Sharks

Women's Open

South East Taipans

Mixed Open

Midlands Tigers

Seniors & Masters

Women's 27s

Midlands Tigers

Men's 30s

South West Saxons

Women's 35s

South East Sharks

Women's 40s

Midlands Tigers

Men's 40s

Midlands Tigers

Men's 45s

South East Taipans

Men's 50s

Midlands Tigers

Juniors

Girls 17s

West Wildcats

Boys 17s

Midlands Tigers

Girls 14s

South West Saxons

Boys 14s

North West Bulls

Boys 12s

North West



National Touch Series

Mixed NTS

London Scorpions

Men's NTS

London Scorpions

Women's NTS

NQ Rebels



BUCS University Touch Championships

Nottingham
Trent University



NTS / Men's NTS Winners: London Scorpions / Women's NTS Winners: NQ Rebels

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A BALL
AND PLAY**



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