

ANNUAL REPORT – 2014/2015



#EnglandTouch





#EnglandTouch

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President Report

Welcome

It gives me great pleasure to present the annual report for England Touch for 2015. Reflecting on another monumental year with so many significant achievements, I'm filled with pride to play my part. It would be difficult to imagine a more exciting time in Touch, than we are currently enjoying. Of course the memory of a wonderful (and wet) Touch World Cup, which showcased our representative teams against the world's best lives on; which was closely followed by the excitement generated by the various Touch series, our fantastic hosting of the Junior Touch Championships and the year culminating in a record breaking Touch Nationals

Thanks

The first reflection should be on the selfless contribution of our volunteer workforce, that are at the heart of our vision. We recognise that without their commitment, professionalism and expertise it would be impossible to achieve our goals. We are committed to providing on-going investment to their learning and development to achieve the highest standards we set for ourselves year upon year. Companies and sports associations alike do not become and stay effective and flourish without strong and passionate personnel, and it would be remiss of me not to mention how the current committee are just that, as they constantly drive the sport forward as we continue to grow. Thank you to all the volunteers who continually represent our sport, whilst we understand it's sometimes a challenge, we thank you for your continued commitment to our great game. And finally to all of our commercial partners and sponsors, we thank you for your continued support.

Planning

As part of the strategic planning, where we are busy setting priorities, focussing energy and resources, strengthening our operations, and ensuring that the committee, members and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, and intended outcomes/results. We are assessing and adjusting the associations direction in response to a changing environment. It is a slow and methodical process that will produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what England Touch is, who it serves, what it does, and why it does it, with a clear focus on the future. Effective strategic planning articulates not only where we are going and the actions needed to make progress, but also how we will know if we are successful. As Charles Darwin stated, "It's not the stronger of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, it is the one that is most adaptable to change."

Governance

We have recently created a Skills Matrix, which will directly link to the associations strategic goals and identify what skills are needed on the board whilst identifying any gaps. We have also spent time updating all task descriptions too, as all roles have evolved, we have new roles in place, they now follow good governance guidelines as advised by S&RA, the format fits with major sporting website formats and they will assist with succession planning.

Global

England were selected to be part of the FIT Income Stream Review Committee, representing Europe. This entailed attending a 2 day face-to-face meeting in Australia along with numerous Skype meetings discussing alternative financial models setting responsibilities of FIT. Interaction with the FIT board along with both TFA and TNZ CEO's was also an invaluable experience.



Membership

> 233% Increase



Members

> 850 individuals



Volunteers

> 100 involved in 2015



Touch World Cup

Joint 3rd in the world



Junior Championship

Successfully hosted and teams in every final



University Touch Series

Inaugural year with 20 teams in UTS1



Sponsorship

1st Cash Deal for ETA



Governance

Joined Voluntary Code of Good Governance



Clubs

11 newly formed clubs joined

Strategies

The board held their first 'away day' in 2015, at Badminton England, which was extremely valuable in a number of fronts. The main purpose of the meeting was to:

- Participate in a day of interactive workshops and presentations. Interesting discussions were had on how to best use the Sport England High Performing NGB framework to provide clarity on direction and vision, ensure customer and staff satisfaction and build sustained growth for England Touch.
- Improve communication, to ensure we are not working in silos and have departmental co-operation to achieve desired outcomes.
- Share ideas, information and challenges with an opportunity to get together, and learn from each other.
- Build trust and moral amongst the committee and make all employees feel valued and ensure the culture aligns to our values.
- Gain personal development and time for people to assess their skills and qualities and maximise their potential.
- Reflect on an extremely busy 2015 and to commence forward planning for the next cycle (up until 2019) by deciding where our focus should be.





Sport is part of our national identity. England created countless sports played around the world and we take pride in hosting some of the greatest sporting competitions on the planet. Touch participation creates so many opportunities, not only providing obvious health benefits, but also less tangible benefits related to friendships and fun. Touch is ultimately about people, we want to liberate and inspire more people to get off the couch and (back) in to sport, to sustain their enthusiasm and provide quality experiences.

As any athlete knows, success is only possible when strong foundations have been put in place. This is what we have done over the past 2 years as we have built the committee to be stronger, smarter and more proactive than ever, engaging members and promoting the sport at every level.

Touch is a passion of mine and I'm incredibly proud to lead and be a part of an association that has flourished in recent times. But complacency is just as much of an enemy to those that run sport as it is to an athlete and it's due to this I make no apologies for the ambitious short and long term goals we set for ourselves year on year.

Goals

Complete a 'Whole sport plan' based approach on an agreed strategic vision; setting and maintaining KPIs, whilst monitoring, evaluating and developing the executive board and committee. We must also evaluate the partnerships opportunities the ETA have, ensuring that they allow the ETA to flourish.

- **UNDERSTANDING OUR CUSTOMERS**

- Meet the needs of the members and enable them to engage in our sport, in numerous ways;
- Meet the requirements of the elite and deliver successful outcomes at major Touch Championships.

- **INCREASING THE PROFILE OF THE GAME**

- Collaborate with partners and sponsors to upscale our events;
- Continue to use the internet as a powerful way to increase the profile of our game;
- Make sure both our website and social media platforms reflect the personality of England Touch and its positive growth.

- **DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE**

- Sustain a productive, viable and responsible association with an effective committee structure;
- Invest in those who give to the sport, providing incentives for them to continue to promote and develop their strategies;
- Continue to provide opportunities for collaborative working and sharing of good practice between other NGB's and other successful Touch Associations.

- **CREATING HIGH QUALITY PRODUCTS & ENVIRONMENTS**

- Our Brand is our Identity;
- Ensure brand identification markers – symbols, images, style, colours and messages are consistent.



COLLATING AND USING INSIGHT



EXTENDING OUR OFFERS



EXPANDING OUR REACH AND INCOME POTENTIAL



SPORT ENGLAND ALIGNMENT

• **COLLATING AND USING INSIGHT**

- Knowledge and understanding of what works effectively to help grow the sport;
- Listen to the customers voice;
- Understand our strengths and weaknesses and be open to new ways of working.

• **EXTENDING OUR OFFERS**

- Develop further playing opportunities for people to play in safe, fun and enjoyable environments, whilst creating sustainable activities;
- Develop opportunities for wider age group to incorporate growth of the sport at schools and within school sports partnerships, community partnerships, universities, disadvantaged areas
- More opportunities for women only league set ups, reflecting on the model of Midlands Ladies Leagues to get more women and girls in to the sport;
- Touch developing and expanding in new areas through an increased number of community coaches and qualified referees

• **EXPANDING OUR REACH AND INCOME POTENTIAL**

Optimise revenue streams to allow for sustainability through:

- Increase in affiliated Memberships;
- Online Shop for apparel and course bookings;
- The development and launch of England Touch Leagues.

• **SPORT ENGLAND ALIGNMENT**

Further align with Sport England guidelines:

- Increased regular and sustained participation with an improvement in talent pathways;
- A growth in participation in the 14-25 age range;
- A growth in participation across the adult population;
- An excellent sporting experience for existing participants to keep them playing the sport;
- High quality talent development which creates effective Pathways for elite players from all age divisions across England Touch;
- A growth in participation by people who have disabilities.

In the near future, it is hoped that there will be smooth transition between Touch played in schools, linking in to clubs and community participation which tiers in to Elite Pathways and National representation.

Gregg Cropper

President and Chairman



Governance

Sports Governance has specific issues to address such as safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Touch is a sport promoted for all abilities and ages. Involving young people in mixed age sport activity combined with the growth of our game at junior level has resulted in England Touch developing good governance and pledging a commitment towards safeguarding, welfare and wellbeing, whereby effective practice is always underpinned by two key principles;

Everyone's responsibility; playing a full part to ensure a coordinated approach

Person centred; a clear understanding of an individual's needs and views

England Touch must uphold the highest standards of integrity not only in what it does but in the wider environment of our sport.

A particular focus will be to work with our affiliated clubs to appoint and train an appropriate designated person; to ensure that best practice is promoted and that implementation of Safeguarding and Welfare Policies and Procedures is supported; and to ultimately work in partnership with a variety of stakeholders to provide the highest quality and positive experience for everyone playing touch.

Hosting the Junior European Touch Championships 2015 required full details on how we mitigate and control risks associated with working with young people, how information is passed on to those involved, details of our Safeguarding policies and how we protect young people within the sport of Touch, all of which is available to the public; so this is what we did...ensuring your organisation is equipped to manage threats to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

ETA Safeguarding and Welfare Policy

- Policy Statement
- Recruitment, Employment & Deployment of Staff and Volunteers
- Promoting Good Practice with Children/Young People and Vulnerable Adults
- Recognition of Poor Practice, Abuse and Bullying
- Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations
- Reporting Flowchart
- Useful Contacts
- Useful Publications

ETA Key standards and procedures

- Anti Bullying Policy
- Confidential Record of an Incident/Complaint
- Use of Photography and Public Imagery Guidelines
- Transport, Drop Off and Collection Guidelines
- Lead Safeguarding Officer Task Description
- Confidential Record of a Safeguarding Allegation

SIGNED UP TO
Good Governance



THE VOLUNTARY
CODE OF GOOD
GOVERNANCE

**SPORT+
RECREATION
ALLIANCE**

How do we continue to make good governance happen?

In March 2014 the ETA signed up to the Sport and Recreation Alliance Voluntary Code of Good Conduct and we are enthusiastic to integrate the principles across our organisation; adopting the practical considerations which will work best for our members.

“Our approach to governance is not just about formal structures; it’s about how governance is understood and acted on throughout our organisation and members, from the boardroom to the playing field”

Carly Heselwood

Governance Director



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Disclosure - DBS

It is the responsibility of England Touch, to ensure we practice safeguarding and child protection policies in line with current legislation, for all of our members. We need to make sure that we are constantly checking the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with children and vulnerable adults in all clubs who fall under the umbrella of the ETA (those affiliated to us). The DBS process helps to ensure that thorough background checks are in place.

It is therefore paramount that ALL clubs registered with the ETA can provide a named coach who is in possession of an up to date DBS form and that affiliated clubs are meeting the requirements of child protection and safeguarding policies.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

The ETA has offered to support clubs through the process of obtaining a DBS in conjunction with the GBGroup (online disclosure provider)

<https://www.onlinedisclosures.co.uk/criminal-record-checks/basic-disclosures/>

If your club has not yet met these requirements then please can you act accordingly and contact the Disclosure Manager to arrange your online application.

julia@englandtouch.org.uk

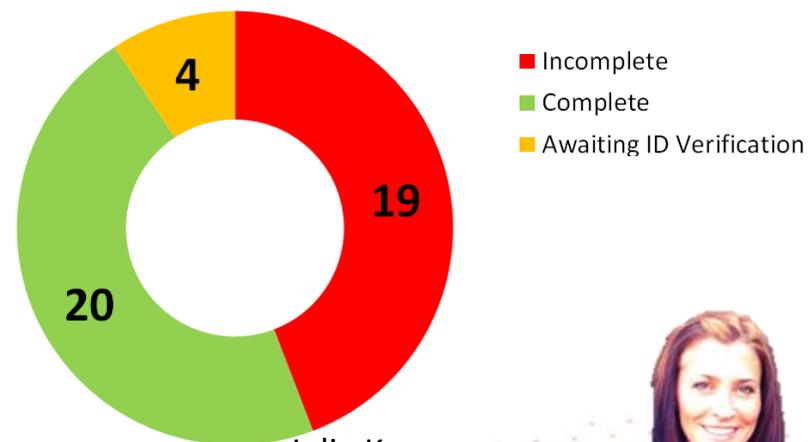
If you choose to process your own DBS check, then please can you submit your DBS reference number at your earliest convenience. The ETA confidentially holds all DBS reference numbers submitted to the Disclosure manager.

What has been done in 2015

- Continued to provide support to affiliated clubs for online DBS applications for club coaches.
- Set up online applications for ETA 'staff'. Inc National Coaches, Team Managers, Medical team members etc
- Created live listing of all affiliated clubs and logged all DBS registered coaches.
- Contacted clubs with no evidence of DBS checks in place.

Current Status

20 Affiliated Clubs have now registered a DBS checked coach with some clubs having more than 1 registered coach with DBS clearance. Several are waiting verification.



Julia Kang


Disclosure Manager



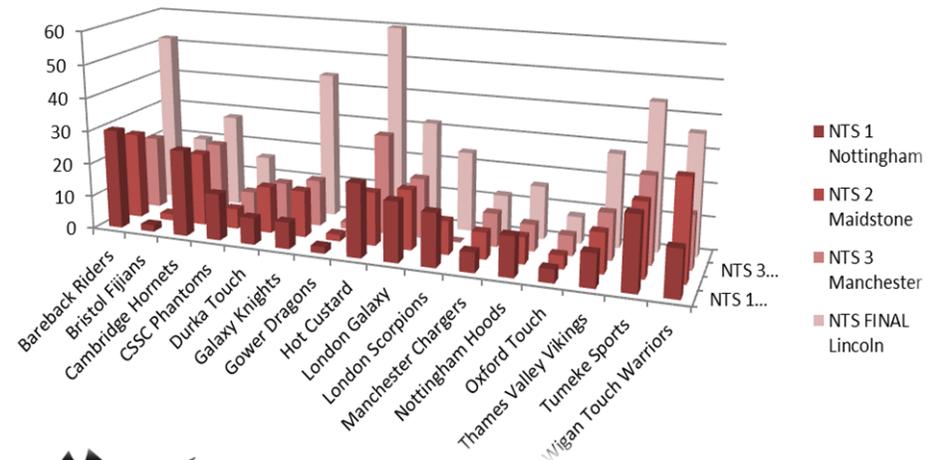
Events

Season Review

During 2015 England Touch launched three tiers of competition with clubs of all levels accessing tournaments hosted across the country. We led the way with our delivery of the Touch Nationals and showcased the sport with the widely heralded Junior Touch Championships for European nations.

Belief Sports National Touch Series

The National Touch Series was again competed to a very high level in 2015, with a new supportive sponsor in Belief Sports, and some fantastic hosts. After a close challenge in the previous year our victorious club of the season was the team of Bareback Riders. Although they lost out in the NTS final to Hot Custard, who made up for a slow start to get within 2 points at the end, BBR proved that they were up for a very strong season with and were worthy winners of the Series. Top three finishes in all the rounds and runners up in the double points final gave BBR the title with notable performances along the way from Cambridge Hornets, Tumeke and, making club history, Wigan Touch Warriors who gained their first National tournament title, to great excitement in Maidenhead!



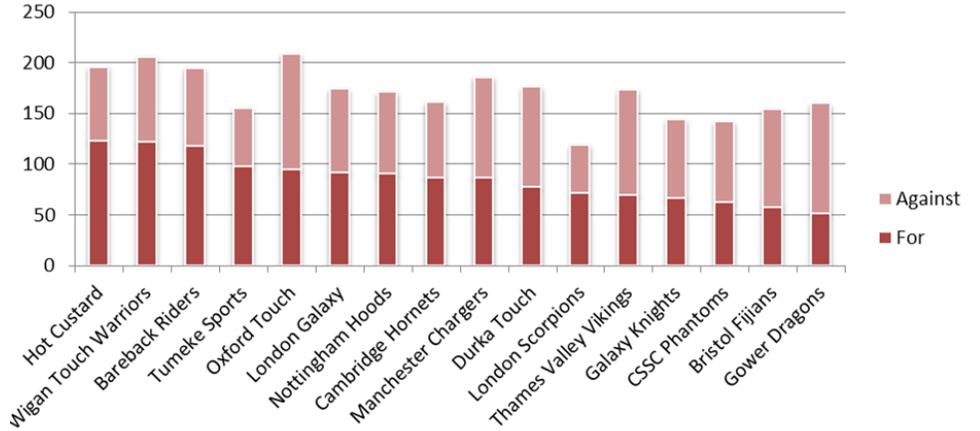
Nottingham University again provided a fantastic environment for top level Touch (more below with the JTC15 review); Maidenhead was a very competitive, well hosted day; and Manchester stayed dry with a great atmosphere! Many thanks to our hosts Nottingham Hoods, Thames Valley Vikings and Manchester Chargers.



**2016 Belief NTS Champions
Bareback Riders**

Lincoln staged the NTS/CTS Final and, with an extended tournament day and function, we enjoyed superb facilities, a little windy conditions, but another fitting tournament to provide our teams with a chance to showcase their talents. Many thanks to Lincoln Touch for hosting this after a difficult summer for the club.

Sam Grant from Wigan again proved to be the top touchdown scorer across the season with plenty of familiar names in the top individual list below.



Name	Club	NTS 1	NTS 2	NTS 3	FINALS	TOTAL
Sam Grant	Wigan Touch Warriors	4	10	6	12	32
Ben Meakin	Nottingham Hoods	6	9	6	7	28
Jake Melling	Wigan Touch Warriors	8	6	3	7	24
Ben Creese	Cambridge Hornets	4	11	6	3	24
Joseph Hartley	Oxford Touch	6	4	3	7	20
Adam Reid	Hot Custard	7	4	4	3	18
Michael Short	Bareback Riders	5	4	1	7	17
James Knoop	Cambridge Hornets	7	7		2	16
Leigh Wylie	Hot Custard	5	2	3	6	16
Shaun Bengston	Galaxy Knights	2	5	3	3	13
Dom Tripp	London Scorpions	2	2		9	13
Meghan Clayton	Wigan Touch Warriors		6	4	3	13
Richard King	Oxford Touch	7	1	1	3	12
Toby Phillips	Manchester Chargers	3	3	2	4	12
Brandon Davies	Gower Dragons	2	1	7	2	12
Becs Lang	London Galaxy	2	5	5		12

Table above shows the touchdowns for and against for each club

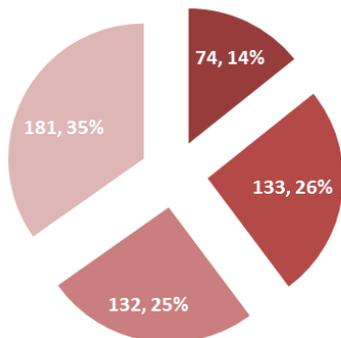
Following a late club withdrawal, Gower Dragons stepped up and rose to a tough challenge and all clubs and organisers appreciated their efforts and enthusiasm in stepping in across the series.

SPORTTAPE Challenge Touch Series

Following on from a change in structure in 2014 the Challenge Touch Series continued to be delivered on the same day as NTS with another terrific season. 12 qualified clubs competed across the series with Galaxy CTS proving too strong, backing up their performances from making the final in each of the three rounds, with a win at the Lincoln finale.

Cambridge Bees and Custard Jägers provided a constant challenge across the series, with Percy Park also making the Manchester Cup Final, but finishing a point behind Bristol Fijians.

Next season will see a couple of new challengers to the CTS following promotions and it will continue to provide a fantastic tournament for clubs with larger squads as well as developing clubs as they strive for the NTS standard.



Number of NTS / CTS attended per player

Another young Wigan Touch Warrior topped the scoring charts with Adam Bimson leading the way narrowly piping England X18s player, Galaxy Adam Bailey .

Name	Club	CTS 1	CTS 2	CTS 3	FINALS	TOTAL
Adam Bimson	Wigan Touch Warriors	1	6	9	3	19
Adam Bailey	Galaxy CTS			6	12	18
Ollie Taylor	CSSC Shadows		5	2	7	14
Gareth Woodfin	Varsity Vandals	3		6	4	13
David Heslop	Custard Jägers	6		3	3	12
Will Simpson	CSSC Shadows	6	2		3	11
David Scribbins	Percy Park Pirates	6	4			10
Paddy Downes	Varsity Vandals	5		2	3	10
Claire Mcsherry	Cambridge Bees	3	2	5		10

2016 SPORTTAPE CTS Champions London Galaxy



Steeden Development Touch Series

Developing a third tier of competition was very important following the success of the previous national season. 23 teams competed across the new summer series with opportunities for new and familiar clubs to host. Bournemouth provided a great launch to the new Development Touch Series with Warwick, Manchester, Halton and Lincoln following.

Canterbury Cougars were the top English club in three of the tournaments and have been invited to participate in the NTS in 2016. Their mix of experience and youth proved an exciting mix and they now have an opportunity to progress at a higher level.

Series champions were Green and Gold who will be promoted to CTS along with Halton Storm who proved a very consistent side in 2015. Both teams have experienced campaigners and will add a great deal to the higher level.

It was fantastic to track teams and individuals across the summer with many making great strides in their squads and understanding of the game. Particularly encouraging was the commitment to travel and also the development of new referees. Thanks to the Ref coaches who assisted across the series and also to the teams who supported the process across the summer.



**2016 Steeden DTS Champions
Green + Gold**



The Development Touch Series has a real chance to grow in 2016 and the aim is to have 3 regions providing local opportunities, with several national tournament days mixed in to give clubs variety and the social side of the sport.

England Touch Nationals

Delivered with the High Performance team the England Touch Nationals stepped up another gear in 2015 with a fantastically supported weekend in Cambridge. Alongside the traditional Men's and Women's regionals divisions we hosted the Steeden DTS Final, Mixed development teams, 3 men's, masters and Junior mixed regions.

London Taipans proved to be the top region in 2015 in both open categories and gave competing teams little opportunities in dominant displays. Middle East Touch entered teams in 3 divisions and provided a welcome unpredictability to the event, and as the weekend unfolded it was clear that the sport is really looking forward to stepping up the development of all aspects of the game.



The tournament in 2016 will be expanded to 3 days in August, with our fantastic venue looking to provide an even better player and spectator experience. Regions are looking to provide more training and development sessions earlier in the season and the tournament will grow to allow the raising of the regional standard to be highlighted with improved facilities.

Junior Touch Championships 2015

Following the successful application process England Touch was delighted to host the JTC15 at the University fields in Nottingham. With NTAs sending up to 3 divisions we provided a fantastic occasion for so many young sports people, coaches, parents, and referees. England Touch rose to the challenge set to deliver a memorable weekend and we certainly allowed the occasion to be enjoyed by all in a high quality weekend.



Quotes;

Ray Burt - Well done to all associated with this weekend's tournament, fantastic setting fantastic touch and fantastic atmosphere. Thank you all.

David Wood - And a brilliant job you did as well, thanks to all the coaches and organisers for giving the parents such a superb weekend.



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Men's and Women's Touch Cup (MWTC) 2016

With many successful women's tournaments being staged across the country and Europe, England Touch are looking to host men's and women's days in 2016 on the Sundays following two bank holiday NTS/CTS. These will be open entry but based around club teams in the first instance. Developing the opportunities for players who play mostly mixed touch will hopefully provide a way of national coaches working with clubs to strengthen the player base in the open single sex divisions.

University Touch Series UTS 2015/2016

Starting in the autumn of 2015 several universities are taking the lead to develop a touch series across the country, allowing many to develop their skills and growing the game. This could prove to be a fantastic way of opening up competitive touch to new players, before they miss out on the opportunities of learning about the sport too late.



Thanks 2015

Many people come together to make a Touch season and Kevin Hill (ETA Tournament Director) would like to acknowledge the following:

- All Host Clubs across the season,
- Ken Pollard for taking on a huge logistical job along with Matt Reid in working with the venue and NTAs during the JTC15,
- Shelley Grace for supporting the tournaments and rallying the referees during a very busy summer,
- Ben Powell for his work on Nationals throughout the year, and leaving me the fun bit at the end!
- Gregg Cropper for his continuing support across all events that we deliver,
- Medical team for their professionalism and expertise,
- All the referees who have supported tournaments in good times and trying days,
- Touch Football Australia for encouragement and mentoring during the Touch World Cup,
- And finally our Sponsors Belief Sports, SPORTTAPE and Steeden who provided supplies and financial support for the main tournaments.

Kevin Hill

Events Director



High Performance

Recalling the dedication, professionalism and perseverance of the High Performance team and athletes in 2014-2015 gives me immense pride.

The foundation is the HP team: an exceedingly diverse group comprising of coaches, advisors, administrators, managers, medical personnel and conditioning staff. Last year, this team worked tirelessly to sustain the goal of caring for, supporting and enabling our athletes to realise and perform to their potential.

Without the combined contribution from over sixty volunteers, England Touch could not have achieved the results which were attained at the highest level of international competition, nor enabled the remarkable evolution in our junior ranks. However, while the last twelve months has included some very notable achievements, it has also provided the HP team with very valuable lessons and experiences which will hopefully be used to continue to respond to the challenges ahead and drive ourselves to be better and better.

It is therefore with great pleasure that I present the High Performance review of the 2014-2015 year, alongside some initial HP team changes for 2016 whilst identifying strategic work needed for the years beyond.

Touch World Cup 2015

Planning for England Touch's 2015 Touch World Cup commenced in June 2013 (22 months prior to the tournament). This planning exercise created continuity for both athletes and staff for an eighteen-month period covering both the 2014 European Touch Championships (Swansea, Wales) and the 2015 Touch World Cup (Coffs Harbour, Australia).

After a very successful European Touch Championships and following an intense seven months of training, a total of seven teams totalling 112 players and 27 staff travelled to Australia to compete in the Federation of International Touch's Touch World Cup. At the event, despite horrendous weather conditions, England kept hold of a top four world ranking, coming equal third with Papua New Guinea. Notable mentions include 3 bronze medals in senior divisions and England Mixed Open obtaining a very close (and spirited) fourth. It was equally pleasing to note that the on- and off-field conduct of the touring contingent was of the highest standard.

Given the distance travelled by the England tour party, the results were a great indicator of the continued development of the sport at the elite echelon in England. It also reaffirms England as the dominant European Touch-playing nation at the elite level.



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However, results against the leading nations – Australia and New Zealand – indicate that Australia have gone further ahead and we have not been able to close the gap to New Zealand. This will help to focus our planning and goals for Touch World Cup 2019.

Junior Touch Championships 2015

In August 2015, England was represented by three teams at the second Junior Touch Championships in Nottingham. With a contingent of 37 players and 15 staff (a total of 52 in the tour group), this was the first time we had undertaken this scale of enterprise with juniors.

Our three teams – one elite team (England Mixed 18s) and two development sides (Lions Boys 18s and Lions Girls 18s) – all successfully proceeded to the final. Unfortunately however, all three sides fell to the Welsh. This meant we were unable to achieve our 2015 goal: to better our 2014 performance. As with our senior sides, very positive sportsmanship and behaviour was exhibited by the England Touch at the tournament.

Based on these results, we will need to consider how to strengthen our junior elite performance through schools, regional and national initiatives if we are to emerge as the dominant European nation in the junior ranks.

HP Finances for 2015

The HP finances are in a strong position following settling of all non-kit-related accounts for 2015. With an expenditure of almost £115k, a loss of around £3k was recorded.

This loss was significantly less than at £8k loss originally budgeted for (and was off-set by other income streams such as fees for late payment) and will allow the HP team to invest in both staff and players in 2016.

HP Staff and Appointments for 2016

2016 will see the High Performance team being led by an individual without any direct coaching responsibilities within the national setup. This was a decision taken to offer improved, dedicated support to the national coaches, the High Performance team as well as the executive. On a personal note, my decision to step away from coaching an England team proved extremely difficult, but I saw this as necessary to take England Touch HP to the next level.

With time devoted solely to the HP team, the recent focus was on finding and appointing the right, quality people for the 2016 campaign, and to commence investing in them. The result is that all senior and junior England head coaches have been appointed prior to the New Year, alongside many assistant coaches and team managers. To further strengthen the HP team, 2016 will also see additional performance personnel including one Performance Advisor and three Performance Analysts.



For 2016 the below junior and senior head coaches have been appointed on two-year terms. This list comprises of ten new and four returning coaches.

Boys 18s:	Doug Benzie
Girls 18s:	Marnie Wills
Mixed 15s:	Ben Powell
Mixed 18s:	Leah Cuthbertson
Men's Open:	Ben Smith
Men's 30s:	Nathan Bourke
Men's 35s:	Jason Logan
Men's 40s:	Jon Lovell
Men's 45s:	Ian Moody
Mixed Open:	Justin Conway and Phil Adams (co-coaches)
Mixed Senior:	Martin Wright
Women's Open:	Simon Clare
Women's 27s:	Gary Lambert

There will be an emphasis on accreditation and professional development in 2016. All head coaches are being supported financially to ensure that they have attained their Advanced (Level 2) FIT Coaching Certificate prior to international competition in 2016. This programme is being run with the expertise and assistance of Peter Bell of Touch Football Australia who will be in the UK in April 2016.

There are also a number of other initiatives being considered to support HP staff development – including attending conferences and potentially including elite coaching development days or forums.



Key Dates for 2016

European Touch Championships – nine teams across Opens, Seniors, Masters

- Senior England Camp: **8-10 April 2016**, Welbeck
- Tournament: **6-10 July 2016**, Jersey

Junior Touch Championships – four teams: Boys, Girls and Mixed 18s; Mixed 15s

- Junior England Camp: date TBC
- Tournament: **19-21 August 2016**, Holland



Beyond 2016

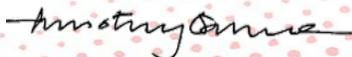
We have a great foundation for England to continue its success at the elite level in Europe. However, we must strive to be better and better with each year. While there is renewed focus on our people in 2016, other areas for future enhancement and focus are required so that we can realise our goals.

It is hoped a future roadmap – a High Performance Plan to 2019 – will be developed in the New Year. At a high-level, the review of 2015 and initial feedback suggests we must look at:

- Strengthening our domestic elite competition, particularly in terms of more regular Men's and Women's competition and for forty-minute games;
- Growing and strengthening our junior elite programme;
- Continuing to develop and invest in coaches at both regional and national level (to match the growth in player numbers, increase of talent and evolution of the game);
- Continuing to raise the profile of the game; and
- Ensuring innovation and support in areas of Touch-specific performance analytics, sports science and sports medicine.

With this in mind, it is a very exciting time for England Touch and I feel privileged to be a part of it.

Timothy Osborne


High Performance Director



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#TouchNationals

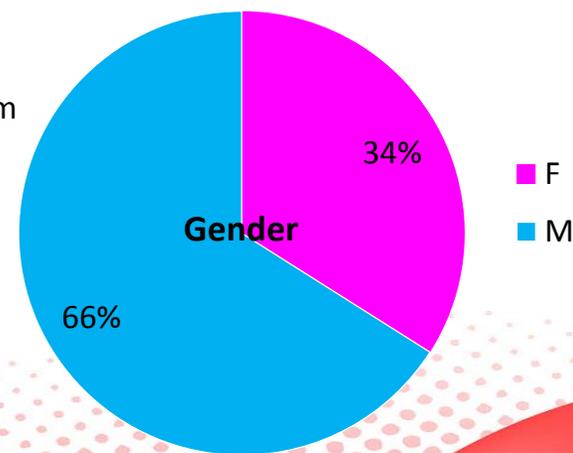
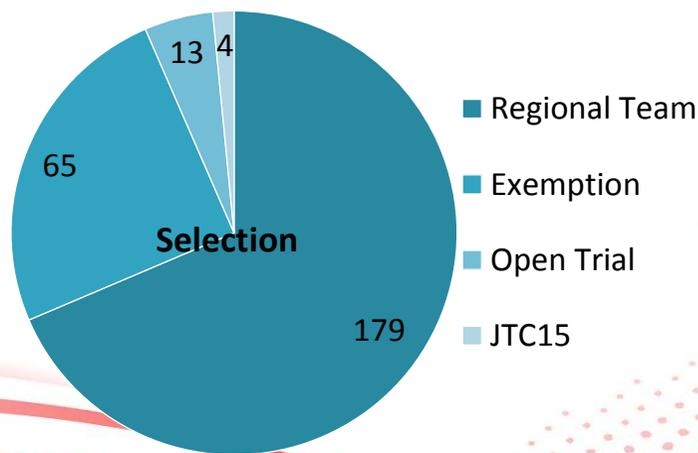
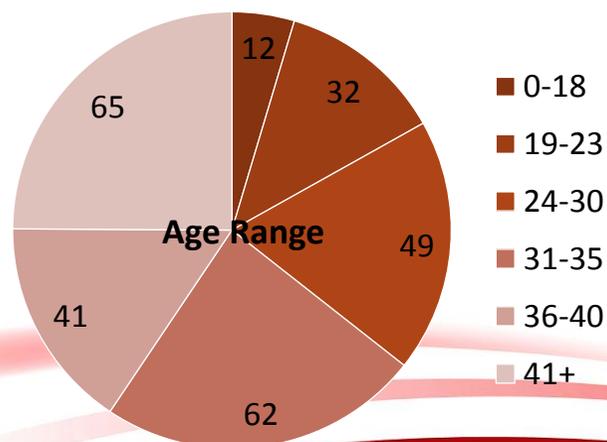
Bigger than ever!

The Touch Nationals was an even bigger event this year, not only accommodating the open divisions with 7 men's teams including an invitational appearance from the Middle East, and 6 women's teams, each battling it out for opens titles, but it also included mixed teams from developing regions to include Midlands Panthers, North East Raiders, South East Renegades, Southern Suns, with Middle East Touch also representing here as an invitational team.

3 x U18 teams took the stage, as fresh young talent was also on display with the U18s division which included Midlands Cubs, Northern Stars and the Southern Mavericks.

A new dawn, for the developing regions

This year saw the addition of the 'developing mixed' division, which saw 5 teams battle it out to be the inaugural winners of the new division.



Masters are back

Not to be outdone by new developing players, the Men's Masters were also in the mix with Midlands Storm, Northern Monkeys, South East Samurais and Southern Suns and an invitational appearance in this division also from the Middle East.

Open Trials

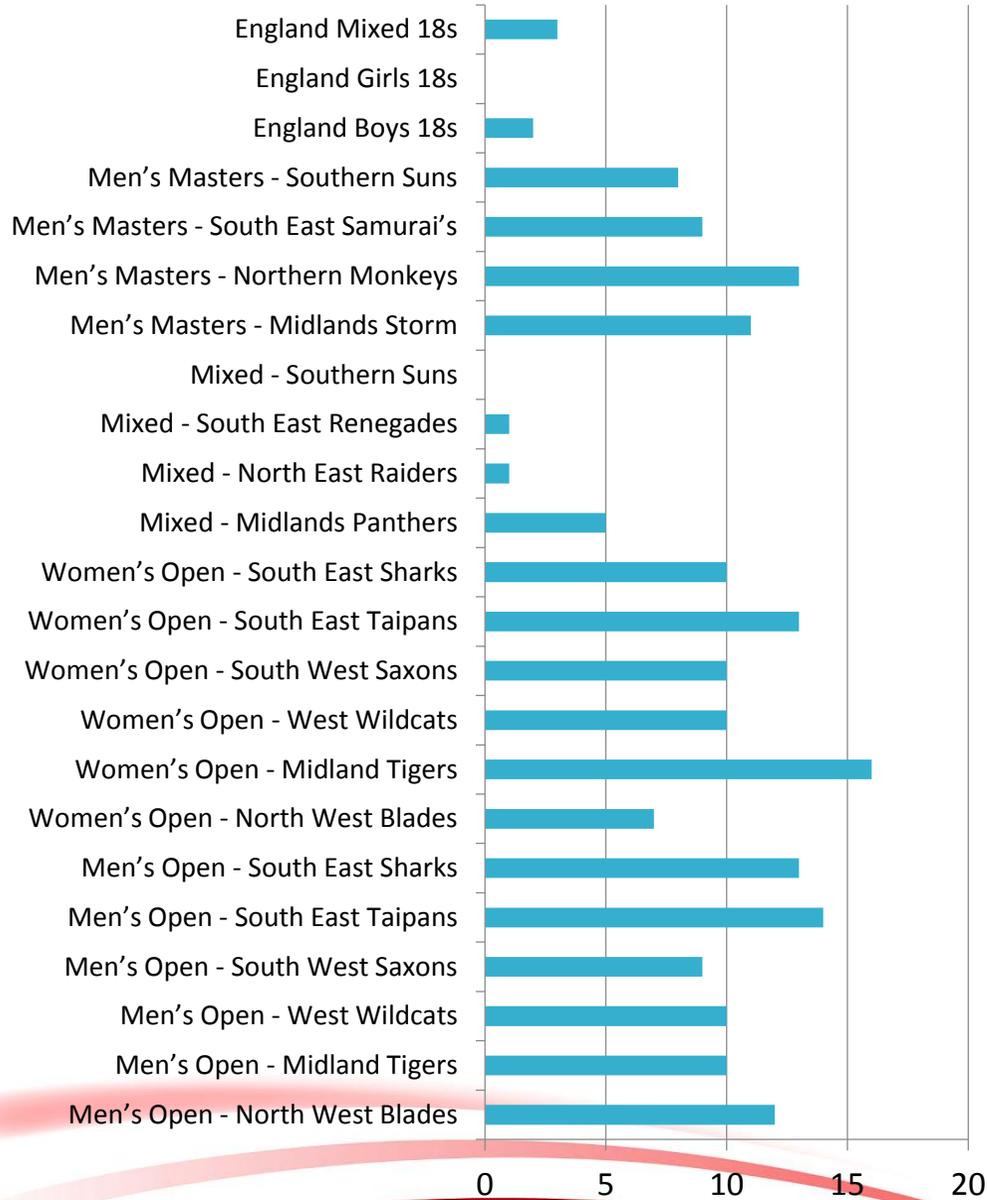
The Open Trials were also running alongside the Nationals. England selectors, clip boards at the ready, were fishing for any talent that may have slipped through the regional nets, as 30+ unknowns arrived in force to showcase their skills and their love of their sport.

Stats

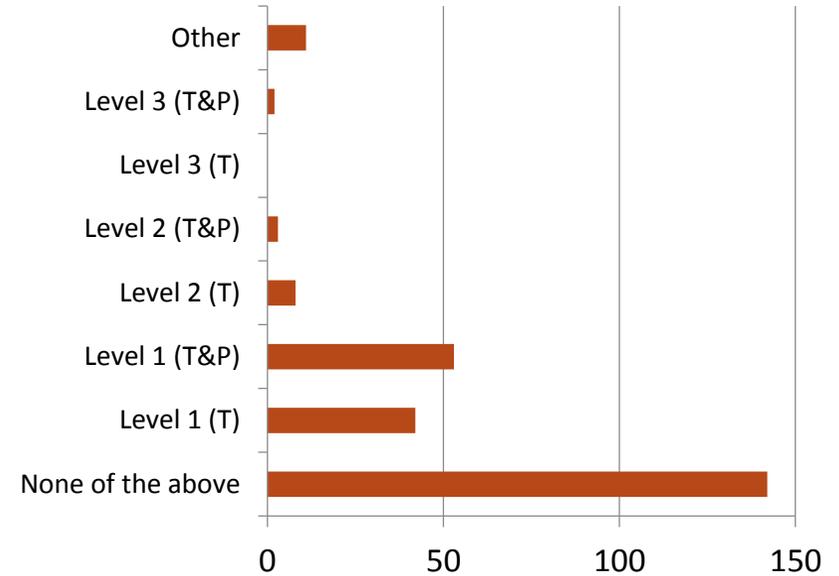
Here is how our squads are made up, which assists us in highlighting areas for further development and growth.



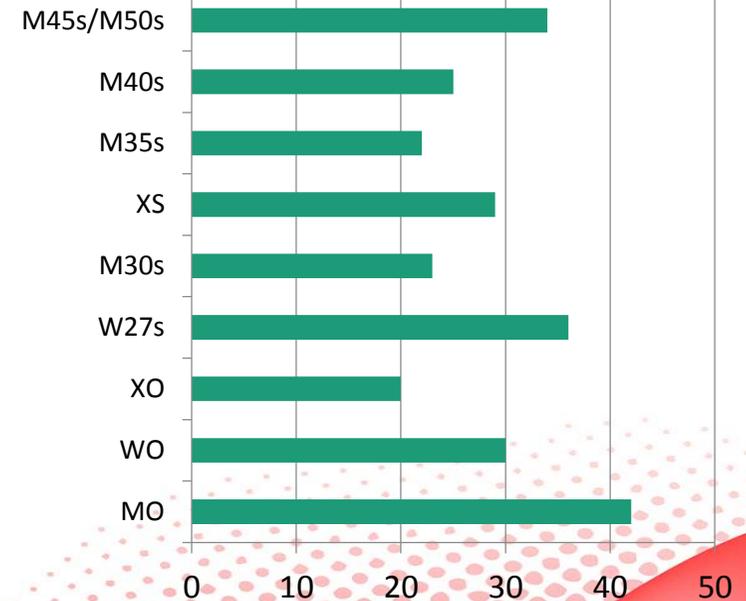
Regional Selection



Referee Qualifications



Selected Squad Sizes



Technical

2015 Coaching Courses

There were 10 Coaching Courses delivered in 2015, however, there were also 7 cancelled. The feedback from the Coaching Courses has been very good, and it is evident that England Touch are delivering a very good product. Overall we had 158 people complete either a Community Coaching Course or Intermediate Coaching Course.

The ETA have also offered significant assistance to other Nations within Europe, both with coaching courses and coaching support.

The aims for 2016 are as follows:

Community Coaching Courses:	5
Intermediate Coaching Courses:	8
Advanced Coaching Courses:	2
Presenters Courses:	2
Development Sessions:	20

Improvements to be made

- O2 Touch Clubs will need to enrol on already established courses. This is to avoid the inconvenience and financial implications of cancelling courses.
- More presenters are coming on-board for 2016. This will alleviate pressure from current presenter and also ensure we have different ideas and practice being shared to our new coaches.

2015 Coaching Courses		
Location	No.	O2 No.
Nottingham	22	9
Exeter	16	16
Berlin	12	0
Munich	12	0
Bournemouth	17	17
Southampton	16	16
Droitwich	25	25
Cambridge	15	6
Wixams	11	3
Reading	12	12
London	Cancelled	Cancelled
Upminster (1)	Cancelled	Cancelled
Upminster (2)	Cancelled	Cancelled
Reditch (1)	Cancelled	Cancelled
Reditch (2)	Cancelled	Cancelled
Royal Holloway	Cancelled	Cancelled
Guildford	Cancelled	Cancelled
	158	104

Policies and Procedures

At the beginning of the 2015 season the behavioural and disciplinary policy was distributed to all clubs, with players acknowledging their acceptance of the policy via signature at each tournament.

The behavioural and disciplinary policy was very successful this year. It resulted in the following;

- 3 players being issued with an official warning letter to indicate that they had been sent for a period of time for a behavioural and disciplinary issue and if it were to happen again they would be issued with an automatic ONE game suspension.
- 0 players were sent for a period of time more than once for behavioural or disciplinary issues.
- 0 players were sent for the remainder of a match for behavioural or disciplinary issues.

For next season the following improvements will be made; Further clarity needs to be provided on scorecards to allow referees to clearly highlight a behavioural or disciplinary issue has occurred.

2015 Touch Nationals

The 2015 Touch Nationals once again was the biggest tournament of the year, and proved to be the highest standard of touch that this country has seen. It attracted significant attention from all around Europe, and we had invitational teams attend from the Middle East. The 18's division expanded to 3 teams and a Mixed Open division was introduced to the tournament.

Plans and improvements for 2016

2016 will prove to be even bigger with the following changes being made:

- 18's Division expanding to 4 teams.
- Mixed Open Division expanding to 7 teams
- 15's Division being introduced
- Senior's Women's Division being introduced
- Regional Leads to appoint their own coaching team.
- Southern Suns to become a full franchise (build on clubs in Exeter and Southampton)
- Exploring whether to push South East Renegades to the Canterbury area.
- Zero tolerance on players 'playing' outside of the region they reside in.
- 0 Ineligible players playing in the Elite Men's and Elite Women's Divisions.

What divisions will compete:

- Elite Men's
- Mixed Open
- Masters Women's (Nth V Sth)
- U15's Mixed (TBC)
- Elite Women's
- Masters Men's
- U18's Mixed

Coaching Progression

We have made significant headway throughout 2015 with the progression of coaches. The below graph indicates that the standard and level of our national and regional coaches is the highest it's ever been, with over 85% of them being qualified to intermediate or advanced levels. Over 87% of all DTS clubs have community or intermediate coaches, with 100% of CTS and NTS clubs with qualified coaches.



2015 Development Sessions		
Location	No.	O2 No.
Exeter	71	71
Bournemouth	40	40
Bournemouth	35	35
Upminster	35	35
Saracens	18	18
Southampton	36	36
Wixams	11	3
	246	238



2015 Development Sessions

There were 7 official ETA Development Sessions delivered in 2015. However, many club and regional coaches delivered Development Sessions throughout the year at a local level. There were 246 people who attended these Development Sessions in 2015. There were a lot of development sessions delivered throughout the year that the ETA were not aware of. It is important we try and ensure we keep track of them to offer compliment/credit to the clubs and regions who are developing their areas. We will look to develop a system to ensure this data is collected better going forward.

Ben Powell

Technical Director



Development

Review of 2015

This has been an encouraging year for developing Touch in England, with the profile of the sport continuing to grow and more people playing touch in venues up and down the country.

The ETA have recruited and trained a team of over 20 volunteer Regional Development Officers, who have worked to support the growth of Touch in their regions. We have been able to deliver formal development sessions to over 30 clubs and O2 centres across the country, but the impact of the Development Officers reaches far wider than this, with regular coaching sessions, friendly competitions, informal advice, coaching and support delivered on a weekly basis.

We have supported new touch sessions up and down the country with advice, practical experience on setting up a new Touch club and coaching support, giving people the best chance of success. The ETA are proud to have supported the launch of 6 new clubs over the year.

By having the ETA as the central hub for all Touch enquiries, we have been able to direct numerous new players to clubs and O2 centres across the country.

In 2015, England also hosted Touch Europe's inaugural Junior Touch Championships at the University of Nottingham. This pitted U18 teams from across Europe and the Middle East in a high quality competition across three categories – Mixed, Girls and Boys.

All of the teams were well supported, adding a festive atmosphere to the proceedings. The teams rose to the occasion and the standard of play was exceptional across the whole weekend, with numerous closely fought matches in all categories. At the end of the competition, England were able to secure silver medals in all three competitions.

We recognise that we continue to face a number of challenges in developing Touch, and remain grateful for the support of our own dedicated volunteers as well as the work of others in growing the game we love.

Moving into 2016, we will look to provide more competitive opportunities for all players, with the DTS series moving into a regional format. We will also look to develop further dedicated competitions for junior and female players, as well as enhancing the impact of the Regional Development Officers around the country.



Ken Pollard


Development Director



#EnglandTouch

Medical Team

This year has seen the ETA Medical Team supporting teams competing in the National and Challenge Touch Series. This increasing role has ensured consistency and continuity in management of players' health and safety to a high level and according to standardised protocols.

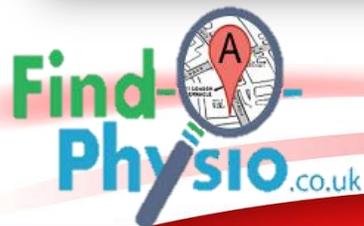
This year's team has seen a fluctuation in staffing. However, the wave of recruitment has secured 2 new physiotherapists to join our team, Thomas Sowter and Peter Hall. They have both decided to continue with our team for 2016.

These posts have secured a partnership with findaphysio, and enabled the purchase of a new spinal board and collar. We have also purchased a defibrillator from central funding, all of this equipment ensures we are well equipped to handle all eventualities. We will begin another recruitment campaign in January to ensure all NTS/CTS competitions are staffed and training provided for those staff transitioning from club to Elite Touch.



JTC 2015

This is the second season we have supported our Junior squads in the Junior Touch Championships. However, this year, we provided cover for not only the England squads but the entire tournament. This was a successful event and the medical team were on standby throughout. We attended 2 concussions and had referred a young player to hospital with a fractured wrist and countless number of minor injuries.



Staff Development and Player Development

Whilst continuing with enhanced fitness, Cari and her team are continuing to look in-depth into injury prevention. The use of the use of GPS and functional testing has allowed more specific fitness programmes to be implemented as well as aid coaching staff in the increased intensity of squad training sessions. The increased robustness of players and dedication to minimizing injury has certainly paid off at this year's World Cup, at least anecdotally. We reported minimal injuries and those that were sustained were mainly due to collision. Only 3 injuries resulted in a loss of play.



2016

Cari 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 is planned for early in the year to ensure that all newly appointed staff and existing staff collaborate.

Research will continue with further analysis of player profiles and positions. Cari and Emma will continue to work evaluating injuries sustained in touch and apply screening programmes to potentially highlight at risk players.

We will continue to work closely with the Sport Science Department to maintain fitness and enhance performance in line with the demands of the sport.

Finally, we will be implementing a first aid course for our elite coaching staff and potentially referees to continue with our high level support of players' health and safety during training sessions.

Continuous monitoring the specific demands and components of the sport, enhancing performance and minimising risk of injury remain our priorities!

Cari Thorpe



Head of Medical Services



Schools Touch

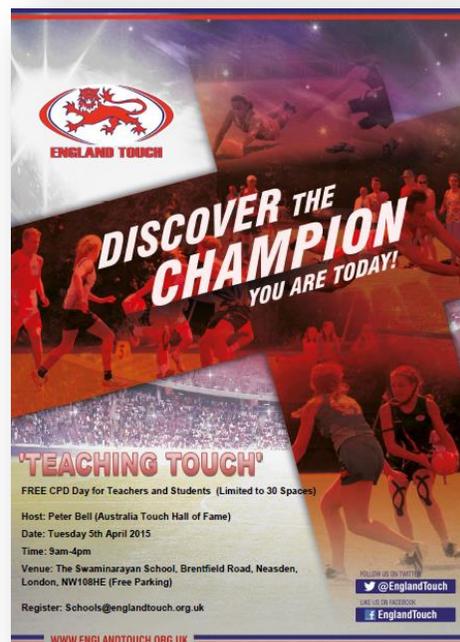
The ETA has made progress this year targeting the development of schools around the country, primarily in London.

Previous Targets of 2014/15

1. **Discover and distribute teaching resources.** Completed
2. **Trial scheme of work group of children.** A school sample has been tested on 300 children in The Swaminarayan School, London, England and the BAPS School in Gandhinagar, India. The resources have also been distributed via email and tried out in various schools throughout the nation. Easy to run, progression was very noticeable.
3. **Explore funding opportunities to fund the educational development of the sport.** Won £2,500 for the development of an excellence centre.
4. **Creation of a relevant teaching touch course for PE Teachers.** Peter Bell CPD Day Tuesday 5th April 2016.

Targets for 2016

1. Creation and Input on the Edexcel GCSE Touch paper
2. Develop a Competition structure (local, regional and eventually National.)
3. Input on the FIT Children and Youth Commission.
4. Introduction of courses. junior referees, and coaches.
5. Daryl Owens to take over for Matt Thomas from 01/08/2016



Matt Thomas
Schools Liaison

PR & Marketing

2015 has been a difficult year on the Marketing front, with the role being empty for the majority of the year. That said, we have still grown in numbers and have had some small wins in terms of social media posts.

We are now looking to rebuild the team and have some well thought through plans in terms of content generation to ensure key messages are sent and our targets are met in terms of reach.

#ENGLANDTOUCH FACEBOOK STATS

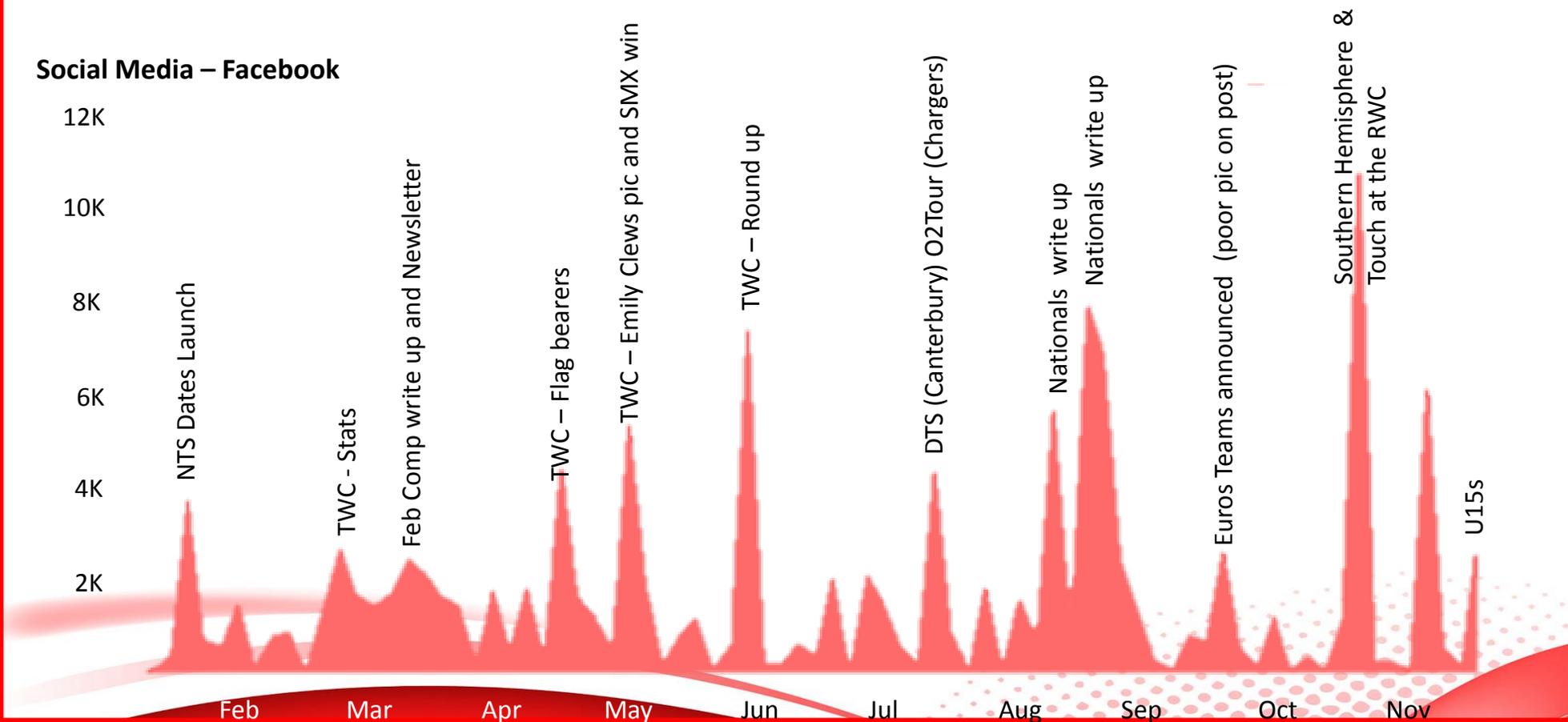
63% Male, 37% Female

33% (largest %) between 25 and 34 years old

Most hits are from London, Wigan and Bristol

Videos, links and photos are 3 times more effective than status alone.

Social Media – Facebook



Social Media – Twitter

342,000+ Impressions from 452 Tweets

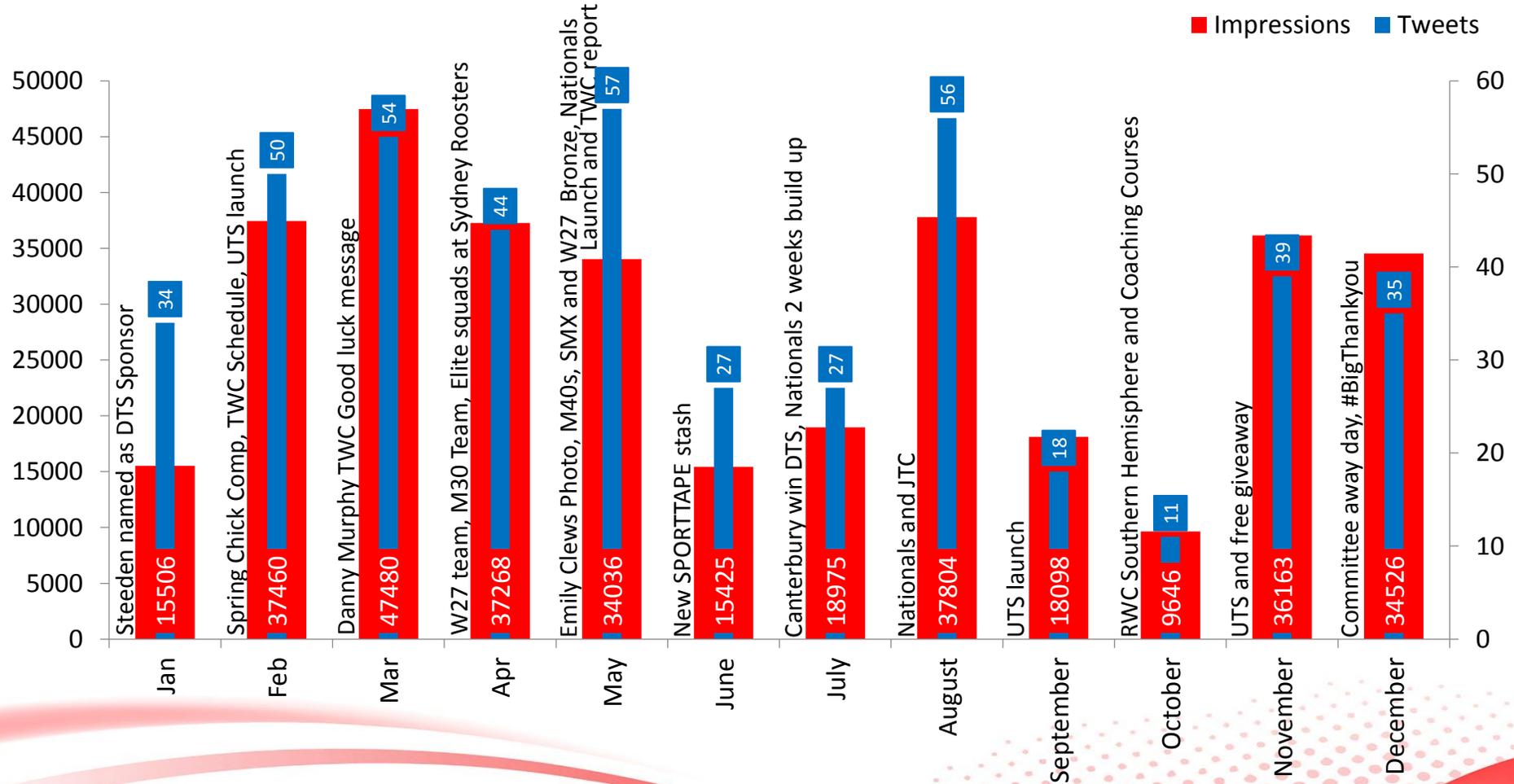
#ENGLANDTOUCH TWITTER STATS

76% Twitter followers are from the UK, 8% Australia.

67% male, 33% Female,

78% have an interest in Rugby, 71% in general sports

59% Use IOS, 31% Android,



Newsletter - Stats

Only 8 this year, due to lack of personnel in this area. Currently picked up by Gregg Cropper. There's a real need for more consistency in the newsletter and this is being addressed. We have over 5000 subscribers, but will be looking to engage clubs and leagues to allow us to data share enabling us to send to a much wider audience.

Open/Click rates are good, with Open: ca. 2 x industry average (17% v 34%) and Click: ca. 4 x industry average (2.8% v 11.6%)

We have a good geographical spread: 85% UK, then Australia, New Zealand, USA and France

New Website inc E-Commerce

Upgrade and overhaul of new website, as the back end is out of date and is becoming unusable. We will be able to utilise a range of new features, with improved functionality.

There's going to be a Fully integrated E-commerce site and Online shop, which will allow purchase of apparel, merchandise and coaching courses.

Commercial Partnership Services

We have a job spec written and have begun to advertise, the role will entail Partnership Management and Sponsorship Servicing, Brand Management, Strategy and Administration along with looking for Sponsorship for elite, events, development (Bring in new, manage existing) The role will be commission based

Moving forward

- Social media will be done via Hootsuite for the more for recurring items
- Recruitment of Marketing team.
 - Social media (All major platforms)
 - Website (updates and content)
 - Newsletter (content and build/send)
- Calendar of events - MarComms plan to be activated accordingly (build up, during, post)
- Collaboration will be arranged for ALL elite teams
- Twitter guidelines and access will be written and disseminated.
- The hashtags #EnglandTouch, #TeamEngland and #TouchNationals will be our standards, with the more specific tournament ones used as and when appropriate.

#ENGLANDTOUCH

Report written by Gregg Cropper

#EnglandTouch

Membership

As the national governing body, England Touch has a role to promote, encourage, foster, develop and extend touch in England, under the Federation of International Touch rules and guidelines. In order to do so effectively as the sport grows in popularity, we require a solid understanding of participation across the country and a secure income stream to keep pace with the growth in demand.

To this end, in 2015 we rolled-out a major restructure and extension of the England Touch membership and affiliation scheme, one of the biggest undertakings England Touch has done in its history. This was part of a series of strategic planning sessions undertaken, looking forward to the next 3-4 years, the previous membership structure was highlighted as one which required review and improvement. Having looked into how other sports manage their insurance, data and memberships, the new membership scheme was introduced in 2015.

There are now multiple membership tiers for clubs, universities and schools, leagues, events, and, for the first time, individuals. Membership became a requirement for all players in CTS and NTS tournaments and for all those involved in regional and elite teams. We are pleased the necessity of this move has been widely recognised and the uptake has largely been smooth.

Importantly affiliation includes insurance and liability cover for both providers and individuals, ensuring additional security and peace of mind for all involved in the sport. With much-improved membership data we are better able to ensure England Touch support and activities meet participants' needs.

The reasoning behind the proposed changes was four-fold.

- **Governance/best practice**

Good governance continues to be an integral part of the ETA's priorities, ensuring that we develop as an organisation to respond to the rapid growth of our sport.

- **To have a better understanding and outreach to our membership base**

We recognise the relationship between well organised and maintained membership data and the association's success.

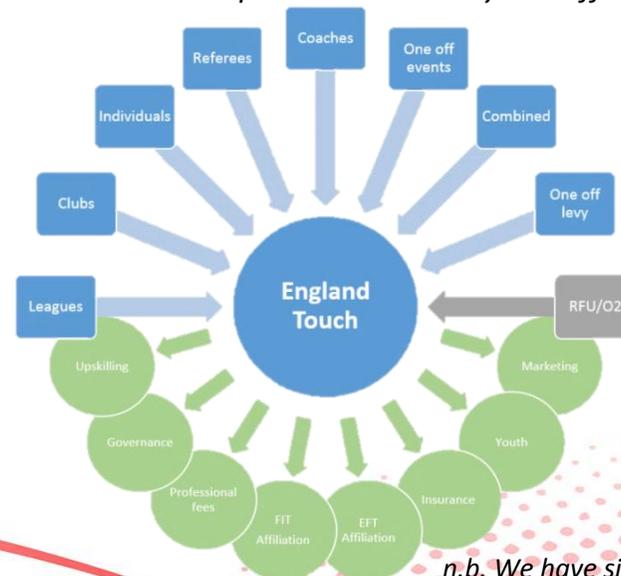
- **Insurance and liability cover**

One of the many benefits of affiliation with the ETA is the provision of public liability insurance for all your Touch activities. This provision is absolutely vital to protect the interests of our members against any legal liability for accidents or damage to third party property

- **Secure income stream and become self-sufficient**

Income is solely through affiliation membership, which barely covers our insurance and fixed costs. Creating a sustainable and additional affordable income stream, allows further budgetary planning and control to take place. Income may be sufficient to employ officers part

or full-time. This would massively increase capacity to develop the sport and reduce dependence on volunteer time for basic tasks, taking us to the next level of professionalism.



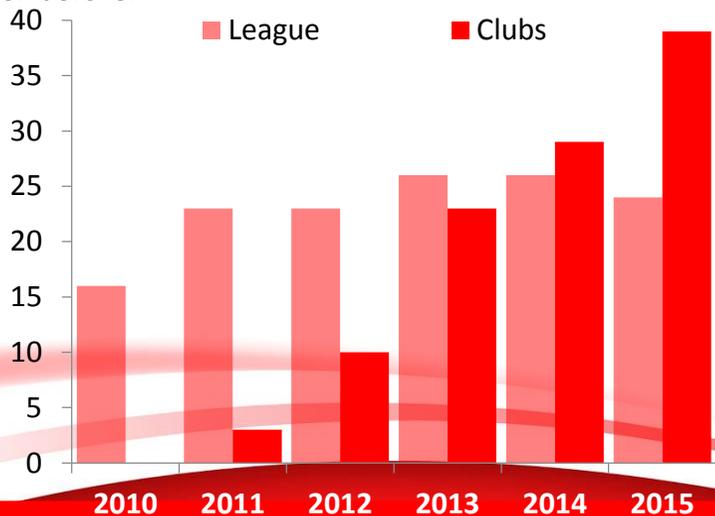
n.b. We have since added Universities to this list.

Participation

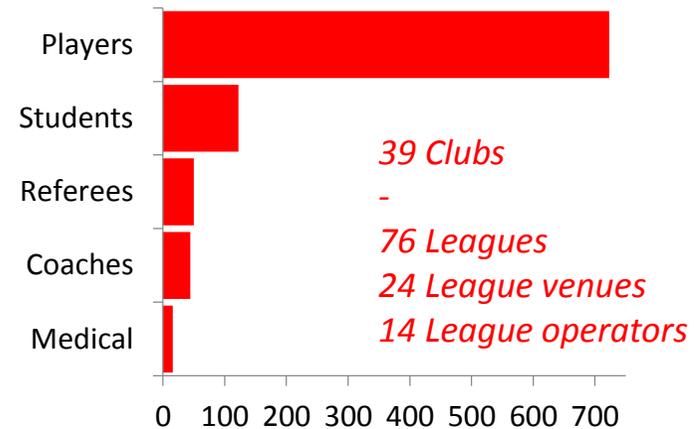
The number of core affiliated clubs continued to grow in 2015, reaching 39 by the end of the year. League venues remained similar to previous years with 14 league providers offering 76 separate leagues between them. Total individual members topped 800 in the first year of this category, an encouraging start and a figure we anticipate growing in 2016.

Overall feelings to affiliation have changed to further understand it as an important requirement to play Touch in England and to take advantage of the opportunities to play in events and gain access to development resources and have insurance cover.

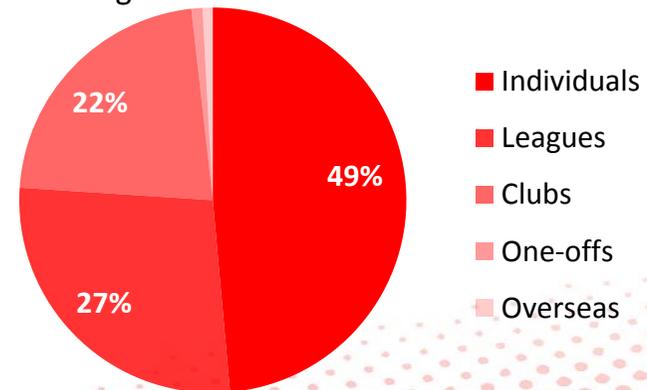
These figures do not include a much broader base of non-affiliated individuals, playing and coaching beyond ETA 'Touch Series' and regional/elite squads. It is difficult to put a figure on this broader participation, but with the continued growth of the RFU's O2 Touch initiative (affiliated to the ETA), we can be confident more people were playing touch in England in 2015 than ever before.



There has been great uptake of the individual membership across the range of membership options that have been introduced and developed.



The revenue from the developed affiliation methods and schemes has given us a much better income profile and sustainable earnings.



All figures: as of Q4, 2015; exclude O2 Touch operations

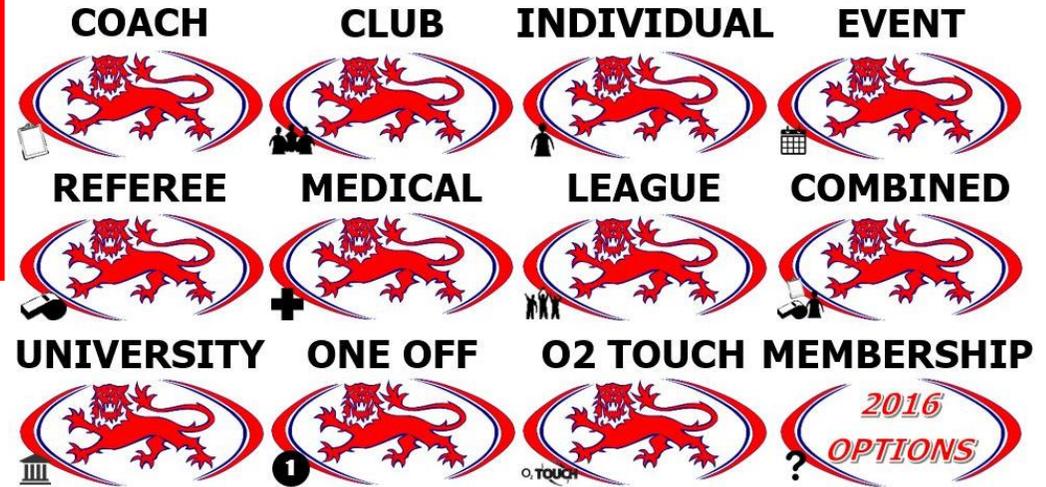
Looking forward to 2016 and beyond

In 2016 we will further consolidate the revised membership and affiliation scheme. Whilst there will be no significant changes to the membership structure, we intend to develop our systems further to ensure they are scalable, fit for the future, and that they allow us to effectively communicate with and serve England Touch members.

Our aspirations include (but are not limited to):

- Fill membership post
 - This is essential to enable the below goals (*role is now filled*)
- Increasing the number of affiliated members
 - Increase number of Clubs
 - Increase number of Individuals
 - Ensure data is collected
- Create a better two-way engagement with the commercial leagues and find a way to ensure data is collected and shared.
- Refreshing and clarifying guidance on different membership packages and benefits, extending these as appropriate
- Better integration of club and player records: improving the accuracy of data and reducing the manual administration required by clubs and England Touch
- Streamlining disparate back-end systems for different affiliation tiers
- Design and Run 'pilot' England Touch Leagues

Report co-written by Gregg Cropper and Richard King.



**“By becoming a member of England
YOU are England Touch,,**

Richard King


Membership Director



#EnglandTouch

Coming Soon...



A PARTNER
A BUSINESS
AN INVESTMENT
AN OPPORTUNITY

#EnglandTouch

Partnership Liaison

ETA partnership with England Rugby

Since the agreement was signed in 2013, England Rugby and the England Touch Association have been working together to support the England Rugby O2Touch project. Originally conceived as a lead-up and legacy project to increase rugby related participation, 2015 was to see the third year of the contracted agreement and also the completion of the lead-up aspect of the project as the Rugby World Cup 2015 came to England.

The agreement sees £5000 affiliation fees paid to the England Touch Association from England Rugby along with ViK kit funding from England Rugby through Canterbury Kit O2Touch.

Since the partnership entered into its third year there has been focus on both sides looking at how the O2Touch project has grown and developed and how the agreement supports the project moving forward. Both England Rugby and England Touch agree that the partnership is in need of updating and restructuring to continue to achieve the mutual goals of continued Touch development at all levels from Grassroots up.

Financial Partnership

The Partnership sees the ETA receive £5000 to affiliate the project. These funds are primarily used in supporting the O2Touch project. In 2015 this saw 70 new level 1 O2Touch centre coaches and over 250 Level 1 referees with 18 level 2 refs. Costing England Touch £9,350 to service (Coaching Course: £3,850 , £5,000: Referee Courses, excluding Expenses)

O2Touch in 2015

O2Touch has continued to grow and thrive in 2015 thanks to increased exposure through the Rugby World Cup and the O2 Touch Tour. England Touch has been there throughout in partnership with England Rugby, helping to support and develop the coaching, refereeing and player development

There are now over 13000 registered players playing on a weekly basis in over 275 O2Touch Centres or leagues; based in over 145 Clubs and 120 Universities or Higher Education Colleges. England Rugby remain committed to the project and having released their project development plans to 2017 for grass roots Touch via the O2Touch project, they have also committed to the project until at least 2021.

Meanwhile O2Touch centres have continued to develop and progress in developing from grass roots centres to provide representative level players. 2015 saw 13 O2Touch Centres represented in the inaugural DTS Series. April saw 6 O2Touch Centres provide a total of 23 players representing the ETA Touch World Cup squads.

August also witnessed the appointment of the first O2Touch coach to an England Touch National Head Coach position. The ETA coaches and newly appointed Touch Development Officers (TDOs) have coached over 250 players across 12 official development sessions and enabled the successful training of over 70 level 1 coaches and 250 level 1 referees for the O2Touch project. Our challenge is to retain and badge all these referees.

ETA and the Rugby World Cup 2015

September and October represented a huge moment for sport in England as the Rugby World Cup came to England. October saw Samantha Philips & Gary Lambert chosen to represent the England Touch Association at a Royal Reception at Buckingham Palace marking a celebration of the Rugby World Cup 2015 and its legacy goals. Furthermore a total of 15 O2Touch/ETA centres were awarded England Rugby Legacy Gold Standard Awards Reward for legacy work within Touch. A reward for their work to recruit and retain players into the sport.



O2Touch Tour 2015

The O2Touch Tour launched in May and visited Loughborough, Manchester, Bath and Allianz Park; home to Saracens. It brought with it major publicity for the sport as Jonny Wilkinson, Jason Robinson, Vernon Kay and numerous other high profile individuals took to the Touch pitch. Supported by ETA trained and affiliated Referees; There were further ETA successes at the tournaments across the country with Canterbury, Manchester Chargers and Maidenhead Mohawks winning legs of the tour, whilst many other ETA clubs took part in the events.

New Partnerships

One of the single biggest developments for the ETA has been the successful affiliation of the Midlands Ladies Touch League. This league has been running for some years and has grown to include over 16 all female teams in 2015. Supported by Referee Training and course delivery, coaching and general assistance, the League saw over 200 ladies competing across their "Super Sunday" tournaments.

2016 and Future Partnerships

2016 is already set to rival 2015 in terms of expansion and development of the O2Touch project and grass roots Touch in England. With another O2Touch Tour being finalised, England Rugby continues to support the project.

With England Rugby committed to continue their Touch project, the future of Grass Roots Touch in England remains positive, as evidenced by the growth in the last three years. Both ETA and England Rugby have expressed their desire to develop a new innovative partnership to commence in mid 2016 and carry the sport into the future. Early discussions have been incredibly positive and already the ideas being discussed are incredibly exciting for all involved in the sport.

Gary Lambert


Liaison Representative

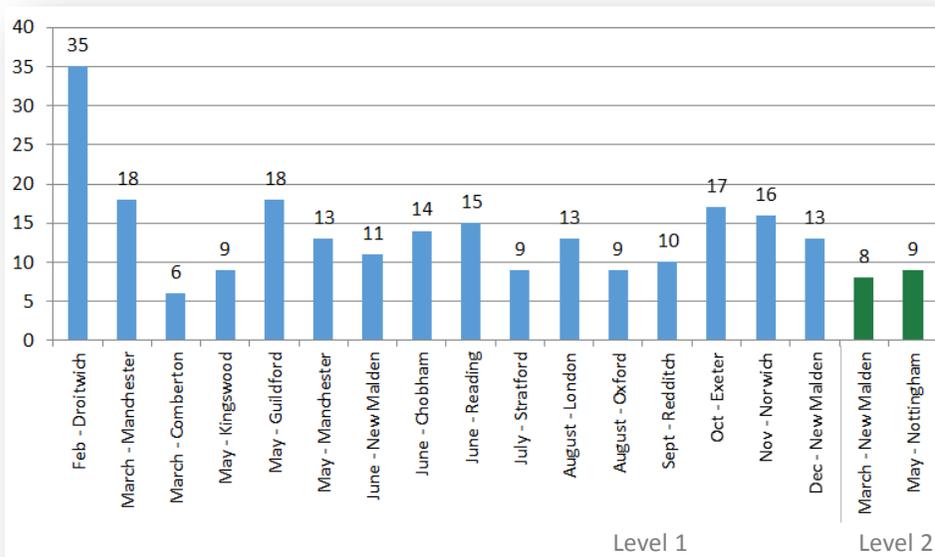


#EnglandTouch

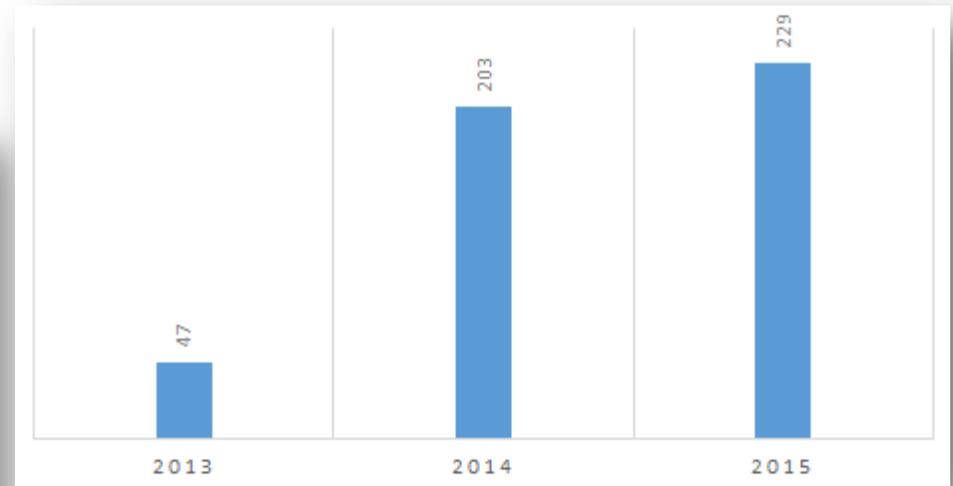
Referees

2015 - A year in review

Courses: England kept the momentum of courses from 2014 into 2015. The majority of courses run were Level 1's.



Our course attendance levels have increased from our 2013 levels as a direct result of our relationship with the RFU and this shows no signs of slowing.



Course Presenters

A small number of England referees are doing a tremendous job in presenting the Touch Europe Level 1 and Level 2 courses throughout the country. England now have:

- 13 x Level 1 course presenters
- 3 x Level 2 course presenters
- 13 x Level 1 referee coaches
- 1 x Level 2 referee coach

NTS/CTS Events

The NTS/CTS events carried the same format from the 2014 season, running up to 8 fields with continuous games all day – referees were again one of the most valuable resource England Touch has. The referees struggled with numbers throughout most of the season. Those who were in attendance did a fantastic job and stepped up to take on the challenge. We must give full acknowledgement of the player referees who did a superb effort in fulfilling their obligations during each event. The skill level of the player referees has increased dramatically over the last couple of seasons and they are a pleasure to referee with, they are keen to learn along with taking feedback and coaching given to them.

We have continued to have a minimum of two referee coaches at each event this year. The more equipped our referees are, whether they be full time or player referees, the better and faster the game will develop.

Touch World Cup 2015 – Australia

From the ranking of the 2014 Euro's, England had 8 referees invited to attend the Touch World Cup. A huge congratulations to the following referees for their selection and performances at the World Cup:

Males

- Nick Richardson
- Shane Hills
- Gareth Hinds
- Nicolas Van de Rijt
- Matt Hobbs
- Bruce Lockie

Females

- Shelley Grace
- Uma Ramaswami



Each England Referee upheld the ethos of England Touch and Touch Europe and did their country and touch association's proud. Each referee made new friends, learnt much about the game and thoroughly enjoyed the atmosphere. It doesn't get much better to referee with the best in the world for the best in the world! The next World Cup will take place in 2019 and England would love to be able to sing the praises of the referees who attend on its behalf.

England Touch Nationals

The 2015 England Nationals were held in Cambridge over a 2 day schedule, with men's, women's, masters, U18s and the DTS finals all taking place, which meant lots of games and some very tired referees. All divisions except the DTS finals and U18's, were full length 40 minute games. It was a nice change and challenge to referee full length men's and women's games instead of the shortened mixed games of the NTS/CTS season. This event was deemed suitable for Level 3 Referee upgrades and we were fortunate enough to have the entire European Referee Coaching Panel present at this event to give coaching, feedback and upgrades. There were two Level 3 upgrades given at this event. England Referees also had many of their referee friends from Europe attend this event.



What's ahead in 2016?

2016 will be another exciting season, the 2016 Euro's will take place in Jersey, the NTS/CTS season will be extremely competitive, the DTS season will continue to expand and it's players develop, there will also be the introduction of the UTS (University Touch Series), all squad training camps, leagues and many one day tournaments. Enough to keep every referee busy!!

England Touch Referees have developed and published their own selection criteria for the 2016 Euro's, this will work alongside the selection criteria handed out by Touch Europe and the Local Organising Committee. Attending the Euro's is a great experience and wish all England referees could experience it.

The success of 2014 and 2015 is a measure that will be hard to be repeated in the future, however the England Referee contingent are always ready for a challenge and we will be ready for everything that 2016 brings our way.

On behalf of all the referees within England, we thank you for your patience as we learn, grow, develop and as we continue to find our way, we are always ready to help the Touch players who make up England Touch! England Touch Referees are also TEAM ENGLAND!

Shelley Grace
National Referee Director



#EnglandTouch

Finance

Basis of preparation

The England Touch Association (ETA) is a not for profit association, which exists as an association in financial terms, for the benefit of its affiliated members.

During 2015, the ETA has proposed to change its financial year from December to September. The purpose of this is to better align financial reporting with the Touch season and to enable High Performance campaigns to be captured in one reporting period. To achieve this, the ETA will prepare results for the 9 month period ending 30 September 2015. Going forward, results will be prepared for the 12 month period to September each year.

Financial results

Player contributions and kit sales funded travel, accommodation and kit costs, with the majority of these incomes and expenditures relating to the 2015 Touch World Cup.

Revenue from Membership and affiliation increased following the introduction of the new membership structure. Income generated from events and tournaments also increased in 2015 following the growth of ETA operated events.

The Junior Touch Championship was cash neutral to the ETA, with profits given back to the JTC Trust. Overall, a cash surplus of £9,636 was generated for the period to September 2015.

	9 months to Sep-15 £	12 months to Dec-14 £	12 months to Dec-13 £
Income	200,252	225,108	107,654
Membership fees and affiliation	21,451	7,534	8,295
Events and tournaments	18,252	12,746	6,425
NTS bond	-	-	2,910
Coaching fees	1,037	1,489	760
Player contributions and kit sales	130,358	198,269	51,749
Donations received	1,209	5,070	37,515
Junior Touch Championship	27,945	-	-
Operational expenditure	(179,011)	(144,960)	(57,652)
Travel, accommodation and kit costs	129,850	95,981	44,159
Training and coaching	7,518	5,790	5,267
Membership fees	171	13,360	2,270
Sundry expenses	13,526	27,137	4,556
Refunds	-	2,692	1,400
Junior Touch Championship	27,945	-	-
Operating surplus before administrative expenses	21,241	80,148	50,002
Administrative expenses	(11,605)	(12,499)	(11,211)
Bank charges	-	89	163
Insurance	11,569	10,600	10,346
Legal and professional	36	1,810	702
Surplus before interest income	9,636	67,649	38,791
Interest income	-	-	4
Bank interest received	-	-	4
Surplus before taxation	9,636	67,649	38,795

High performance and events

High Performance encompasses the annual Touch Nationals competition and international tournaments, including the 2015 Touch World Cup held in Coffs Harbour, Australia. The High Performance financial strategy is to provide the best value for money for the elite player base, whilst ensuring tournament logistics 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. As the ETA secures additional revenue streams, such as sponsorship, it will review the opportunity to evolve from being player funded to a subsidised model.

The National Touch Series, the Challenge Touch Series and the newly launched Men's and Women's Touch Competitions are, going forward, being operated by the ETA events team to ensure consistency of delivery and to secure a sustainable income source for the association in 2016.

Membership and affiliation

In 2015 the structure of ETA Membership was revised to provide clear and appropriate benefits, underpinned by a membership payment scheme that was fair for all members. The ETA continues to evolve away from dependency on discretionary partner income to ensure the ETA maintains a robust financial operating model with incomes generated from a diverse base, including membership and events. The ETA increased its income from membership and affiliation to £21,451 in 2015.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship income has increased slightly in 2015, on a pro-rata basis, reflecting the 9 month financial period. This has been identified as a relatively untapped source of income, and is therefore a key strategic priority for 2016.

Financial position and liquidity

As the ETA focusses on expanding, it is critical that any strategic 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 financial security into the future, as well as covering the working capital cycles associated with the activities of the ETA.

Finally, robust budgeting, cost control and expenditure monitoring processes ensure that financial planning is adhered to and that the committee can respond to any changes in expected income or expenditure that result from both internal and external factors.

Financial position and liquidity (continued)

YTD Cash Flow Jan-Sep 2015

	HSBC	Paypal	Total
Opening Cash	54,221	56,915	111,137
Income	187,305	-	-
Expenditure	<u>183,116</u>	-	-
Net Cash Flow	4,189	-32,518	-28,329
Closing Cash	<u>54,221</u>	<u>24,397</u>	<u>78,619</u>

The ETA's total cash position has decreased from £111,137 at the end of 2014 to £78,619 as at 30 September 2015. This is predominantly due to the timing of payment receipts from national squad players being received in 2014 in advance of payments made in relation to the 2015 FIT Touch World Cup.

The ETA's liquidity strategy is to maintain a cash position that will cover short term financial commitments over a period of 12 months. This strategy allows the ETA to invest in growth with the confidence of a stable cash base, rather than relying on uncertain and variable short term income streams.

Financial risk management

As the ETA expands its activities, the range and magnitude of risk exposure continues to increase. To address this, the ETA is in the process of 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 such as player welfare.

Outlook for 2016

The overall financial objective for 2016 is to continue to grow revenue streams and to re-invest in growth of membership and participation. In addition, the ETA will look to develop sustainable revenue streams, including sponsorship, which can reduce the financial burden currently shouldered by the Elite Player base and other membership groups.

A key component of this strategy is the renewal of a partnership agreement with England Rugby in 2016.

The ETA is in a stronger financial position than it has been historically, and will continue to invest in the growth of Touch in England following a well-controlled and sustainable approach to its finances.

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