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**SOLIHULL ARDEN
CLUB**

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Sharmans Cross Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1RG www.solihullarden.co.uk

President: Richard Dumbleton

Management Committee: Chairman: Alan Robinson, Vice Chairman: John O'Malley, Treasurer: Pam Telfer, Secretary: Natalie Ward

General Manager: Mark Carroll, Tennis/Padel: Paul Stanley, Squash: Richard Lowe, Gym: Ken James

Life Members: Mrs. Joan Erskine, Gordon Hall, Roy Clark, Jeremy Bates, Jonah Barrington, Mike Erskine, John Skerrett, Nigel Orrett.

Dear Member

Notice is hereby given that the 51st Annual General Meeting of the Solihull Arden Club will be held at the Clubhouse on Monday 25th March at 8.00pm to transact the following business:

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Approval of the previous AGM Minutes (27th March 2023).
- 3 Changes to the Club Rules & Bye Laws
- 4 Report of the Chairman
- 5 Report of the Treasurer
- 6 Report of the General Manager
- 7 Receive and adopt the accounts
- 8 Election of the President, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary
- 9 Election of the Management Committee
- 10 Any Other Business (At the Chairman's discretion)

NOTES

1. Elections

Elections

Club President: Richard Dumbleton

Chairman: Alan Robinson

Vice Chairman: John O'Malley

Tennis & Padel: Paul Stanley

Squash/Racketball: Richard Lowe

Gym Ken James

No other nominations have been received

The position of Secretary was previously vacant and Natalie Ward was appointed into this role by the Management Committee meeting on the 5th April 2023. Natalie has now agreed to take on the role of Secretary as a full member of the Management Committee. This requires a proposer and seconder to formalise her appointment as Secretary.

Members wishing to raise any other matters under "Any Other Business" must submit them in writing via email to the Club Chairman by 18th March 2024. E:alan.robinson@solihullarden.co.uk

2. Subscriptions

Although we have managed to avoid increases to membership subscriptions over the last few years, inflation does now mean that we need to review the situation as rising prices have substantially impacted our operating costs. Subscription changes required will be communicated to members by email well before the AGM.

3. Constitution

No changes have been made to the Club Rule-book.

We will further communicate further information before the AGM on March 25th.

Solihull Arden Annual Chairman's Report Alan Robinson

It is most satisfying for me to be able to advise that 2023 was another very successful year for Solihull Arden Club (SAC).

- We have further increased overall membership in the last year by 23% to 1,595.
- Premier members (combined Racquets & Gym/Fitness) increased by 22%.
- Gym and Fitness membership increased by an amazing 52%!

In addition to these valuable increases in membership, during the last year more than 100 people who visited the club with interest only for "gym/fitness" membership actually joined with Premier

membership once they had seen the options of tennis, padel and squash. More than that, in the region of 100 members who had previously joined only for Gym/fitness membership upgraded to Premier during 2023 .

Such increases and upgrades to membership as above obviously bring in substantial additional income to SAC giving us more funds to reinvest in our Club enabling us to maintain and develop high quality facilities for our members.

On a slightly negative note about membership however is that if we continue to increase numbers there will inevitably come a time where we reach a maximum as we have a limited number of courts for racquets play and similarly cannot accommodate limitless numbers for gym usage and fitness classes. But despite this, all existing members can relax as if we have to put potential new members onto a "waiting list" we will ensure that this will in no way negatively impact existing members of our club.

In terms of club facilities, during 2023 we have invested in a considerable amount of new equipment for the gym and fitness suite. Also we have upgraded squash court 4 to have a glass-back-wall. Now with three of our six squash courts with glass back-walls this hugely lifts the quality of our indoor racquets facilities.

Looking forward into 2024/25 we have several projects on the agenda including:

- Upgrading the floodlights to Tennis courts 4, 5 6 & 7
- Remodelling the sauna/steamroom to create completely

**Chairman's
Report**

(private) facilities for male and female use

- Replacement of the double doors between the bar and the patio.

As well as these projects there are others on the horizon to further improve facilities, but these are still at the early stages of investigation, planning and assessment and obviously we will advise about these in due course.



Finance Report

Pam Telfer **Treasurer**

An independent accounting company continued to manage our accounts in 2023.

For the year to 31 December 2023 the Club realised a net profit of £105,071 compared to the profit of £43,554 in the previous year.

In 2023 our GM Mark Carroll has continued to significantly build the membership and trading income.

A decision was made to reduce the hiring out of the function room in favour of establishing a studio gym.

The major movements in profit for 2023 were: £,k

Increase in membership subscriptions	94
Increase in trading income	7
Increase in sundry income	13
Increase in Asbourne management fees	(7)
Decrease in energy costs	(3)
Increase in capital expenditure	(18)
Increase in maintenance costs	(25)
Increase in staff costs	(6)
Decrease in other	

This has been marginally offset by an increase of £51k in general overhead costs

Subscriptions

2023 saw a marked increase in membership, where subscriptions have increased by £94k.

(2022 - £95k).

Staff costs

Total staff costs increased by £6k (2022 - £22k)

Asset additions & replacement

Expenditure includes £15k for gym equipment, £5k for outdoor furniture and £4k for upgrading the squash courts.

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Bank loans

- We repaid £8k of the government bounce back loan and paid £592 in loan interest.
- We repaid £19k of the padel loan and paid £8,955 in loan interest.

Cash on hand

The Club had £68k cash at bank and in hand at 31 December 2023 (2022 - £38k)

GM Report 2023

Mark Carroll **General Manager**

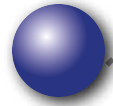
Over the last 12 months the Solihull Arden Club has carried on developing its comprehensive journey that cultivates and improves the facilities while creating an exceptional member experience. Effectively navigating the industry trends has allowed for continual growth throughout the whole calendar year resulting in another year of positive membership movement and increased revenue streams.

Financial stability for the Solihull Arden Club was again a key objective for 2024 and could only be achieved with membership growth and recurring revenue stability. With the cost of living and energy crisis still gripping the country and interest rates soaring it's never been as difficult to achieve this, however, by changing our approach and enhancing our product we managed to thrive, increasing our membership base to over **1600 members**. Achieving these numbers has been from an accumulation of strong marketing promotions, outreach and awareness days within the community and a rewarding referral campaign, nevertheless, this is only half the story as retaining members is the real test of success and so far this has been our finest achievement to date.

With the launch of the new open plan gym and class timetable in January 2022 our fitness offering has gone from strength to strength, having the studio classes included in our membership packages has really enhanced our product and engaged members throughout the calendar year, in January 2024 we further extended our offering and launched a comprehensive day time studio class offering which has already been a huge success.

The Gym has had many new additions over the last 12 months too with another new Cross Trainer, new Rower, new Ski Erg's, new assault bike's, dual action pulley machine and 4 new treadmills, which in turn highlights the value of our product here at the Solihull Arden Club. Moreover, our ethos and approach regarding how quickly we react to problems really does resonate how proud we are about our facilities and how pleased we are with the service we provide, many thanks to **Ken James** our Gym Chairman for his ongoing support and help in achieving this amazing service.

All of our sporting offerings have developed over the last 12 months with more participants than ever, the coach led Squash, Tennis, Padel and Racketball club nights are testament to our success across



all disciplines. With all of these sports having such a presence at the club it was time to fly the flag for Table Tennis too, with new tables and new lighting we were able to open up the door for the Solihull Arden to launch our first Table Tennis Team in the Birmingham leagues with great success, hopefully with increased member interest we can enter more teams this year and really cement this into the fabric of the club. I would like to thank both the Tennis Chairman **Paul Stanley** and Squash Chairman **Richard Lowe** for their ongoing passion and enthusiasm for their respected sports, real ambassadors of the club and their sporting disciplines, further thanks for the support of **Nigel Busby** (Table Tennis), **John Thomas** (Padel) and **Tim Woodfield** (Racketball) for driving these disciplines too. Many members positively impact the club throughout the year and I would like to say a big thank you to you all, including **Nigel Orrett** who is still driving new members onto court!

Special thanks to all the members on the Social committee and the Funding Committee, your hard work over the last 12 months has been fundamental in the clubs past, present and future, the events have been truly amazing this year and the future looks bright for the Solihull Arden club.

I would like to thank everyone on the Management Committee and the Club President for their amazing support, vision and openness to embrace the positive changes made by the club over the last 12 months. I would like to personally thank **Pam Telfer** (Treasurer) for driving the finances, **Natalie Ward** (Secretary) for administration support and **John O'Mally** (Assistant Chairman) for Bar and operations support, all key elements in the successful running of the club.

I would like to thank **Alan Robinson** the Club chairman for his constant and ongoing dedication to the Solihull Arden Club, all of our growth and developments would not have been possible without his dedicated support, direction and belief. Finally I would like to thank the Club president **Richard Dumbleton** for all of his time and commitment, his passion resonates throughout the club and personifies what the Solihull Arden Club is all about.

Squash & Racketball

Richard Lowe **Squash & Racketball Chairman**

A YEAR TO CELEBRATE..!!

2023 has definitely been a year to celebrate in so many ways. After all the problems with Covid and Lockdowns the club has transformed itself with hundreds of new members and so much enthusiasm to get on court and play.

We celebrated the Club's 150 year anniversary in October with squash and racketball open competitions – so many members took part and loved it. Then an exhibition match to finish the day off.

We built and installed the new glass-back on Court 4.

We painted and refurbished all the courts and did the same to the squash corridor.

We laid new carpets throughout

We refurbished the gallery upstairs and created a new view onto

court 6

We serviced all the Ambi-Rad radiators to make sure the courts are always warm

And we will carry on upgrading all of our facilities throughout 2024 – whether it is another glass-back; new floors and even more new courts.

We will continue with our 5 year development plans – which are even more important now that squash will be in the USA Olympics in 2028.

Exciting times. And we want Solihull Arden to be part of it.

Team Squash

Team Squash at Arden goes from strength to strength.

Monday nights are as popular as ever.

Our first team always guarantee 30-40 members watching some of the best players in the Midlands and are currently top of the Division one – and looking for another Warwickshire title. **Simon Herbert** is team captain and his world ranking is now up to world 55.

Our second and third teams are playing well – thanks to team captains **Tony Hannington** and **Tom Harris**.

Our 4th team are also top of the table and looking for promotion under **Lou Van Talligan**.

More team players and members keen to play.

Looks like a 5th team for next season.

Team Racketball

The 2022-2023 winter season ended in us winning Division 2 by 13 points and gaining promotion to Division 1! For this season – which was a great achievement.

Thank you to **Luke Symes, Prendy, Tomo, Chopper, Lyunchy, Ben Singh, Friendly**, who all played part during the season.

This success meant that we had the opportunity to run 2 teams this season which has been proven tricky with injuries and world travel playing a part, however we have picked up our 15th victory in Division 1 and now we have the key players returning to the fold, the first team are looking good to drive on from their current position of 7th out of 8 and and the next 3 teams within reach.

A big thank you to **Justyn Claydon, Ian Russell** and **Tony Hannington** from the Squash ranks playing their part so far this season, **Glen Trueman, Ian Stokes, Ollie Manning Brown** have also played a valuable part and stepped in on occasions to support the teams.

The second team has very much taken a back seat allowing the 1st team to field as strong a team as possible – but we have been competitive and I would like to think those taking part have enjoyed the experience.

We can now look for a big push for the rest of the season.

Gordon Symes – Racketball Team Captain.

Ladies Team Squash

The ladies squash section has seen a number of new members joining the club and several enjoying the Saturday coaching sessions and having great fun whilst improving their racket skills.

The Ladies team have had mixed results often gaining good wins at 3 and 4 but coming up against tough opposition at 1 and 2. There have been a couple of close wins on count back but that is credit to all the players in the team who never give up. As a result we have now managed to stay in the first division for both halves



turned out to support the ladies.

Jane Armstrong – Ladies Team Captain.

Club Nights

As with everywhere else in the club – club nights are in demand, busy and more popular than ever.

We will continue to look at the number of members playing and the courts available to play on.

Squash Club Nights – Wednesday & Sunday 6pm to 8pm

Racketball – Fridays 6pm to 8pm

All nights are coach led and again a big thank you to **Leigh Benton** – **Tim Woodfield** – **James Averill** and **Nigel Orritt** for making the nights so successful.

Chairman's Summary

It would like to thank all the club members who play and support our teams and who enjoy playing team squash and racketball. They all play at a very high level and year on year enhance the reputation of the club and give lots of other club members some great squash & racketball to watch.

I also need to say a massive thank you to the members who support the teams through their sponsorship and financial backing to help us get one of the best squads in the Midlands – **Pete** and **Paul Olds**, **Nigel Orritt**, **Ian Thurman**, **Paul Warmington** and **Tim Forsyth**.

Squash and Racketball competitions and Club championships are always popular and well supported and well done to all members who competed and congratulations to all the winners & runners up.

Thank you to **Tim Forsyth** and **Tim Woodfield** for all your organizing skills in running the tournaments.

Thank you to **Tim Forsyth** as well for the 150 year celebration days competition – so successful we are doing it again this year!!

Finally thank you to all the members who gave their time and efforts in organizing competitions, tournaments, leagues, club nights etc namely **Tim Forsyth**, **Steve Morton**, **Tim Woodfield**, **Justin Claydon**, **Gorgdon Symes**, **Gaynor Keeley**, **James Averill** and **Leigh Benton** plus all the team captains and team players – **Many thanks**

Junior Squash

The new junior leagues run by Gaynor Keeley have been a great success with over 25 juniors playing in a monthly box league. These take the same format as the adult box leagues, provided for members only.

Our juniors play a lot of events up and down the country but they did particularly well at the West Midlands Regional Championships in the boys events. **Sonny Hollings** won the under 9's, **Archie Mcleod** won the under 11's, **Haydon Chow** was 3rd in the U 15's. **Vinayak Chikermane** played a higher age-group and came 4th in the U 17's. In the girls event **Lauren Keeley** won the under 11's and **Sienna Clarke** came 3rd in the same event. **Katie Brown** was 2nd in the U19's.

Well done All

Friendly matches – we have played friendly matches with Sutton and Knowle and Dorridge both home and away.

It's been a great way to get juniors introduced to competition and several players have decided to then enter national ranking events.

We hosted our own Bronze national rankings event in the summer with approx. 45 juniors playing and several of our players picked up medals.

Programme – Monday evenings and Saturday mornings continue in their popularity and we provide after-school sessions on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday too.

Camps – We continue to run holiday camps that are very popular with 4 more days scheduled for the Easter Break.

Coaches – A big thank you to the many coaches who contribute to Junior development at the club. These include **Katie Brown**, **Jack Cant**, **Stu McGregor**, **James Averill**, **Tom Watkins**, **Jon Tate**, **Oliver Tate**, **Leigh Benton** and **Lu Van Talligan**

Chris Ryder – Head Squash Coach

Tennis & Padel Report

Paul Stanley **Tennis & Padel Chairman**

As with the rest of the club Tennis & Padel enjoyed a very good year in 2023. We not only saw success in our league teams, increased numbers at our social sessions but also loads of new members and you are all very welcome to this special club of ours and we hope you will stay with us for decades to come, just as lots of us have.

Team Tennis

We have 8 men's teams and 5 ladies teams playing in the Birmingham and Coventry leagues and it's a great way to build friends, play competitive tennis and play at venues all across the region. If you are interested in playing for our teams just speak with **Chris Foulkes** or **Micheala Price** and they will help sort out some practice sessions.

For the first time in ages our first team won the Birmingham 1st division and **Alex Griffiths** was the top player in the league. This is a great credit to the club and well done all that played.

Our Men's 4th team won Div 5 and **Waheed Baig** was the division's top player. Our Coventry 1st team won Div 6 and **Freddie Cliff** was top of the league. Our Coventry 3rds won Div 8 and had **Pete Vickers** the divisions top player. On the ladies front our second team won promotion from Div 4 and **Kath Brown** was top player and **Gaynor Dolby** was top of Division 3.

So a very good year all round and can I thank the captains for all their support and organisation throughout the year.

Social Tennis

This is the bedrock of the club. The organised club nights on a Monday and Wednesday 6.00 to 10.00. If you haven't been just book onto them on the clubs app and we will sort out a game, usually doubles and all standards are welcome. Also the array of self organized 4's. There are some real stars who pull us all together and keep us playing. My thanks to all of you.

Chris Cronin also runs a fantastic social session on Thursday mornings 10.00 to 12.00 any ability will be accommodated and usually they decamp to the bar for the all important social part of our great sport. You just have to turn up to court 4 at 10.00 on Thursday and Chris will make you welcome.



Club Championships

We had another successful tournament with 11 competitions across age groups including Men's Ladies and Mixed events. This all came together On the 9th September last year for the finals day. Which also happened to be the hottest day of the year and felt far more like the Australian Open conditions.

We had 2 new names to go on the honors boards for both men's and ladies singles. namely **Michaela Price** and **Jack Smith** in 2 very high quality matches.

Dates for your diaries **Finals Day 2024 will be 7th September**. Entry forms will go up in May for a start in June to September.

Tennis Coaching and Junior Program

Under our Head Coach **Alex Thompson** and his team our junior and coaching program continues to thrive. Our Juniors entered 7 teams in the Warwickshire Junior League giving them a great opportunity to experience competitive tennis. Also our coach Jack Smith has been chosen to run the Warwickshire under 8 county team.

The team have a number of outreach programs with Solihull Mental Health Trust, Solo and the Carer Trust and the Ukrainian community. All of this provides a valuable service and enhances Ardens reputation as a community club.

There is a full program of adult coaching right from real beginners to advanced players and we are just about to start a Try Tennis program aimed at lady gym members who would like to try and potentially take up tennis.

If you or any children in your family would like to join any of the programs just contact Alex Thompson and he will talk through the options available.

Padel

What a difference this has made to the club its brought in loads of fantastic new members and also given our existing members a new sport to enjoy. My thanks to **John Thomas** who has stepped into the padel lead and is helping to shape the way we continually improve the members experience. Highlights are. We have 116 members playing in our internal leagues. Our regular social sessions are very popular. Regular social tournaments, including the inaugural **Nick Hart** memorial. **Racheal Woodford** has organized social friendlies against other local clubs lucky enough to have padel courts.

Capital Projects

Now the club is thriving we have a number of key capital projects that we will get done in 2024. Firstly we will update the floodlights on courts 4-7 and hopefully rebulb courts 1-3.

We will refurbish courts 8 & 9 or the birdcage, plans are being updated to exactly how we will best do this.

We are also looking to put roofs on padel courts 1 & 2 but this will depend on us receiving a significant grant, but we are working hard on it.

Conclusion

Solihull Arden is a great club to belong to and I am delighted we are growing strongly. The future is very positive and I would like to thank all the volunteers, the clubs staff and fellow players for making it a major part of our lives.

Revised Membership Subscription Rates:-

As mentioned previously we are having to review membership subscription rates. This is our first increase in subscriptions for a number of years and is mainly due to general inflation over recent years.

We have kept rises as low as possible, subscriptions only increasing in the region of 5%.

Subscription Increases and Revised rates are as per below.

Category	Current	Increase	New Price
Racquets - Monthly	£39.95	£2.00	£41.95
Racquets - Annual	£439.45	£22.00	£461.45
Gym - Monthly	£26.00	£1.50	£27.50
Gym - Annual	£286.00	£16.50	£302.50
75 & Over - Annual	£100.00	£5.00	£105.00

The above subscription rates will come into effect from 1st September 2024.

