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**SOLIHULL ARDEN
CLUB**

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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

President: Richard Dumbleton

Management Committee: Chairman: Alan Robinson, Vice Chairman: Tim Forsyth, Treasurer: Pam Telfer,
General Manager: Mark Carroll, 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 52nd Annual General Meeting of the Solihull Arden Club will be held at the Clubhouse on Monday 31st March at 7.30pm to transact the following business:

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Approval of the previous AGM Minutes (25th March 2024).
- 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: Tim Forsyth

Squash/Racketball: Richard Lowe

Gym: Ken James

No other nominations have been received

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

We have made changes to the rule book they are;

- With the increased membership, the old definition of 50 members needed to call for an EGM has been amended so now 10% of the membership are now required to vote to call an EGM.
- The revised Rules have been displayed on the Club Notice Board, in accordance with the Club Rules.
- The old references to membership categories that no longer existed have been removed and the current categories that describe the type of Membership we offer has been inserted.
- A section on Bye Laws for Padel Tennis and Table Tennis has been included.

We will further communicate further information before the AGM on March 31st.

Solihull Arden Annual Chairman's Report Alan Robinson

I am very pleased to report that 2024 was another successful year for our Club.

We have further increased overall membership during the last year from 1,595 to 1,825. Our membership growth is spread across the various categories with Racquets and Gym/Fitness both growing by similar percentages.

During the second half of 2024 we closed applications for new membership but with changes to some of our sporting activities (thereby reducing the parking of cars in peak hours) we were able to reopen membership to new members. We consider that we are near the peak of membership so we can be confident that we offer a great experience to all members.

The growth of membership in 2024 brought in additional funds for us to invest in the Club facilities and the General Manager's report contains details of these improvements. As a reminder, the Club has Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC) status, so we are obliged to reinvest any profits for the benefit of increasing and renewing our facilities for all members. The Financial details of the funds spent throughout the Club are summarised in the Finance report.

Late in 2024 the Club was selected by Warwickshire Lawn Tennis Association as "Club of the Year". Our thanks go to the Tennis sub-committee and all the Tennis community for securing this award.

We are aware that our success in growing our membership has led to the Car Park being at capacity during peak times. We are reviewing all of our options for the Car Park and we will report to the members in due course.

Internally the Club has been re-modelled to facilitate better access and security for those using our facilities. This work will be completed in 2025. The funding for this came from the revenue by our increased membership.

Looking towards 2025 and beyond

The Club has made a representation to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) to their "Call for Sites" on land adjacent

**Chairman's
Report**

to the Club.

The Club has planning permission for a fourth Padel Court, and the Club is in discussion with SMBC to remove the restriction on play allowed after 6:00pm on the fourth Court.



Finance Report

Pam Telfer **Treasurer**

An independent accounting company continued to manage our accounts in 2024.

For the year to 31 December 2024 the Club realised a net profit of £14,608 compared to the profit of £139,077 in the previous year.

In 2024 we effected a prior year adjustment to 2023 closing stock of £9,277. This was due to an error in closing stock valuation. The adjusted profit for 2023 is restated to £129,800.

Stock counts are now managed by an independent stocktake company.

Subscriptions

In 2024 our GM **Mark Carroll** has continued to significantly build the membership.

2024 saw a marked increase in membership, where subscriptions have increased by £98k. (2023 - £94k).

Maintenance & facilities upgrades

2024 was the year of investment in Club facilities & playing courts. In total, £102k was spent. This includes investment of £71k on new tennis court floodlights and £25k on resurfacing the Padel courts.

Bar & catering contribution

In 2024 we realised a £102k gross profit in the bar contribution. Contribution in 2023 was £110k (adjusted).

Staff costs

Total staff costs increased by £42k (2023 - £22k)

This was mainly due to the 9% government rise in minimum wage costs in April and the engagement of a Deputy General Manager during the year, and a Senior Receptionist towards the end of 2023. A new Facilities worker was also appointed which saved on maintenance costs.

Asset additions & replacement

Expenditure includes £18k for gym equipment, £7k for outdoor maintenance equipment, £2k for additional outdoor furniture and £4k for upgrading the till & computer equipment.

Bank loans

- We repaid £8k of the government bounce back loan and paid £393 in loan interest.
- We repaid £39k off the Padel loan and paid £8k in loan interest.

Cash on hand

The Club had £49k cash at bank and in hand on 31 December 2024 (2023 - £69k).

GM Report 2024

Mark Carroll **General Manager**

Throughout 2024 the Solihull Arden Club has carried on increasing its inclusive pathway that develops and improves the facilities while creating a unique and affordable member experience. Once again, we navigated the industry trends which allowed for continual growth throughout most of the calendar year resulting in another year of positive membership movement and increased revenue streams, moreover we achieved something the industry has not seen in decades and capped our membership thus creating a huge waiting list and demand for our amazing facilities. Achieving this status has come from a strong brand presence, an exceptional point of sale price structure and a fantastic facility offering which is at the heart of everything we do.

We were proud to announce that the Solihull Arden Club won the Warwickshire Tennis Club of the Year for 2024, this outstanding achievement was testament to the newly formed tennis committee and the coaching team here at the Solihull Arden Club. The truly inspiring community projects formed the very foundations of what we represent and how we are perceived within the community. Furthermore, the Solihull Arden Club was able to spend over £100k on outdoor facility enhancements without the need for loans or finance which under the current climate is an amazing achievement, alongside these facility developments we took huge steps forward on our compliance spectrum making our site not only beautiful and safe but efficient and in line with current regulations.

All 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.

Another focus for 2024 was raising money for various charities, the first Charity we campaigned for was Prostate Cancer and through great social events we managed to raise an impressive £2,833 for this charity.

The Gym has had many new additions over the last 12 months too with 5 state of the art treadmills, 2 new Cross Trainer and further functional equipment for the studio 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.

The focus of 2024 was to solve the logistical restraints that the Solihull Arden Club has had for generations with regards to site security and access. Furthermore, we wanted to explore what more could be achieved on our own footprint that would enhance our Club and keep it moving forward for many years to come. These plans and visions were shared and greatly received by our members, the site security is on the verge of being complete, the other plans will be further discussed and digested prior to any decisions being made to ensure we maximise the experience for all our members, in short, the futures bright for the Solihull Arden Club.

Squash & Racketball

Richard Lowe **Squash & Racketball Chairman**

"I love your Club and what you are doing here, great atmosphere and great facilities" said James Willstrop World Squash Player

This is what James Willstrop said to us when he came to the Club for British Junior Open. We also had Marwan El Shorbagy and Curtis Malik playing and training here. Plus, **Joel Makin** playing and training here as a member. The World's top players, praising our Club.

We are hosting the England Squash Masters Tournament (May -June) and we have been asked to host the Qualifying Rounds of the British Open Tournament, so we will have the World's Top Players at our Club for two weeks.

Team Squash

Team Squash at Arden keeps getting Bigger and Better.

Monday Nights during the Season are as popular as ever, with the First Team Guaranteeing Top Squash and Top Pro members for our members to watch. This year we have **George Parker** and **Moustafa El Sirty** playing, both World Top 50 players.



Curtis Malik, Rich Lowe & Marwan El Shorbagy

We added a fifth team last year and all five teams are playing well and looking for Titles. A sixth team is a possibility.

Thank you to all the Captains and Team Players.

Ladies Team Squash continues to thrive and are always welcoming new players.

Team Racketball

It's been a tough year for the Racketball Team in Division 1. Regular players **Luke Symes** and **Ian Russell** have been joined by **Ben Whetstone**, **Tom Hudson**, **Luke Friend**, **Ollie Manning Brown**, **Jon Stobart**, **Cameron Synott** and **Gordon Symes**. We also now have a Club Coach who wants to play Team Racketball, so this will enhance our reputation.

Thanks to all those listed that have represented the Club and we look forward to an even brighter future. **Gordon Symes** Racketball Captain Squash and Racketball Club Nights are very popular, Squash on Wednesday and Sunday and Racketball Fridays. Thanks go to the Coaches and Players on the Club nights.

Farewell to Chris Ryder

I would like to thank Chris Ryder who left us at the end of 2024 for his new role at Head of Squash at Nottingham University. Chris has been a major part of our Junior and Coaching and Development programmes. Chris also played in our Squash Team helping to several Warwickshire League Titles.

Squash Chairmans summary

I would like to thank all the Club members who play and support our Teams. They all play at a very high level and enhance the reputation of the Club.

Welcome to Chris Hall Director of Squash

Chris Hall has joined us from Sutton Coldfield and is responsible for all Coaching, Junior Programmes and School activities. Chris also has responsibility for Club Tournaments and liaising with England Squash and the Professional Squash Association for the Masters Tournament, British Open Qualifiers and British Junior Open.

Chris is a Level 4 High Performance Coach with 13 Warwickshire Titles, across Squash and Racketball and is available for Squash and Racketball coaching to our members.



I also need to say a massive thank you to the members who support the Teams through their sponsorship and financial backing. **Pete and Paul Olds**, **Nigel Orrett**, **Ian Thurman**, **Paul Warmington**, **Darren McNeil**, **Dave Fennel**, **Tony Hannington** 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 the Winners and Runners up.

Finally thank you to all the members who gave their time and efforts in organizing competitions, tournaments, leagues, Club nights, namely **Tim Forsyth**, **Steve Morton**, **Tim Woodfield**, **Justin Claydon**, **Gordon Symes**, **Gaynor Keeley**, **James Averill** and **Leigh Benton**, plus all the Team Captains and Team Players.

Junior Squash Report

Chris Hall **Director of Squash**

I am excited to have joined the Club at the start of 2025 and hope to continue the excellent work performed by Chris Ryder and the rest of the junior coaching team. It is fantastic to be a part of such a thriving Club.

County Representation – We would like to congratulate the following players who have been selected to represent Warwickshire over the 2024/25 season.

Chun Sang Chow, **Connie Mason**, **Constance Regan Elson**, **Gabriella Ibrahim**, **Jacob Reville**, **Lauren Keeley**, **Luke Johnstone**, **Max Ibrahim**, **Ollie Tate**, **Raphael Ibrahim**, **Robbie Carroll**, **Shrey Gupta**, **Shubham Kapadia**, **Sienna Clarke**, **Sonny Hollings**, **Sri Bharath Gopal**, **Summer Hall** and **Vinayak Chikermane**.

Tournaments – Several of our junior players compete in events across the West Midlands and all over the country. Well done to those who gained silverware at the Warwickshire Championships – **Sonny Hollings** (BU11 2nd place), **Robbie Carroll** (BU13 1st place) and **Gabriella Ibrahim** (GU11 2nd place).

There were also successes at the Aspire West Midlands Championships – **Robbie Carroll** (BU13 1st place), **Ollie Tate** (BU19 1st place), **Gabriella Ibrahim** (GU11 2nd place) and **Constance Regan-Elson** (GU13 2nd place).

Junior Programme – The junior programme continues to be successful with group coaching sessions on Saturdays and



throughout the week. If you would like your child to get involved, please contact me at chris.hall@solihullarden.co.uk.

Junior Leagues – A big thank you to **Gaynor Keeley** for her work running the junior leagues. We currently have 18 players competing and would love to welcome any other junior payers to join.

Camps – We ran two days of holiday camps over the February half term which were very popular, there are further camps planned over the Easter break.

Coaches – The junior programme would not be possible without the support of our coaching team who play a big role in the growth and improvement of our junior players. Thank you to **Katie Brown, Tom Watkins, Ollie Tate** and **Lou Van Talligan**.

If you have any thoughts/suggestions about junior (or adult) Squash and Racketball at the Club, please do get in touch with me.



Tennis Report Alex Thompson

Our Tennis section enjoyed a special year in 2024 culminating in SAC receiving the coveted **Warwickshire Club of the Year Award** at the Annual WALTA awards, our Club has now been entered into the National Club of the Year Award with the winner announced later this year.

Team Tennis

It has been another successful year for our teams in the competitive leagues. We entered 8 men's teams, 6 ladies' teams and 1 mixed team, a total of 61 men and 39 ladies representing the Club in the regional summer leagues. Our men's 1st team finished a close second place in the top division of the Birmingham Area League, another fine achievement having won the league the year before. We also had 2 other men's teams, 2 ladies' teams and the mixed team win their respective divisions and gain promotions further up the leagues. Congratulations to **Martyn Langstone, Sarah Perry, Marianne Jones, Shavi Soni** and **Sunjay Manian** for topping the player stats in their respective divisions.

A big thank you to all the captains for their considerable efforts in organising these teams and to all the players for their passion and fighting spirit in representing the Club. We are always on the lookout for fresh talent to bolster the squads so please reach out to **Chris Foulkes** or **Michaela Price** if you are interested in playing competitive tennis this season.

Social Tennis

Ever popular, Social Tennis runs on Mondays and Wednesdays 6pm to 8pm led by our Club Coach Mark. Mark has a wealth of experience and endeavours to match up players into challenging matches, rotating play and adjusting formats where necessary subject to numbers and court availability. Social Tennis is open to all Club members who are confident to play a doubles game of Tennis. Once a month we have a meal and drinks immediately following Club Night, which is very popular with as many as 40 members in attendance.

Chris Cronin continues to arrange a popular social session on Thursday mornings 10am to 12pm, Open to all ability levels and with inclusivity as the main priority simply turn up on a Thursday at 10am and ask for Chris. The Thursday group arrange several friendly matches with other Clubs through the year and enjoy a social in the Club bar each week.

Junior Coaching and Outreach Programmes

Led by Head Coach Alex and his dedicated team, our Coaching Programme continues to thrive with over a 150 Juniors attending Coaching each week across our 7-day programme.

We continue to hold LTA Status as a 10&U Pathway venue, this status awarded to Clubs that show consistent standards when nurturing young talent.

Highlights last year include our very well organised every point counts friendly match with Alltryn Tennis Club from Wales. Over 50 Juniors played in matches culminating in a Solihull Arden win 590 to 530! Special thanks to Coach **Zach** for managing the event.

Our team continues to offer coaching to local schools and maintains strong links, Sharman's Cross School in June the Club and coaches to manage 'Sports Week'. Utilising the Tarmac courts, the team coached every pupil at the school over 5 days.

Community and Outreach Programmes

Over the past year, our Club has demonstrated exceptional commitment to inclusivity, community engagement, Led by Head Coach Alex and his Team, Highlights include.

Supporting Young Adults in Mental Health Recovery, offering Tennis sessions at the Club during the summer months

Empowering Women Through Social Sports, working with the NHS clinical team these sessions encourage interaction, low-impact exercise, and a supportive community for women facing mental health challenges.

Supporting Ukrainian Refugees, partnering with the Ukrainian refugee charity BRAMA, we delivered community tennis sessions alternate Sundays for families, children, and adults. With over 150 participants in our WhatsApp group, we've fostered a thriving and supportive community.

For more information on our community initiatives, contact Alex Thompson.

External Competitions and Club Championships

Many thanks to our Club and LTA referee William McCormack who once again planned in conjunction with the Club calendar a series of LTA events across all age groups, offering opportunities to our own budding Juniors and Club Members as well as keeping the culture of competition strong at Solihull Arden. We held over 30 LTA events in 2024 with over 250 participants some travelling from as far as Wales and Yorkshire.

Congratulations to our Men's Club Champion **Nader Megahed** and Ladies Club Champion **Hollie Ruck**.

Padel Report John Thomas

Padel has continued to flourish throughout the year with further growth in the number of players and the range and extent of social and competitive opportunities. Court utilisation remains very high with weekend figures reaching a peak of 97% in August. During the autumn, members welcomed the resurfacing of all three courts, which has improved the facilities significantly.

The internal Padel leagues remain extremely popular. We currently have around 70 pairs competing in 17 divisions with promotion and relegation at the end of each league programme. These leagues





provide regular opportunities for members to test their skills against both familiar and new opponents and contribute immensely to improving playing standards.

We held our inaugural Club championships during the summer. Although we would have welcomed more teams in the ladies' and mixed doubles events, entries for the men's and over 55 men's doubles events were particularly encouraging. Despite the finals day being disrupted by inclement weather, there was a high standard of play throughout. Overall, the event was highly successful and has established strong foundations for future years.

There is now an established and extremely well-supported tournament programme. The spring tournaments and the **Nick Hart Memorial** event in the autumn include discrete competitions for intermediate and more advanced players. All these competitions feature mini-leagues leading to progressive knock-out rounds ensuring that all players experience a busy schedule of matches. (The programme is displayed in reception area with details of all tournaments accessed through menu at <https://sac.mycourts.co.uk>)

Our men's team is currently performing well in the iPadel Midlands Premier League. Our ladies' team has recently completed its first season in the Midlands Premier League, winning four matches and losing just two.

There are extensive opportunities for members to participate in social Padel activities with regular sessions on Thursday evenings, as well as Friday and Saturday afternoons. Attendance at these events is excellent with high demand for places. Social Padel provides a unique experience for Club members particularly in supporting the induction and integration of new members. It helps them to build friendship groups within which they can organise matches at other times. One popular development this year has been the Social Americano tournaments held on the first Saturday each month.

We were delighted to be invited to host the inaugural Warwickshire County Closed Padel Championships. A considerable number of Club members entered these championships, and we were particularly pleased that **Rachel Woolford** and **Kim Westman** won the ladies' doubles event.

It is evident that due to the extensive range of opportunities to play Padel many members are making significant improvements both technically and in their understanding of the principles and strategies of the game. However, we appreciate the importance of supporting player development and this will remain a clear priority for the future.

Solihull Arden Table Tennis Section

Nigel Busby **Team Captain**

We are now in our 2nd year of running Table Tennis at the Club and our Table Tennis Team were promoted from Division 3 to the 1st Division in the Birmingham and Solihull League after our performance last year. We are facing much more challenging opponents now from teams that have been playing for many years however the Team are playing with great spirit and enjoyment.

We anticipate dropping down to Division 2 in the next Season where we hope to find our "level".

This year we have kindly been given a fantastic Butterfly Match Table by one of our members **Toby Cross**. The Team would like to thank Toby for his generous donation and "Toby's Table" is being put to regular use by the Team on Match and practice nights.

We also have 2 Club Tables which can be used by Members and we are looking to put on more regular practice sessions or even coaching nights during 2025.

For next season which starts in October we hope to be able to field 2 teams - we can always do with more players so if you fancy taking up Table Tennis and improving your reflexes then please contact Nigel Busby (nigelbusby@hotmail.com).

Please look out for notices over the coming months about Table Tennis Practice Sessions and also Club Handicap Tournaments.

Social Committee Report

What an amazing year we have had with our Socials! With huge thanks to the Social Committee, **Jane Howe**, **Shirley Robinson**, & **Brian Doogan** who have worked tirelessly to make each event a success.

With a plethora of different events including our Quiz Nights, Curry Nights, 151 Year Celebrations, 80s/90s Night, the legendary Christmas Carvery with thanks to **Simone**, and **Santa** arriving on Christmas Eve, thanks to **Shirley & Charles Robinson**.

We have raised an enormous amount for Prostate Cancer, a whopping **£2833.00!**

We look forward to another great year with new recruits on the Committee, thank you **Stewart & Stuart** for volunteering to help us all!

Solihull Arden Charitable Trust (SACT)

SACT received approval from the Charity Commission and has embarked on their programme of acquiring funding for their plans.

Two significant donations to SACT have been received from the Warwickshire Masonic Charitable Association, Provincial Grand Lodge of Warwickshire. These funds were used to improve access to the Club who are less able and the preparation of the development of the campus for our future plans.

Subscription changes

Category	Current £	Increase £	New Fee £
Gym only membership Monthly	£26.00	£1.50	£27.50
Gym membership Annual	£286.00	£16.50	£302.50
Premier Monthly	£39.95	£2.55	£42.50
Premier Annual	£439.95	£27.55	£467.50
Over 75 Per Annum	£100.00	£20.00	£120.00
Children 0 ro 12 Monthly	£2.00	£3.00	£5.00
Children 12 to 16 Monthly	£5.00	£2.50	£7.50
Student in full time education	£24.95	£0.00	£24.95
Social Membership per annum	£60.00	£0.00	£60.00