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**SOLIHULL ARDEN
CLUB**

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Sharmans Cross Road,
Solihull, West Midlands B91 1RG

www.solihullarden.co.uk

President: Richard Dumbleton

Management Committee:

Chairman: Tim Forsyth, Vice Chairman: Alan Robinson,

Treasurer: Pam Telfer, General Manager: Mark Carroll,

Richard Lowe, Ken James

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

WELCOME Dear Member

Notice is hereby given that the 53rd Annual General Meeting of the Solihull Arden Club will be held at the Clubhouse on Monday 30th March 2026 at 7:30pm to transact the following business:

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Approval of the previous AGM Minutes (31st March 2025)
- 3 There are no changes to the Club Rules & Bye Laws during 2025
- 4 Propose and Second the appointment of Tim Forsyth as Chairman
- 5 Report of the Chairman
- 6 Report of the Treasurer
- 7 Report of the General Manager
- 8 Receive and adopt the Accounts
- 9 Election of the President, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary (who have all expressed their willingness to continue in post)
- 10 Election of the Management Committee
- 11 Granting of Lifetime membership to Richard Dumbleton
- 12 Written questions raised by members
- 13 Any other business (At the Chairman's discretion)

NOTES

1. Elections

Club President: Richard Dumbleton

Chairman: Tim Forsyth automatically became Chairman when Alan Robinson expressed a desire to step down as Chairman. Tim Forsyth should now be proposed and seconded to ratify the position.

Vice Chairman: Alan Robinson

2. Constitution

We have made no changes to the Rule Book and Bye laws during 2025.

Solihull Arden Annual Chairman's Report Tim Forsyth

I am pleased to deliver my first report as Chairman.

I would like to place on record our sincere thanks to Alan Robinson, who has been our Chairman for many years. Alan's tenure involved a very difficult time in the history of Solihull Arden with the Global Pandemic and falling membership numbers. Under Alan's guidance, Solihull Arden has been transformed into a Premier Sports Club, with a comprehensive Racquet Sports offering, complimented by a Gym and Fitness facility. Our future is more secure now than at anytime in our recent past, due to Alan's Chairmanship.

It is fair to say that the success of our increased membership has brought additional problems to solve and the biggest of those is our Car Park. The conversations around the Car Park are ongoing and we have looked at several solutions to increase capacity.

Our membership numbers are circa 1,900 and our membership is closed to online applications and we are operating on a one out, one in basis.

The re-purposing of Club premises has nearly been completed,

with the latest addition being the Spin Studio that is using the old kitchen that was only used for one function per year.

We took the decision to make sure that all groups who use Arden is a member of Arden. Some of the rationale for this was so we could keep control on our Car park usage at peak times. The only exception to this is the groups that are part of our Outreach in the local community.

We are awaiting the outcome of our appeal to Solihull Council on the ability of a fourth Padel Court to operate beyond a curfew of 6:00pm.

We are proud to have been selected again to host the preliminary rounds of the British Open. Having the Worlds best squash players use our Courts is a testament to our engagement with the Squash Community.

My thanks go to all the members who assist with running all of the internal leagues, tournaments, coaching, social functions that are integral to the ethos of Arden being a true Club for the members.

Finance Report Pam Telfer

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

For the year to 31 December 2025 the Club realised a net profit of £14,608 compared to the profit of £139,077 in the previous year.

Subscriptions

In 2025 our GM Mark Carroll has continued to significantly build the membership.

2025 saw a marked increase in membership, where subscriptions have increased by £116k. (2024 - £98k).

Maintenance & facilities upgrades

2025 was another year of continued investment in Club facilities & playing courts. In total, £122k was spent.

This includes investment of £27k on installing access barriers & uplifting the reception area, £9k for installation of a spin studio and additional £20k for repairs to squash courts.

Bar & catering contribution

In 2025 we realised a £117k gross profit in the bar contribution. The contribution in 2024 was £116k.

Staff costs

Total staff costs increased by £56k (2024 - £42k)

This was mainly due to the 10% government rise in minimum wage costs in April and the engagement of a Squash Coach to manage all Club coaching inhouse.

Asset additions & replacement

Expenditure includes £14k for new gym equipment.

We also purchased the Wellness hub for £7.5k to enhance our available indoor space and to ensure that all site users will be exclusively Club members from 2026.

Bank loans

- We repaid £8k of the government bounce back loan and paid £192 in loan interest.
- We repaid £18k of the padel loan and paid £5.5k in loan interest.

Cash on hand

The Club had £137k cash at bank and in hand at 31 December 2025 (2024 - £49k)

GM Report 2025 Mark Carroll

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 consistent membership stability throughout the whole calendar year thus retaining our notable revenue streams.

The primary focus of 2025 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 very own footprint that would enhance our club and keep it moving forward for many years to come. We are pleased to say that the site security design and build has been finished with great success, the new corridors that access all of the external courts have not only given us complete site security but an enhanced feel of professionalism, the new internal access control barriers have further supported our club security and massively reduced the ability for facility abuse from non-members which had been a common thread for decades at the Solihull Arden Club.

Further improvements were made to our communal areas in the 'first phase' of our plan to elevate the Solihull Arden Club to a 5* facility. We started by creating a new 'simply stunning' reception desk that welcomes our members with a real sense of quality and prestige, we installed several wire framed notice boards that are updated on a regular basis with professional posters and information regarding all aspects of the Solihull Arden club life, a new external sign replaced the old faded 'Orange' sign that had served the club for many decades, we installed new pathways around Tennis Courts 4-7 that created a beautiful, floral space that really comes to life in the summer months.

As part of our all-encompassing membership approach we made the decision to re-design our 'honours boards' so we could, for the first time ever represent and recognise all of the winners from our Club Championships Categories, congratulations to everyone who has made it onto these boards, your names will be part of the history of the Solihull Arden Club for ever more! The plans are to continue with the 5* refurb in 2026 starting with the toilets and changing rooms along with the brand new Sauna/steam room extension that gives both male and females their very own wet facilities area, we will keep all members updated with timelines and planned work over the coming months.

Financial stability for the Solihull Arden Club was again a key objective for 2025 and could only be achieved with membership stability and sustained recurring revenue. After the first quarter of 2025 our membership figures were so strong that we 'paused' our membership and created a waiting list for all membership types. Adopting this membership strategy is something that sports clubs in the UK haven't done in many decades which itself is a real test of our success.

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

I would like to again 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, the Solihull Arden Club is without doubt the sports club everyone's talking about.

Squash & Racketball

Chris Hall

It has been another busy year for squash and racketball at the club, with some major events complementing our regular activity. The section is busy with something for all standards, from try squash sessions and internal leagues, through to a full junior programme and club team selection.

We have continued to invest in the facilities, courts 3, 4 and 6 have been re-plastered, along with a brand new floor installed on court 5.

British Open

In May and June we hosted the British Open PSA event for the first time which brought some of the world's best players to the club. It was fantastic to host these top athletes and see them mixing with our members. We also held the British Open Masters event with several of our players competing, congratulations to Jon Tate who won the MO45 event!

We are looking forward to both of these events returning at the same time this year at the end of May and early June.

Team Squash

We had 5 mixed squash teams and 1 ladies team competing in the Warwickshire squash league. It has been great to see many of our junior players starting to gain experience in these sides. We are thrilled to see such good quality squash at the club on team night's, including a number of world ranked professional players. A special mention to our number one player, **George Parker**, who has recently retired from the PSA tour. George reached a high of #25 in the world and we hope to continue to see his attacking brand of squash during our team matches.

We are entered a men's team into the national club competition and will keep you updated on our home fixture dates where our members can come and watch some world class squash.

Team Racketball

Team Racketball is growing at the SAC and we were able to add a 2nd racketball team into the Warwickshire leagues in 2025. Both teams are doing well with the first team winning the winter division 1 league and the second team gaining

promotion to division 2.

Club Nights

Our squash and racketball club nights are very well attended and continue to be a great way for players to get on court and socialise. A big thank you to the coaches who run these sessions and everyone who attends.

International Honours

In March **Jane Armstrong** was picked to be part of the England (WO50) squash team in the Transatlantic Masters Series held in Ireland, with England winning the event, well done Jane.

Rich Lowe was selected to represent the England racketball team (M070) at the home internationals in Cardiff. The event took place in September with the England side coming out on top.

Ollie Tate made his England junior squash debut in a select side which took on the Jesters at the prestigious Queen's Club. A great achievement.

Natalie Townsend travelled to Edinburgh in May as part of the England ladies O45 team at the home internationals championship, helping the side to wins over Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

Squash and Racketball Leagues

A big thank you to **Steve Morton** for managing our Internal Squash and Racketball leagues.

Junior Squash Report

County Representation

We would like to congratulate the following juniors who have been selected to represent Warwickshire for the 2025/2026 season.

Gabriella Ibrahim, Viaan Aggarwal, Sonny Hollings, Lauren Keeley, Sienna Clarke, Summer Hall, Shrey Gupta, Nico Bhogal, Constance Regan-Elson, Niamh Townsend, Robbie Carroll, Ed Burrows, Paras Aggarwal, Max Ibrahim, Jude Mason, Sophie Townsend, Sri Bharath Gopal, Vinayak Chikermane, Benji Tate, Chun Sang Chow and Ollie Tate.

Junior Leagues

A big thank you to **Gaynor Keeley** who looks after our junior squash leagues, there are currently 20 juniors taking part with lots of matches being played.

Junior Programme

The junior squash section continues to grow with sessions available for 4-18 years olds throughout the week and on Saturdays. The full programme is available to view at the club or please contact chris.hall@solihullarden.co.uk for more information.

Coaches

The coaching programme would not be possible without our qualified squash and racketball coaching team who support all of the activity delivered at the Solihull Arden Club. Thank you to **Lou Van Talligan, Leigh Benton, Ollie Tate, Tim Woodfield, John Byrne, Nigel Orrett, Jane Armstrong, Libby Blond, Sophie Townsend and Crystal Wong.**



(left Jane Armstrong) Players from the club who gained international honours

We also have a number of junior volunteers whose help is much appreciated.

Tennis Report Alex Thompson

“With the club overall progressing in every area, it is important that the Tennis section, with its roots in our very foundations, continues to fly the banner. To that end, we are excited and proud to report that the club will host the Warwickshire County Tennis Championships in August 2026.

Having been recognised as Warwickshire LTA Tennis Club of the Year 2025, due to significant membership growth, improved facilities and strong commitment to community inclusivity (including disability and mental health-focused sessions), our hosting of the highlight in the competition calendar for Warwickshire tennis players further underlines our standing as a club. We are sure that members will support this prestigious event.

Playing a wider role in our community is central to life at the club and our Ukrainian Tennis Project, of which we are rightly very proud, is in its third year. From its inception, this initiative has gone from strength to strength. Working closely with Ukrainian charitable organisations BRAMA and Kryla, we are helping displaced Ukrainian mothers and children to rebuild their lives through the power of tennis. We also host up to 50 junior players from Altryn Tennis Club in south Wales every summer on the final day of their Midlands tour and we acknowledge coach **Zach Hemmings’** contribution in the organisation of this

Tennis Committee

The past 12 months have seen the first full year of the new tennis committee’s stewardship. Tennis director Alex Thompson reports directly to management and he is assisted by the work of the committee who are representative of every element of tennis played within the club. Members are encouraged to reach out to the committee with ideas and general feedback which will be addressed at our regular meetings.

On the back of upgrading the floodlights on Courts 1 to 7, the committee, along with management, is currently reviewing options on upgrading surfaces in our continued efforts to make the club even more attractive to potential new members and to current members who avail of our courts regularly.

The game continues to be popular with members, with extensive use of courts all year round. We staged multiple events over the course of the year, showcasing the club’s ability to field competitive teams. We encouraged junior boys’ and girls’ tennis programmes and hosted an impressive programme of LTA events while also holding internal club championships for all age groups, making it a versatile, immersive and enjoyable experience for everyone. The committee - comprising of **Brian Doogan, Steve Dooley, Chris Foulkes, Christine Greig, Will McCormack, Sunjay Manian, Kate Smith and Alex Thompson** - would like to thank all the members for contributing, participating and encouraging everyone to play, compete and enjoy the game.

Team Tennis

With eight men’s teams, five ladies’ teams and one mixed team participating in the Birmingham League and Coventry League in the summer and two men’s teams, two ladies’ teams and one mixed team playing in the various leagues in the winter, the club is heavily involved in local competition. We also enter various cup competitions, which can serve to encourage junior

talent and promote champions of the future.

Our teams performed strongly in both the summer and winter leagues and the committee recognises and applauds the efforts of all captains and players, congratulating our winners while celebrating the overall success of our teams. Team tennis is a great way to test oneself and stay competitive and hosting teams from other clubs helps to further enhance our reputation and showcase our facilities, contributing to us securing the hosting of various LTA events.

Anyone interested in playing for our teams should speak to **Chris Foulkes, Sunjay Manian, Eva Robbins** or any of our committee members in order to be pointed in the direction of the team captains and pre-arranged practice sessions. Junior members are especially encouraged to come forward, as is any member who would like to be considered for the responsibility of being a team captain.

Ladies’ team tennis has progressed impressively since first entering the Coventry & District Lawn Tennis League five years ago. Three promotions in 2021, 2022 and again last year have resulted in the team rising to Division Two for the upcoming 2026 season. Due to this success and the popularity of the league and match-play opportunity for members, the ladies entered a second team in 2024 which secured promotion to the next division in its first year. We welcome **Julia Broome** as our new second team captain and are keen to welcome any lady members who are interested in competitive match-play.

Social Tennis

This is the bedrock of the club’s tennis programme. Club Nights run each Monday and Wednesday throughout the year from 6pm to 8pm. Participation levels remain strong and players of all standards are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please book the sessions on the club app, with doubles games arranged and rotated through the evening by a club coach. Club Night meals, which bring together many members, are organised every six weeks or so and have proved popular.

Chris Cronin also runs a separate social session on Thursday mornings from 10am to 12pm. All abilities are accommodated and anyone who turns up to play on Court 4 will be made welcome.

Internal Competitions

Congratulations to our reigning champions: **Nader Aboueileh** (men’s singles), **Hollie Ruck** (ladies’ singles), **Amr Eliraqi & Nader Aboueileh** (men’s doubles), **Marianne Jones & Emma Rice** (ladies’ doubles), **Ollie & Emma Rice** (mixed doubles), **Ed Lunt & Dave Burnley** (men’s vets doubles), **Gareth & Michaela Price** (mixed vets doubles) and **Ian Bowland & Graham Hollway** (men’s super vets doubles). The club championships will run again across the summer.

Internal leagues for men’s doubles, ladies’ doubles and mixed doubles currently run quarterly, with the next cycle due to start in April.

The tennis singles ladder, topped at the moment by **George Friend**, runs continuously. To get involved in any of the above, please contact **Chris Foulkes**.

External/Junior Competitions

The club ran a variety of successful tournaments and team events during 2025, with a total of 22 LTA events taking place across all age groups from under 8 to adults. Our juniors entered six teams throughout the year in the Warwickshire Junior League, presenting a great opportunity for youth players to experience competitive tennis. Our u8 squad enjoyed a particularly strong year, winning the u8 Warwickshire Winter Junior League, which included a strong win over Edgbaston

Priory. Naturally, the Warwickshire County Championships in August will present another great opportunity to see top quality juniors in action at the club.

Coaching

Under the leadership of Head Coach **Alex Thompson** and the coaching team, tennis at Solihull Arden continues to grow, driven by our strong seven-day Junior Coaching Programme. Delivering high-quality sessions seven days a week provides consistency, structure and clear development pathways for players of all ages and abilities. This programme remains the foundation of our junior growth and long-term player development.

Our juniors entered seven teams in the Warwickshire Junior League in 2025, giving players valuable competitive experience and the opportunity to represent Arden across the county.

Our community links remain hugely important. We continue to work closely with Sharmans Cross School and Solihull School and were pleased to host Sharmans Cross Sports Week for the second year running, delivering tennis and multi-sports on our hard courts - another excellent opportunity to showcase the club. Our holiday activities also continue to support junior engagement and introduce new families to Arden.

Alongside our junior programme, we deliver a full adult coaching offer catering from complete beginners through to advanced team players, ensuring tennis is accessible at every level.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are launching several initiatives to further strengthen engagement. We will be relaunching Junior Club Night, creating a regular weekly opportunity for young players to compete, socialise and feel more connected to the club beyond their coaching sessions. We are also introducing a new Junior Tennis membership model, designed to create a clearer and more accessible route into membership for all families within our programme.

For adults, we are launching a refreshed programme aimed at engaging more current members into tennis. This will include Introduction to Social Tennis sessions for novice players, structured Beginner Coaching Courses, and Intermediate and Advanced Drill Sessions for those looking to refine their game. The focus is on strengthening the link between coaching and club play.

Finally, a sincere thank you to the coaching team, who deliver quality sessions seven days a week and continue to uphold Arden's strong reputation in an increasingly competitive environment. Their professionalism and commitment are central to the continued success of tennis at the club.

For more information on tennis at Solihull Arden and to get involved in any of our initiatives, please email Alex at alex.thompson@solihullarden.co.uk.

Padel Report

John Thomas

Padel continues to flourish at Solihull Arden. Court utilisation remains very high throughout the year underpinned by a well-established programme of social and competitive opportunities, including leagues and a variety of tournaments. The internal padel leagues remain extremely popular. We currently have a premier league containing 5 pairs and a further 68 pairs competing in two parallel leagues (Arden and Solihull). Each of

these leagues comprises 8 divisions with promotion and relegation as well as crossover between leagues at the end of an eight-week programme. These leagues provide regular opportunities for members to test their skills against both familiar and new opponents and have contributed immensely to improving playing standards.

Our member Nigel Busby suggested a daytime Padel League to provide opportunities to play competitive Padel at off-peak times during the week. These leagues have been a great success and already two ranked divisions have been created. The Management Committee would like to thank John Thomas for his efforts in managing these leagues.

Club Championships

The club padel championships have become an established feature of the programme. This year we commenced the championships immediately after Easter and held the finals' weekend in mid-July, to reduce holiday disruption. Overall, the championships were very successful, culminating in some exciting and extremely competitive finals, featuring a high standard of play. The Ladies' Doubles and both Men's Plate and Mixed Plate events were organised as box leagues with initial group matches followed by finals and play-off matches. This proved to be a popular approach contributing to well-supported and particularly enjoyable social occasions for the final stages. Members are delighted with the new honours' boards where the names of all championship event winners during the last two years are now proudly displayed.

Nick Hart and Barney Griffin Memorial Padel Tournaments

A total of 30 pairs participated in the third annual padel tournament in memory of **Nick Hart**, which was organised into intermediate and advanced competitions. We were delighted that so many players and members of Nick's family supported the event.

There was also an excellent turnout for the tournament held in memory of **Barney Griffin**. Barney was a keen and regular player, the possessor of a great sense of humour and a highly individual taste in brightly coloured sportswear! He was extremely popular and always willing to help and support others, especially those new to the game or new to the club. We were delighted to welcome Barney's son and daughter to the club together with other relatives and friends. In keeping with Barney's 'approach' and attitude to padel, players dressed in sports kit that reflected his 'colourful and flamboyant' style.

Both events were splendid social and 'family' occasions that reflected the closeness, friendship and immense rapport of the padel community within the club.

iPadel Leagues

Solihull Arden teams continue to perform well in the IPadel Leagues. Our men's team finished third in the Midlands Premier Summer League behind Edgbaston Priory and Kenilworth. Our ladies' team has recorded two victories and one draw from their first five matches in the Midlands Club Winter League. An increasing number of our members benefit from the opportunity to represent the club in these leagues. Participation in the premier club competitions in the UK provides these members with the competitive experience necessary to enhance their own performance and ultimately help raise standards throughout the club.

Social Padel

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. These sessions provide 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. Attendance at these events is excellent with high demand for places.

Solihull Arden Table Tennis

Nigel Busby

The Arden is well and truly on the Table Tennis map this year fielding two teams in the Birmingham & Solihull League this year.

Solihull Arden Table Tennis Teams

Our A Team, Captained by **Glen Truman**, are performing brilliantly in their first year and are well placed in the Top 3 of Division 1 in the Birmingham & Solihull League. The Season ends at the end of April so it's still all to play for.

The B Team, Captained by **Nigel Busby**, are struggling a bit in the first half of the season however we have had a bit of a restructure and strengthened the squad. We have high hopes of a stronger 2nd half of the season.

All of the players are finding it rewarding playing competitive Table Tennis - some of us haven't played since our schooldays but it is very enjoyable and we also have a great social calendar which revolves around the Arden Bar, Wetherspoons and Curry Houses in Shirley!!

We have a total of 12 players playing for the teams - if you would like to play for the Arden please contact Nigel Busby (nigelbusby@hotmail.com) to arrange a try out.

Social Table Tennis

We have a regular Social Table Tennis Club Night which runs from 8pm on Wednesdays for upto 12 players - if you would like to play please book a slot on the App. All are welcome and you don't even need a bat as we can provide one if needed.

We have 3 tables and are hoping to acquire a 4th "Competition Standard" Table which will replace one of the tables that has become damaged.

Looking Forward

Social Club Night on Wednesdays started at the beginning of December and is building nicely. There may be other nights that Social Table Tennis can be run if demand is there - we are looking at Friday nights after the Fitness Classes finish at 6:30pm for instance.

The Table Tennis Section would like to record their heartfelt thanks to the Committee and Management Team at the Club for the ongoing support given to the Teams - it is most appreciated!

Social Committee

The Social Committee organised nine events in 2025, which were strongly supported by members across the club throughout the year.

From quiz nights to comedy nights, live bands to discos and also charity events, the diverse range of functions were popular and enjoyed by all who attended.

The majority of these events were sold out, with members from all of the club's various sports and activities coming together in a social environment.

Indeed the events put on by the social committee regularly bring together members of all ages and all interests and therefore they play a pivotal role in underpinning and promoting the culture of our club.

They also contribute to overall finances through ticket sales as well as to the club's success in retaining a fundamental community core and identity while we continue to grow and attract new members.

A total of £3,173 was raised for Prostate Cancer UK and Breast Cancer UK from events, with renowned local sports reporter and commentator **Gary Newbon** coming to the club to present the cheque.

Upcoming events are always publicised on posters placed around the club and highlighted in the club's monthly newsletter. Tickets can be bought using the MyCourts website.

This year has already started off strongly again with a sold-out comedy night featuring nationally recognised comedians and a performance by the very popular Strictly ABBA.

Further events planned for the year ahead include a wine and cheese night, quizzes and the ever-popular Christmas disco - and, of course, there will be another Christmas Eve appearance being made for the kids by Santa Claus. And his elf.

The social committee - which comprises of **Shirley Robinson, Jane Howe, Brian Doogan, Stuart Gallagher** and **Stewart Robinson** - would like to place on record its gratitude to all club members for your continued support and also to the staff who work hard to support every event.

Members' ideas and suggestions for future events are always welcome.

Solihull Arden Charitable Trust

Charles Robinson - Secretary/Trustee

The Solihull Arden Club Trust has continued to examine ways in which it can support the Club and the wider community. It has helped to fund the plans for the extension and enhancement of Club facilities and has been delighted to help fund the refurbishment of the Member/Community toilets by the main entrance.

Going forward the Trustees are looking to continue to support the development of Club facilities that will further cement the Club's aims and aspirations to maintain its position as the premier rackets club in the wider Solihull community and will be looking to undertake additional fundraising throughout the year.



British Open at the Solihull Arden Club



Jon Tate (British Open 045 Winner)



British Open at the Solihull Arden Club

