

Blackheath Squash Club - Chairman's Report 2024/25

Welcome to the 2024/25 Chairman's Report.

Membership - our membership remains at historically high levels. We currently have 258 members (2024: 258). Many thanks to our Membership Secretary Danny Dowling for enrolling our new members and collecting the annual membership fees.

Finance - The 2024 annual accounts show a cash balance of some £96k (2023: £90k). The Club is run on a not-for-profit basis and this cash is earmarked for the Club's continuing refurbishment, maintenance and future development. We were able to hold our annual membership subscriptions and court fees for 2024/25 at prior year levels with no increase despite increasing inflationary pressures. Many thanks to Neil Harris as Club Treasurer for prudent management of our financial affairs.

Kent League Teams – The Club put out two teams in the 2024 Summer Kent leagues with the 1st team winning promotion from Division 3. Two teams also played in the 24/25 Winter Kent leagues with the 2nd team winning promotion from Div 5. Thanks to team captains Jon Critchley and Olly Ruff (1st team) and Ville Leppanen (2nd team).

Tournaments and box leagues – The box leagues ran throughout the year and continue to be popular with members, currently 14 boxes with 81 participants. Many thanks to George Wooding for running the boxes during the year. The Club's annual tournaments were held in early Summer 2025 and finals night was well attended. Danny Dowling set up a new Racketball box league during the year which has seen an increasing number of participants since it was set up.

Junior squash – Junior coaching sessions run by coach Danny Dowling continue to be popular and included a visit to the Club by ex-professional player Paul Johnson who spent time with the juniors at one of their regular Saturday morning sessions.

Ladies squash – the Club's Ladies Squash Sunday evening sessions also continue to be popular and we currently have 49 (2024:45) female members. One of a number of events was the celebration of Women's Squash Week. Many thanks to Danny Dowling and Pam Reid for organising the Ladies squash evenings.

Senior training and coaching –The Club's Sunday morning senior training sessions run by Club head coach Ville have run throughout the year and are well attended. Many thanks to Ville for the time and effort on running these sessions and to both Ville and Danny for providing coaching services to Club members.

Club Night – The Friday Club Nights on the first and third Fridays in the month ran throughout the year. Many thanks to Ville, Andre Nowaczek, Niall Quilligan, Pierre Alexandre Mostermans and Sam Adebiyi for hosting these popular evenings.

Court maintenance – During the year we had continuing issues with the new court floors which were installed in Spring 2024. We also had an issue with the front court lights which were installed at the same time which resulted in the closure of the club for 3 weeks. We have resolved the light issue and mostly dealt with the flooring issues however we will be seeking an alternative court maintenance contractor for future works.

Communications - Many thanks to Danny Dowling for maintaining the Club's website; Twitter feed; and the monthly Club newsletter. Thanks Danny!

Club Renovations and future plans – We carried out major works to the balcony in the autumn of 2024 which included taking out the old bar and kitchen, removing the glass partitions overlooking the courts and installing new lights, floor, ceiling, radiator and sink unit. The new look balcony has been well received by members and visiting teams. We have also recently re-rendered the external side wall next to the school with the aim of eliminating the damp issues on the left hand wall on Court 1. It remains the long term aim of the Club to build two new squash courts on the slab adjacent to the squash building.

Garden works – Danny Dowling and Pam Reid have done a fantastic job improving the side garden, with extensive ground works and new planting it looks really good and has greatly improved the external amenity of the club.

Conclusion – 2024/25 has been another busy year. On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank all our members for their support for the Club. I would also like to thank the Committee and member volunteers who donate their time to make the Club a great experience for all and without whom the Club could not exist. We held a 'Meet the Committee' evening during the year and we will do the same for 2025/26 and hope to see more of our members at this event.

Enjoy your squash!

Kevin Clark
Chairman Blackheath Squash Club