

## **Background**

The Main Committee of the Club first debated the strategy for the Club in November 2018. This work was further developed for the review of the IT systems and website and a further workshop was held in December 2019.

This strategy will clearly evolve and be updated for developments however it is intended in its early guise to help inform the budget setting process and guide our detailed planning for 2020.

The discussions broke down into a number of areas:

### **Club ethos and involvement**

Primarily the Club exists for its members and it should provide value to its members in whatever form they choose to take it and to the extent that they want. The Club should provide something for everyone and there should be no closed shops or perceived elitism.

The Club wants to generate a positive, friendly and inclusive impression with existing and new / potential members.

Knowle and Dorridge Racquets Club is essentially 1 club with 2 sections.

It is a big 'little club' and wants to encourage as much participation across the 2 sections as people wish and also in the social activities of the club.

The Club needs to be financially stable both now and going forward in order to service the loans that have been taken out for new courts and floodlighting and to continue to allow the Club to invest.

Whilst the Club will continue to rely on volunteers to carry out key roles, other clubs (comparable size and bigger) have a paid administrator, with the hours worked depending on the size of the club. The Club should invest in a paid administrator who could administer the new systems being implemented and fulfil a number of other functions.

### **Member numbers and recruitment**

The Club will maximise its efforts to retain existing and encourage new members to preserve the positive circle of increased membership and income from membership, leading to better facilities and activities encouraging more members helping to keep increases in subscriptions as low as possible.

The Club will work to the following broadly recognised principles in terms of maximum members per court:

- 80 members per squash court
- 40 members per unlit tennis court and 60 members per floodlit court

Although we are close to the maxima advised by the LTA and the SRA, the courts do not appear to be overly busy. Accordingly, over the 3-year life of this strategy document, the Club will aim to recruit 20 net new members each year allowing for resignations. This can be reviewed if our recruitment is successful and the courts start to feel too busy. Within this membership recruitment target, the Club will

- Push to recruit Juniors and younger players recognising the increasing age profile of the Club
- Look to retain Junior Members and to progress them as they become older so that they stay with the club
- Continue to recruit Senior Members

The club recognises that the recruitment and retention of Junior and younger members will require changes to the way that the Club addresses these segments. Some options might include:

- Better signposting for Juniors towards e.g. Warwickshire Elite
- Becoming a 'performance club'
- Better and more available development and coaching (e.g. development sessions need to be run in the evenings for working members)
- Better facilities for younger people / Juniors
- Club environment that is attractive to younger people / Juniors

Recruitment of Senior members is important. We need to look at areas that do not have local sports facilities (e.g. Dickens Heath). Our new member offer needs to pick up various elements that may have disappeared with the loss of the handbook but also focus on more people carrying on with the work that Roy Clark does (and this needs to be extended to squash & racquetball).

### **Coaching and development**

There needs to be more availability of coaching at times to suit members for the various groupings

- Junior – daytime during holidays and evenings + weekends
- Adult – daytime, evenings and weekends

Equally, there needs to be the scope to arrange more improvement sessions for junior and adult members where the demand exists.

### **Pricing strategy**

The table below indicates the pricing on a comparable basis as is possible for tennis and squash combined:

Club	Tennis and squash annual subscription
K & D	£364
Leamington	£348
Arden	£513
Hampton	£400
Blossomfield	£259 (tennis only)

---

## K & D Racquets Club – 3-year strategy

---

West Warwickshire	£390
Marsh Lane	£175 (tennis only)
Warwick Boat Club	£476

There are various discounts available (and schemes for those that pay by DD) however the above information represents the most consistent comparator.

The strategy will be to maintain current price positioning with modest increases to allow for inflation.

A number of clubs have indicated that moving to monthly payments by Direct Debit has resulted in significant increases in memberships in the following groupings:

- Young families
- The 20s and 30s

Our strategy will be to offer a variety of payments options, annual and monthly in order not to deter, and indeed attract, potential members.

### **Succession planning**

The Club is run by a small number of committed unpaid volunteers. With one exception, the Main Committee does not provide a good spread of age profiles. The club needs to expand the number of members involved, perhaps splitting tasks / duties and have a clear succession plan for key roles. This needs to cover the various committees (Main and Sub-Committees), other key helpers and the coaching team.

Equally, the Club needs to ensure that the volunteers receive appropriate training for the roles that they agree to undertake.

### **Role of the Bar**

The Club believes that the Bar is an extremely important element to the Club and contributes both financially (helping to invest in new facilities) and as a focal point for member and social activities. Social activities have been successful and should be increased (as requested in the membership survey), subject to demand.

The Club should encourage better usage of the Bar emphasising its role in helping to improve facilities (rather than “encouraging” members to go to the Cricket Club).

The Club does not believe that, at current usage levels, there is a justification for paid bar staff but is happy to review this if the Bar becomes appreciably busier. The Club will therefore continue to ask its members to complete bar duty but the Club must establish an effective sanction if members do not show up to complete their duty.

### **Investment priorities**

As a result of the member survey, the Club has determined its investment priorities as:

- Refurbishment of the squash court block (approximate cost £6k)
- Install LED floodlighting on all courts (approximate cost £120k)
- Resurface Courts 3 & 4 initially (approximate cost for courts 3 & 4 would be £50k but it may make sense to do all courts if floodlights are upgraded)
- Construct a meeting room or Committee room. (Cost being investigated)
- Improve ventilation in showers. (Cost being investigated)

The above are not in priority order but will be determined by the availability of funding relative to cost.

### **Technology**

The Club will progress the following projects:

- Implement the Payne Automation ASP membership and court booking system to provide better functionality than at present and move away from cash tokens
- Implement a new email system that stands alone from the booking management system
- Move to a General Ledger package rather than relying on spreadsheets for its accounting function
- Implement a 'smart till' that will allow for cashless payments at the Bar
- Move to collect membership subscriptions by Direct Debit, offering annual and monthly payment options

### **Club Organisation**

It was felt that the present Committee structure was broadly fit for purpose and was very similar to most other Tennis Clubs.

Main Committee meetings need to be improved as they become bogged down in detail that would best be handled by an administrator. They need to be shorter in duration with reports taken as read rather than scrutinised in detail unless there are questions.

### **Community involvement**

The involvement with Schools & other educational establishments should be continued and developed. The example of Coventry University playing their matches at the Club is a blueprint that can be replicated.

The Club should reach out to local businesses and offer corporate memberships at say lunchtime when the courts are traditionally quiet.