
ANNUAL REPORT

2020-21



CONTENTS

Chair's Foreword	3
Chief Executive's Introduction	5
The Covid-19 Pandemic	6
Participation & Supporting Clubs	9
Developing Talent & Improving Performance	12
Communications & Promoting the Sport	16
Competitions: The Heart of the Sport	20
Financial Review	24

CHAIR'S FOREWORD



England Squash will continue to work closely with Sport England and the squash community, including county associations, clubs, coaches and volunteers, to embrace the changes required for the game to recover well and thrive once more.



I am extremely proud of the organisation's progress over the past year, under the most challenging of circumstances. The Chief Executive and whole England Squash team have adjusted admirably to the numerous difficulties posed by the pandemic and the support the team have been able to offer the squash community has been critical in shaping the sport's response to the challenge. The Board has supported the executive team to lead the squash community during this time and I am pleased to share that there have been some really positive results achieved across all areas of the game.

Most notably, progress has been made in our work to improve inclusion and diversity and our continued efforts to make an impact on the Climate and Ecological Crisis; we have now been accredited as carbon neutral for two years. Work in both of these areas is still in its early stages and we recognise that there is still much to do but I am proud that England Squash will be leading the way.

In addition, we have been busy consulting with key partners across the game to ensure their views and ideas shape our new strategy. We have seen a tremendous sense of togetherness across the squash community and, as we transition towards the lifting of restrictions and a return to play, that togetherness will be a critical factor in how squash bounces back from the challenges we have all faced.

It is for that reason that 'Together' has been added as a core value of the organisation that will define how we work over the coming period.

As we head towards a new phase of the pandemic, sport and physical activity will play a vital role in how the country addresses the various impacts, both those we have seen and those that remain unknown. England Squash will continue to work closely with Sport England and the squash community, including county associations, clubs, coaches and volunteers, to embrace the changes required for the game to recover well and thrive once more.

I would like to add my sincere thanks to the England Squash Board, whose expertise, guidance and support has been needed and valued this year more than ever. Finally, I would like to thank our outgoing CEO, Keir Worth, for his outstanding leadership of the organisation over the past seven years. I and the rest of the Board are grateful for all that he has done and we wish him well in the future.

Joy Carter
CHAIR

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S INTRODUCTION



I am grateful to all of the volunteers, coaches, clubs and county associations across the game who have stuck by the sport, supported each other and England Squash.



It has been a uniquely challenging year for the organisation and the squash community across the country. As the pandemic unfolded, every level of the game was impacted and the ongoing restrictions forced us to reassess our objectives and focus on guiding the game through the uncertainty. At short notice, the England Squash team were forced to move to home working, events were cancelled, and for the first time in the sport's history, restrictions forced clubs to close en masse as the various lockdowns took hold. In helping us to navigate the challenge, we are indebted to Sport England whose extension to the current funding cycle (2017-21) enabled England Squash to focus on helping the sport through the pandemic.

We paused membership and affiliation fees to ease the burden on clubs and individuals. We provided grants and resources to support activity when restrictions allowed and we turned to online platforms to engage the community including through new training programmes. The timing of the pandemic was particularly cruel on those young players who missed out on a critical period of their development as aspiring squash players and I am pleased that we were able to engage many of the young players within our talent pathway through regular virtual training sessions.

As we return to court, England Squash will prioritise re-engaging our core players, supporting clubs as they reopen, rescheduling events and ensuring that our young players have a calendar of competitions to look forward to. Attention will then shift to driving participation once more with a new focus on ensuring our sport is open and accessible to everybody.

Whilst the past year has been primarily defined by the challenges we have faced, I have been hugely encouraged by the positivity, determination and resilience shown by individuals and groups across the squash community. I am confident that the game will maintain that feeling and pull together with a shared purpose to ensure that some positives can be taken from this experience. To this end I am grateful to all of the volunteers, coaches, clubs and county associations across the game who have stuck by the sport, supported each other and England Squash. None of us would have wished for the year we have had but, if we can now come together, perhaps the dark days we have experienced will be a stepping-stone to a brighter future.

With this in mind, the year ahead has some incredibly exciting opportunities, a return to play, the launch of a new strategy, planning for a home Commonwealth Games in 2022 and a rejuvenated squash community.

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to the Board for their support and guidance and to the whole England Squash staff team who have worked incredibly hard, under the most challenging of circumstances. I would also like to recognise the tremendous work of Keir Worth who led the organisation with distinction during one of the toughest years the sport and England Squash has faced, we wish him well in his new role.

Mark Williams
CEO

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The pandemic caused widespread disruption to the sport nationwide and impacted every aspect of the game. England Squash's main role was to provide guidance and recommendations that were informed by Government policy and advice from national sports bodies, including Sport England. This guidance was updated frequently in line with the evolving nature of the pandemic. Throughout the year, England Squash also sought to engage and support clubs, coaches and other key stakeholders across the sport in several ways, including free webinars and training programmes, club grants, online campaigns and regular communications.

Our priority was helping clubs, coaches and players to remain safe whilst still being able to enjoy the game they love.

The suspension/cancellation of all England Squash activity was communicated to all parties through email, social media and on englandsquash.com, usually within hours of decisions being made.

We launched a COVID-19 support hub on englandsquash.com, with updates and guidance for the community, as well as FAQs for clubs and coaches.

To maintain visibility and create engagement, our 'Stay In, Work Out' content hub was launched in April 2020 to support Sport England's 'Join the Movement' campaign featuring engaging new video content and features.

We sought novel ways to connect and engage with stakeholders and hosted webinars for clubs, coaches and referees.

CLUB & PLAYER SUPPORT

Supporting players, clubs and venues was a key priority, including:

- Affiliation and membership fees were suspended for the full duration of the year
- 'Bounce Back' grants were provided to support clubs
- Club support webinars were delivered covering a range of topics
- Regular updates, including advice on interpreting Government guidelines, and a dedicated club support COVID-19 section on the England Squash website were created

- 'Stay in Work Out' activities kept the community engaged including #WorkoutWednesday Squash 101 circuit videos and Junior 101 home workouts
- Player surveys were circulated to understand how squash clubs and players were feeling about stepping back on court
- Information was shared on funding opportunities, including the Sport England Community Emergency fund and local authority grants
- Return to Play video content was produced featuring clubs showing how they are implementing measures to allow their members to play safely
- A Club Toolkit for COVID-19 was created, including:
 - Guidelines for re-opening squash venues
 - Template risk assessments
 - Posters for clubs to use on social media to encourage safe behaviour

COUNTY ASSOCIATION SUPPORT

Support was provided to county associations in the following ways:

- Regional Forum (RF) funding was paid early and the usual conditions were relaxed – RFs were able to use the grants to suit the needs of their counties and clubs.
- The County Programme Manager’s course was delivered virtually
- An England Squash funded Level 3 coaching course was delivered online for county coaches
- One-to-one support was available to address the individual needs and concerns of counties
- County ‘Zoom’ meetings were held to discuss issues and challenges

COACH DEVELOPMENT & COACHES CLUB

Coach members were supported in the following ways:

- Twice-weekly webinars with c.60 coaches attending each week
- New content was created, based partly on ideas from the coaching community
- A set of 24 lesson plans for county/club coaches to support group activity
- Regular updates and direct messages, including safeguarding advice on delivering sessions remotely and the Government’s furlough and self-employment payment schemes

- Coaching courses and workshops were delivered online, including a Level 3
- Suspension of Coaches Club membership fees for the duration of the year

REFEREES

- We piloted an online Beginner Referee Test which is part of a suite of three courses that are being created to help club-level players and juniors, who would like to better understand the rules and their application. The test acted as a precursor to the World Squash Officiating (WSO) award
- Delivered educational webinars for referees

**PARTICIPATION &
SUPPORTING CLUBS**



PARTICIPATION & SUPPORTING CLUBS

Participation programmes have been on-hold since the pandemic began, with the priority being to support the squash community through it.

A package of support has been on offer for clubs, with over 100 accessing the £150 'bounce back' grants, with hundreds of clubs attending webinars on topics ranging from 'understanding COVID guidance' to 'crowdfunding success stories'. Case studies were also shared to show how clubs adapted throughout the pandemic, and posters and marketing materials were provided for clubs to display to ensure protocols were followed.

With the planned delivery of our participation programmes not possible, the focus turned to supporting clubs and coaches.

PARTICIPATION PROGRAMMES

During the first national lockdown, in 2020, England Squash's attention turned to supporting players to stay active at home through the #StayinWorkOut campaign led by Sport England. Initiatives like #WorkoutWednesday, Squash 101 circuit videos and Junior 101 home workouts kept adult and junior players engaged with squash.

As restrictions lifted attention turned to re-engaging players through campaigns designed to get regular players back on court. Team Laura Vs Team Nick was the 2020 World Squash Day campaign which aimed to bring back some competitive squash at a time when traditional competitions couldn't take place. Players from across the county picked a team, got on court and recorded their scores. The competition ran over a month with 1,165 matches played across 84 venues and Team Laura taking the win.

January 2021 saw the new Club Development Programme piloted, with 13 clubs taking part in six modules designed to support them to develop their strategy and a 12-month action plan.

WORKFORCE

The pandemic provided a clear challenge to engaging the squash workforce of volunteers, coaches and referees. England Squash focused on supporting them through online engagement so that they could remain involved in the sport, despite their usual roles being disrupted. Throughout the year we delivered workshops

and webinars to our Coaches Club members, achieving regular attendances of c.25-30 coaches for each session. We maintained a positive relationship with the 16 funded level 3 coaches through the County Programme Managers Course and managed to deliver bespoke webinars and smaller scale face to face sessions in October 2020 before the winter lockdown. Further to this, we were able to provide regular six weekly webinars to the c.65 referees that were active before the pandemic. Webinars were received well with 55 referees regularly signing up to webinars.

The enforced shift towards online learning created a real opportunity to transition the organisation towards making better use of technology on a permanent basis. One significant positive to come from the year was the improved reach and engagement compared to the usual delivery methods. A new Participation Coach Award (Level 1) was developed and piloted in the summer of 2020 with the final launch taking place in February 2021. The award saw over 200 people trained by the end of March 2021. The opportunity to provide online education also proved popular for the Referees' Award which moved online at the end of January and saw over 150 people pass the course by March 2021.

DEVELOPING
TALENT &
IMPROVING
PERFORMANCE

Canary Wharf Classic 2021

PSA
WORLD TOUR



**DEVELOPING
TALENT &
IMPROVING
PERFORMANCE**

The pandemic had a disproportionate impact on indoor sports and players in the talent pathway and senior programme suffered greatly, with normal competitions and training affected by Government guidelines and training venue closures.

DEVELOPING TALENT & IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

When clubs closed and competitions were cancelled, we took our squad programmes online and supported players through remote sessions.

PERFORMANCE & TALENT HUBS

Throughout the various national lockdowns we engaged our talent and performance players through weekly online workshops and virtual coaching and physical training sessions. All of our senior funded players were sent training equipment for home-based circuits and we devised a menu of sessions for them to complete on a weekly basis, produced by our Strength & Conditioning lead.

From July 2020 onwards we were able to open up two training sites for our senior programme players, a northern hub at the National Squash Centre and a southern hub at Hatfield. We held 3-day squads at both venues with access to coaching from the national coaching team and EIS sport science and sport medicine. These sites were only available to players signed off as 'elite' according to the Government guidelines.

TEAM ENGLAND

The tournament calendar shut down completely for several months, including the cancellation of England Representative events such as the Women's World Team Championships and the European Team Championships.

To compensate for the lack of match play, we staged three internal events for our senior programme players. These events were played on the glass court in Manchester with draws of eight men and eight women and all matches being streamed live on PSA Squash TV. These events were a huge success and gave our players much needed competition and motivation.

WORLD RANKINGS

All rankings were frozen throughout most of the year.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES DOUBLES PREPARATION

Monthly two-day doubles camps were held at the National Centre. Test matches against Scotland and Wales were also held to provide some meaningful competition for our players.

A schedule of doubles test matches and selection squads are planned throughout 2021 as we build towards the Games in 2022.

DEVELOPING TALENT & IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT & ENGLAND POTENTIAL PROGRAMMES

The pandemic heavily affected delivery of the England Potential and Development programmes this year. This forced a shift to online delivery via Zoom and at-home work outs. Both squads received multiple weekly sessions on various topics, such as physical work, nutrition education and match analysis. These were led by England Squash coaches, performance practitioners and were often supported by senior and academy players. Sessions were attended by c.20 players across both of the England Potential and Development squads and helped maintain motivation levels through connection with other players.

Online competitions using physical challenges were also set up to add to the programme of online activity, including against Malaysia and the home nations.

A small number of England Development players were signed off under the Government's elite exemption and were able to continue their on-court training.

The online model was also used for Aspire level players as well. This provided support for c.200 players through online contact every quarter to ensure they were kept engaged with our coaches, programmes and the sport during this period.

Looking forwards, we have planned a post pandemic training programme that will be specifically focused on getting our England Potential and Development programme players back as quickly as possible.

JUNIOR INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Due to the pandemic all international and England Squash competitions were cancelled.

COACH EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

The pandemic provided an opportunity to upskill a number of people that support our talent pathway in a number of roles, including:

- County Programme Managers
 - Two cohorts of County Programme Managers were trained via online delivery with all 38 counties taking part.
 - Monthly calls were set up once the County Programme Managers were trained to keep them engaged and provide further ideas and support.
- Monthly County Coach CPD sessions were set up lead by Josh Taylor and Paul Carter. These regularly attracted c.20 coaches on topics such as movement and match analysis.
- The team of Aspire coaches met on a biweekly basis to share ideas and experiences, providing a great development opportunity for the team.
- The national junior coaching team lead by Lee Drew met on a monthly basis to discuss key ideas and themes.
- Coaches Club Webinars were introduced for the wider coaching community via Zoom and led by national coaches and key members of the coaching community, with c.30 people attending each webinar.

**COMMUNICATIONS
& PROMOTING THE
SPORT**



Our priority has been to lead and support the community safely in and out of lockdown by communicating up-to-date and clear guidance across all customer touchpoints.

March saw the launch of our COVID-19 support hub featuring advice, guidance and news to signpost the squash community to. Once restrictions lifted in July, we launched a Back to Squash microsite which included advice, guidance and FAQs on the return to play.

Building trust and engagement
through effective content,
communications and campaigns.

PR, COMMUNICATIONS & CONTENT

During the pandemic, our focus has been on retention, rather than acquisition and to retain affiliated clubs, player and coach members by demonstrating value, building trust and engagement through effective content, communications and campaigns.

The pandemic has driven us to adapt and develop creative digital content strategies to actively engage our audiences and maintain visibility. April 2020 saw the launch of our 'Stay In, Work Out' hub to support Sport England's Join the Movement campaign featuring engaging video content and features to entertain players and drive engagement on social media in lockdown. Regular features included:

- Train Like A Pro: a live workout series on Instagram: c.3k views per episode
- 10 Things You Didn't Know About: athlete interview series, c.1.5k views per episode
- Tuesday Tricks: a trick challenge series: up to c.1.3k views per video

Using insight from our Back to Squash August 2020 survey which informed us that 38% of players had returned to play, we launched our Bounce Back hub featuring content, resources and campaigns to support clubs and venues, and re-engage players.

Our Bounce Back participation campaign, Team Laura vs Team Nick launched on World Squash Day (10th October 2020) to support clubs in re-engaging players. Despite the introduction of the new COVID alert levels mid-way through the contest, 83 clubs in England took part – with the top seven most active clubs engaging more than 40 players each.

A collaboration with the PSA enabled us to stream live squash and has resulted in high levels of engagement across social media. This approach has been effective in gaining followers, with our Facebook page seeing a 66% increase, helping to increase our sphere of influence.

- England Squash Challenge (Nov 2020): 22k video views | 26k engagements
- England Squash Championships (Feb 2021): 49k video views | 32k engagements

To deliver further value in membership and engage with members, we launched a Facebook group exclusive to Coaches Club members, which has seen 12% of all coach members join since January 2021.

The pandemic has driven us to redefine the way in which we engage and webinars have proven a successful channel to connect with stakeholders, gather insight and demonstrate value during this time. Feedback was positive with up to 6% of all coach members registered.

MEMBERSHIP & AFFILIATION

Club affiliation renewals were 'suspended' at the point of indoor sports venues being closed and this was ultimately extended to the end of the financial year. Consequently:

- Clubs who were due to renew their affiliation during this period will be issued a pro-rata invoice for the remainder of their affiliation year, at the point of return to play
- Clubs who have not needed to renew their affiliation during this period will be offered a similar pro-rata discount in their next affiliation term
- This will allow affiliated members to retain continuous membership, and to be able to access their England Squash benefits throughout this period.

Direct and Coaches Club members were offered an extension to their membership in the same way.

COMMERCIAL

England Squash has continued to make good progress in this area, with the management of existing partners and development of new partner relationships at the heart of our work, including:

- The Official Ball & Racket agreement with Dunlop was renegotiated with Official Clothing replacing Official Racket status
- Official Clothing agreement with KUKRI ended 31st December 2020
- All 10 companies/partners were retained within our Approved Contractor Scheme

- Negotiations are ongoing with several partners to replace the previous Dunlop sponsorship of the England Squash Junior Circuit which ended in September 2020 – all competitions within the Dunlop England Squash Junior Circuit experienced significant growth during the previous agreement period
- An official Event Merchandising agreement with iPROSPORTS was successful and negotiations are ongoing regarding an extension
- Title sponsorship with AJ Bell was secured for the 2020 AJ Bell British National Championships
- A 'How to Attract Sponsors' video was produced as part of the club toolkit to help increase revenue opportunities at grassroots level
- englandsquash.com website banner advertising was introduced and sponsors/advertisers continue to be sought alongside maximising visibility of existing partners

A review is being conducted to identify the impact on commercial income linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, as sponsors and partners seek alternative approaches to sponsorship based on global markets.



University of Nottingham Sport

GOOD UNIVERSITY GUIDE 2019

SPORTS UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

COMPETITIONS: THE HEART OF THE SPORT



COMPETITIONS: THE HEART OF THE SPORT

The pandemic represents a huge challenge to running competitions and there will be implications that will change the way in which England Squash runs competitions for the foreseeable future. The priority has been the development of a competition plan to manage the effects of the pandemic.

With the majority of competitions cancelled due to the pandemic, the focus has been on preparing for the return to play and planning the future of competitive squash in England.

PRIOR TO COVID-19

Prior to the lockdown, we delivered a very successful English Junior Championships, and made improvements to Club Locker, including the launch of our tournament organiser dashboard on englandsquash.com which will give organisers greater control over the administration of their tournaments. More recently, we have been consulting on the format for the Inter County Championships (both Juniors and Masters).

COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS & RESPONSE

COVID-19 had a huge impact on the 2019-20 season, with all competitions between 17th March and 31st July 2020 cancelled and the likelihood that the 2020-21 season will be severely disrupted too. Rankings have been suspended as of 1st April 2020, a draft calendar was proposed, with the BJC moved to Spring 2021, the Junior ICC being split into a regional format for stage 1, cancellation of the Masters ICC and PSL, and the postponement of the British Open.

COMPETITIONS: GENERAL UPDATE

The Competitions department met with its extended team of delivery partners to outline key objectives to support a Competitions and Events plan for the coming seasons. The key discussions were as follows:

- A new Mixed U9 age group to be established at Bronze and Copper level
- To pilot a third Gold competition
- All players will be required to compete in their own age-group at Silver competitions and above unless special dispensation is approved

- A range of measures to tackle the effect of competitions on the environment which we will begin to implement in the next year.
- The PSL's new national league structure will be delayed until the 2021/22 season.
- Our goal with the British National Championships remains to try to secure an agreement with a delivery partner. Discussions are being held with the PSA.

The Competitions Team have also conducted a review of our major competitions, provided updates to our tournament organisers and completed a refresh of the website to make information more readily accessible. Progress has also been made with the Masters Inter County review, with our focus group offering feedback on our provisional proposal for the coming season. Counties will have the opportunity to feed back on the proposal before a format is agreed. Improvements are also currently ongoing with Club Locker, including the development of a Mixed U9s ranking.

COMPETITIONS: THE HEART OF THE SPORT

COMPETITIONS: RETURN TO PLAY

In September 2020 the reintroduction of team squash, albeit with significant restrictions (including reduced team size) was permitted. To facilitate the return, the team has rescheduled major competitions, monitored and learnt from other NGBs, and kept partners updated.

We continued with the Masters Inter-County review and counties will have the opportunity to feedback on the proposal before a format is agreed. A set of guidelines which outlines a pathway back to competitive play in a safe and controlled way was prepared.

With the ongoing uncertainty caused by the pandemic, the Competitions team has been required to regularly reschedule the competitions calendar and when appropriate, take tough decisions on whether to reschedule 'big' competitions or to cancel them. This work will continue into the next financial year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW



DEPARTMENTAL INCOME & EXPENDITURE £'000

1. MEMBERSHIP 2020/21 2019/20

INCOME

Membership fees	0	498
Total income	0	498

EXPENDITURE

County Rebates	4	97
Membership Services	71	113
Staff	0	0
Total Expenditure	75	209

2. COMPETITIONS & EVENTS 2020/21 2019/20

INCOME

British Open	0	313
Entry fees	5	174
Other	0	36
Total income	5	524

EXPENDITURE

British Open Costs	11	378
Event Costs	67	278
Staff	0	0
Total Expenditure	77	656

3. PARTICIPATION 2020/21 2019/20

INCOME

Miscellaneous Grants	0	33
Total income	0	33

EXPENDITURE

Development Budgets (Schools, Youth, Leisure Centres etc)	122	262
Staff	132	191
Total Expenditure	254	453

DEPARTMENTAL INCOME & EXPENDITURE £'000

4. MARKETING & COMMERCIAL

	2020/21	2019/20
INCOME		
Commercial & Marketing	17	51
Total income	17	51
EXPENDITURE		
Branding Materials/Collateral	10	71
Strategy Development	0	0
Other	0	0
PR Costs	0	8
Staff	112	169
Insight	0	0
Website/CRM Development	0	51
Total Expenditure	122	299

5. SUPPORT SERVICES

	2020/21	2019/20
INCOME		
Approval fees	0	0
Legacy	2	20
Interest	0	3
Total income	2	23
EXPENDITURE		
Depreciation	1	9
Insurance	23	22
Irrecoverable VAT	74	124
Office Costs	18	29
Strategy Development	11	8
IT maintenance and infrastructure	3	20
Other	87	96
Legacy	0	20
Printing	0	66
Professional Fees	93	78
Rent	11	12
Staff	231	282
Total Expenditure	552	765

DEPARTMENTAL INCOME & EXPENDITURE £'000

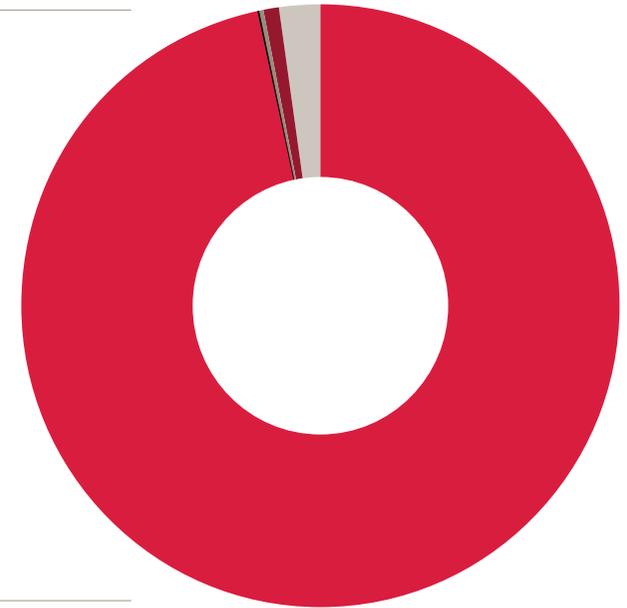
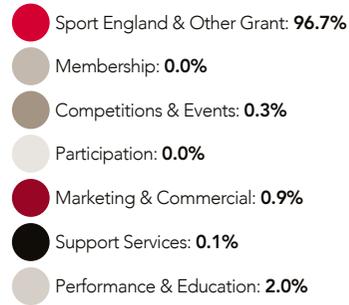
6. PERFORMANCE & EDUCATION

	2020/21	2019/20
INCOME		
EDP	0	14
Coaching Courses	34	114
Talent Pathway	2	5
Total income	36	132
EXPENDITURE		
Competition Programme Support	18	5
Personal Awards	81	132
Training and Preparation (Squads, Coaching)	126	352
Technology and Equipment	52	17
Coach and Tutor Development	2	33
Science and Medicine Support	73	51
Other	0	0
Staff	258	275
Total Expenditure	611	864

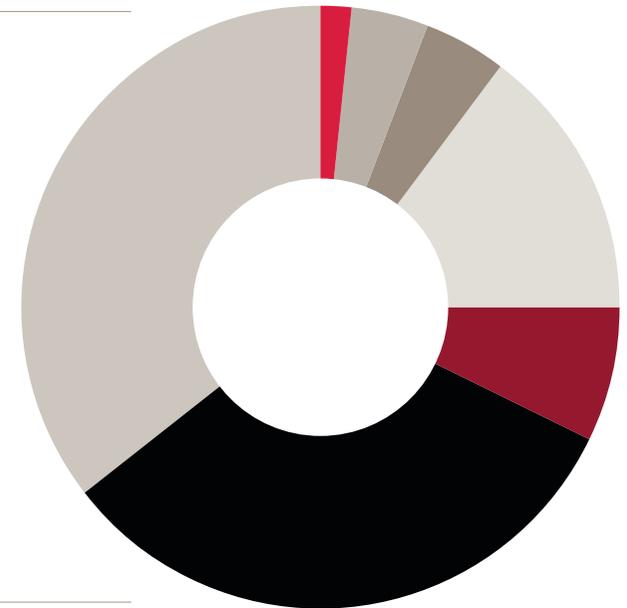
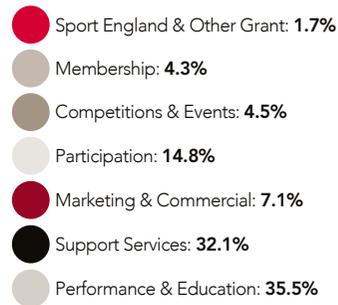
7. SPORT ENGLAND & OTHER GRANT INCOME

	2020/21	2019/20
INCOME		
Other Grant income	0	0
Revenue Grant	1,723	2,047
Total income	1,723	2,047
EXPENDITURE		
Capital Investment	30	30
Total Expenditure	30	30

INCOME 2020/21



EXPENDITURE 2020/21





englandsquash.com

National Squash Centre
Rowsley Street
Manchester
M11 3FF

0161 231 4499

