

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24

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CHAIR'S FOREWORD



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As we reflect on the 2023/24 season, we can be immensely proud of the progress and achievements within the sport across the country. This year has been one of resilience, growth and innovation, with our athletes, coaches, volunteers and supporters all contributing to a vibrant and thriving squash community.

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Our national teams continue to compete at the highest levels, delivering inspiring performances on the global stage, while new grassroots and community initiatives have made significant strides in making the sport more accessible to all. We remain committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment that nurtures new and existing players at every level.

As we look to the future, we are excited by the opportunities ahead, including squash's participation in the LA2028 Olympic Games, a major milestone for the sport. With continued engagement from coaches, clubs and facilities there is a fantastic opportunity for squash to grow and thrive over the coming years, and we are confident that the foundation has been laid for sustained success both domestically and internationally.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the continued success of England Squash, especially my colleagues on the England Squash board and the executive team. The dedication, passion and hard work that we see across the community are what make this sport truly special. Together we will continue to build on this strong foundation and create a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Thank you all for your support.

Joy Carter
CHAIR

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S INTRODUCTION



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It is with great pride that I can share the many successes and milestones we've achieved together during the past year. 2023/24 has been an exciting and transformative period for England Squash, showcasing our commitment to inclusivity, performance, excellence and grassroots development.

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One of the standout achievements has been the success of the new Squash from the Mosque programme, which continues to break down barriers and foster greater community participation in the sport. Through this initiative, we've welcomed new and diverse participants into the world of squash, encouraging physical activity, social integration, and widening access to the game for new talent. This programme has not only expanded the reach of the sport but also reinforced our commitment to inclusivity and growing the squash community in all corners of England.

We are equally thrilled with the impact of the Mixed Ability Squash programme, which continues to provide opportunities for players of all abilities to engage, compete and enjoy the sport. The spirit of inclusion that defines this initiative aligns with our broader vision of making squash accessible to everyone, regardless of background or ability.

On the international stage, England Squash has again delivered exceptional performances at major championships. Our men's and women's teams added to our impressive history at the European Team Championships by securing gold medals, a testament to the depth of talent and determination within our national teams. Additionally, we are incredibly proud of our players' accomplishments at the Women's World Team Championships, where England earned a fantastic bronze medal. These results highlight the strength and resilience of our senior players, coaches and support staff as well as inspiring the next generation of young players.

The junior pathway has continued to flourish, with more players joining the junior circuit and more competitions being delivered. Supporting our top young players remains an important focus for England Squash, and the results speak for themselves – England juniors performed well at World and European Championships and will look to build on these achievements in the pursuit of success on the senior stage in the years to come.

As we look ahead to the next year, we remain committed to growing the sport, supporting our athletes, and fostering an environment of inclusion and excellence. The successes of 2023/24 are a reflection of the hard work, passion and dedication of everyone within the England Squash community, and together we will continue to build on this foundation for even greater achievements in the years to come. Exciting developments are planned, including the launch of a new membership scheme that will bring England Squash closer to our players and provide better benefits for every squash player that joins us.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and for helping make this an excellent year for squash in England.

Mark Williams
CEO

PARTICIPATION & SUPPORTING CLUBS



The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games legacy programme saw over 10,000 people in Birmingham and the West Midlands experience squash through awareness events and new programmes.

The project, funded by Sport England, set about using the profile of the Commonwealth Games to address the inequalities that certain communities such as women and girls, and ethnically diverse communities, face within sport and open up squash to more people.

Regular squash sessions were established at facilities across Birmingham with over 300 regular players taking part, 95% of which were from ethnically diverse communities, 84% from lower socio-economic groups, 65% female and 62% age 30 or under.

The success of this work led to an additional £75,000 capital funding from Sport England for the installation of outdoor playground courts in community spaces, particularly in areas where access to facilities is limited.

Squash from the Mosque has been established as a core programme in partnership with Calder Community Squash, with training, supporting materials and grants for clubs and venues looking to run the programme. To date, 12 clubs and venues are running Squash from the Mosque programmes with new players of all ages taking part. New community leaders from across faith centres are being trained to run sessions supporting the sustainability of the programme.

Mixed Ability Squash was rolled out as a national programme in partnership with International Mixed Ability Sport. 30 clubs and venues took part in the programme, with training, support and grant funding to kick-start their sessions.

Clubs and venues linked up with local community groups such as day care services to offer squash. The success of the programme and appetite from participants led to the creation of the Mixed Ability Squash festivals. Two festivals took place, one at Pontefract Squash Club and the other at Bowdon Squash Club, with a total of 42 participants across the two events.

Val, a staff member from Pontefract Family Centre, said: "It was amazing, it was really good to see other people developing and bringing them together because that's what we should be doing."

Squash Stars continues to develop, with 1,400 children taking part across 144 venues since the start of the programme. With 76% of children transitioning into regular club activities beyond the initial six sessions, Squash Stars is proving to be a great way to introduce more children to the sport and to local venues.

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

The Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan has been developed to drive our work around enhancing the diversity of the sport. The DIAP initially focuses on gathering insight and data to inform priority areas and activity. The England Squash Inclusion Advisory Group was established to provide guidance and expertise to support the development of the DIAP and our wider work around inclusion and diversity.

DEVELOPING TALENT & IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

The 2023/24 season, although a little less hectic than last year, continued to offer encouragement at both junior and senior levels. Such promise can be witnessed in certain results and performances but also in the development of a clear and shared focus on what needs to be achieved to offer high-level continual success.

On 9 October 2023 it was announced that squash will be one of five new sports in the LA 2028 Olympic Games.

OLYMPIC GAMES

The LA 2028 Olympic Games is a monumental moment for England Squash and for our sport in general. It lays the ultimate platform for all our current senior players to be judged on, while offering inspiration and aspiration for all our juniors. All staff, coaches and major stakeholders are now driven to be a successful part of this unique journey, and the motivations are extraordinarily strong in every direction to make this a reality.

TEAM ENGLAND

It has been another successful year for the senior programme. Both the men and women won the European team titles, defeating France and Belgium respectively. Mohammed ElShorbagy led the men's team superbly on and off the court, while Pat Rooney, Nick Wall and Adrian Waller all played their part in securing a close victory over our toughest European rival.

Jazz Hutton, first up, won a close match against her much higher ranked Belgian opponent in the women's final. This allowed her teammates Gina Kennedy and Lucy Turmel to play with freedom, and although Gina Kennedy lost a tight battle, Lucy Turmel was able to confidently win the deciding rubber.

In September 2023 Marwan ElShorbagy joined his brother Mohammed as a Team England programme player. It was a great boost for the programme as our younger members now have two legends of the modern game to develop with and learn from.

As a result, the men's team that left for New Zealand for the World Teams Championships in December 2023 contained Marwan and Mohammed, alongside Pat Rooney and Adrian Waller. David Campion, our National Coach, led this new-look side to win the silver medal. Unfortunately Egypt proved too strong in the final with Mohammed and Marwan losing fiercely contested matches.

Individually, numerous players have produced results and performances that have brought credit to the programme. Notably, Mohammed ElShorbagy reached the semi-final and quarter-finals of many high-profile events like Hong Kong, Qatar, US, Chicago and Paris. Marwan secured quarter-finals in Tournament of Champions and Hong Kong while making the final of the New Zealand Open. For the women, Gina Kennedy continues her presence at the top of the game to reach the semi-finals of Paris and Chicago whilst also securing quarter-finals finishes at Qatar, US and Singapore. Additionally, Jazz Hutton reached the semi-finals of the Optasia in London.

DEVELOPING TALENT & IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT & ENGLAND POTENTIAL PROGRAMMES

This past year the Development and Potential programmes continue to strengthen in terms of their culture and programme content. In time this will develop better people and better squash players. Strength and conditioning continue to be a staple part of the structure, and to compliment the complexities that our juniors face at times, we have introduced a well-being support service. Specifically, trained professionals now attend both development and potential squads to deliver group and personal workshops on relevant topics. These topics are carefully chosen as the most challenging areas most juniors face when attempting to juggle the demands of school, social life and becoming an elite squash player.

Since the Super Regional programme inception last season, it has gone from strength to strength. It continues to gain huge momentum with the coaches and parents of England's best 9 to 12-year-olds.

The Aspire programme attracted over 250 juniors a year into the eight regions via the five weekend squads. The eight regional coaches work alongside and, at times, inside the Super Regional, Potential and Development programmes.

JUNIOR INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The season started off successfully when Jonah Byrant and Asia Harris won the U19 European junior titles in April 2023. They were also part of the England team that won the team title and clinched a double success.

This U19 team success was backed up by the U15 team winning their European team title, but disappointingly the U17 team did not medal for the first time in our documented history.

In the summer of 2023 the U19 World junior squad travelled to Melbourne for the WSF individual and team championships. Jonah Bryant made the quarter-finals, but his aim and ability was for much more. However, his handling of this disappointment has said a lot about his development and maturity as a player. Team-wise, the girls won the bronze medal, which exceeded their fifth seeding.

The British Junior Open in January 2024 displayed the world's best age group players on home soil. Jonah Bryant shook off the disappointment he suffered at the World Juniors to reach the final of U19 event. Losing a hard-fought final, Jonah's comeback from his World Juniors campaign was a moment in the junior programme that highlights how a player's progression is not just about winning matches but how you recover from the difficult moments.

DEVELOPING TALENT & IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

SUPPORTING TALENT PATHWAY COACHES

The quantity and quality of coaches is progressing, as are the coaching partnerships in all our major junior programmes.

A specific emphasis has been seen in the recruitment of more female coaches in the system and, so far, this is proving beneficial to the connection and advancement of our younger girls.

Targeted CPD workshops have been held to advance the coaches' knowledge and provide a bedrock of quality content.

**COMMUNICATIONS
& PROMOTING THE
SPORT**

The focus over the last 12 months has been to provide impactful content and communications to drive awareness of squash, and engage new and existing audiences aligned to our strategic priorities.

OLYMPIC GAMES

Following October's announcement of squash joining the Olympic Games in 2028, we generated 144 pieces of coverage, which resulted in a combined reach of 22 million. Highlights included BBC One, BBC Breakfast, Channel 5 News, The Independent and the BBC World Service. Our social media Olympics coverage also resulted in a reach of 150,031 and 8,592 engagements.

SQUASH STARS

We delivered two marketing campaigns for Squash Stars in this period to drive awareness and increase bookings at squashstars.co.uk, which resulted in:

- 4,047,441 impressions on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Google following paid advertising (with 84% of all bookings coming from ads).
- 119 pieces of coverage that amassed a combined reach of 3.4 million people (including five BBC radio stations and a story on BBC South TV).

WOMEN'S SQUASH WEEK

As part of our 2023 Women's Squash Week campaign, we published club best practice content on how to establish sustainable women and girls' activities and create a culture where women and girls can thrive. We also highlighted inspiring female stories across the sport including a newly qualified hard of hearing coach and a female double-amputee player. This campaign content resulted in 74,000 views and 3,151 engagements.

LET'S HIT IT!

Our insight-led player recruitment campaign Let's Hit It! launched in January 2024 to inspire 18-35 year-olds from ethnically diverse communities in the Midlands to get on court.

With one of the key objectives to test new digital approaches, adverts were presented across Unity Radio, digital display and digital out of home (billboards and LED screens). Display adverts received 849,280 impressions with digital out of home receiving 189,413 impressions. Adverts on Meta (Instagram and Facebook) amassed 1.8 million impressions with community and wellbeing messaging driving the highest engagement.

As a result of this six-week activity, the campaign saw 11,400 visitors to the Squash Finder – an increase of 148% compared to the same time period last year.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Growth of our presence and profile across social media continues to soar, and within this time period, we saw an 17.3% increase in followers across all social media platforms (65,472 to 76,857). Posting on-trend short video content consistently across Instagram and TikTok has been instrumental in driving follower growth and boosting engagement.

MEMBERSHIP AND CLUB AFFILIATION

Following the Board's approval of the move to a new membership and affiliation model, a comprehensive consultation with the squash community was undertaken over the spring and summer months. This involved numerous individual conversations, face-to-face meetings, targeted webinars to key stakeholder groups, and community-wide surveys that informed key principles of the new membership scheme.

A detailed roll-out plan was developed based on insights gathered through the consultation, detailing how the new scheme will be implemented in the early summer of 2024 across a number of key areas:

- Agreement on the categories of membership that will be offered, along with finalised pricing details
- A comprehensive package of benefits for both individual members and affiliated clubs across all membership categories, provided by a number of new and existing commercial partners
- Details of how county associations will benefit financially from an updated agreement to mandate England Squash membership for participation in local leagues and competitions
- Plans for the development of an easy-to-use and modern digital platform to manage the new membership scheme, to be launched alongside the new scheme
- Development of a dedicated brand for England Squash Membership, including a distinctive visual identity and tone of voice, along with plans for digital marketing campaigns to support both the launch and ongoing promotion of the new scheme

COMMERCIAL

Joey Barrington was appointed as Membership and Commercial Partnerships Manager in August 2023 to lead on implementation of the commercial strategy, manage commercial partners and support the development of a commercial mindset across the organisation.

An audit was undertaken to identify opportunities for commercial growth, both through the development of existing partnerships and establishment of new partnerships.

Exploratory conversations with a number of existing and potential partners have been taking place, to explore development of commercial opportunities, most notably supporting the development of a significant improvement in the benefits packages that will be available with the upcoming relaunch of the membership and affiliation scheme.

Planning work has also been underway to explore how England Squash can best support commercial partners and activate partnerships in order to maximise benefits for all parties and provide the greatest opportunities for the development of sustainable long-term partnerships.

COMPETITIONS: THE HEART OF THE SPORT



COMPETITIONS: THE HEART OF THE SPORT

The 2023/24 season saw a fantastic increase in the number of competitions being offered across the country.

COMPETITIONS CALENDAR

Sheffield hosted another great British Junior Championships, and 2024 saw a hugely successful British Junior Open held in Birmingham with an impressive 577 players from 45 countries.

A host of Gold and Silver events covering the length of the country took place, as well as a full calendar of junior events at clubs around the country, including Bronze and Copper events, and the National Schools competition.

SQUASH SUPER LEAGUE

A New Squash Super League is being developed, with the aim of showcasing some of the world's biggest and brightest squash stars in venues nationwide.

TOURNAMENT SOFTWARE

Sports Manager continues to develop, and in the 2023/24 season team competitions were introduced to Sport Manager, running all Inter County, National Schools and National Clubs competitions through the software. Rankings were added to individual competitions, making it easier for Tournament Organisers to arrange the seedings for their competitions. Entry confirmations were added for everyone entering England Squash-sanctioned competitions, so players are agreeing to the Code of Conduct and the sanctioned competition regulations.

JUNIOR RANKINGS

The English national ranking system continues to attract more and more players each year and is constantly developing to showcase England's squash talent.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

FINANCIAL REVIEW

DEPARTMENTAL INCOME & EXPENDITURE £'000

	2023/24	2022/23
1. MEMBERSHIP		
INCOME		
Membership fees	456	494
Total income	456	494
EXPENDITURE		
County Rebates	117	137
Membership Services	79	53
Staff	0	0
Total Expenditure	197	190
2. COMPETITIONS & EVENTS		
INCOME		
British Open	0	0
Entry fees	314	260
Other	0	0
Total income	314	260
EXPENDITURE		
British Open Costs	30	32
Event Costs	318	323
Staff	87	53
Total Expenditure	435	408
3. PARTICIPATION		
INCOME		
Miscellaneous Grants	0	0
Other	20	45
Total income	20	45
EXPENDITURE		
Development Budgets (Schools, Youth, Leisure Centres etc)	250	279
Staff	141	121
Total Expenditure	391	400

FINANCIAL REVIEW

DEPARTMENTAL INCOME & EXPENDITURE £'000

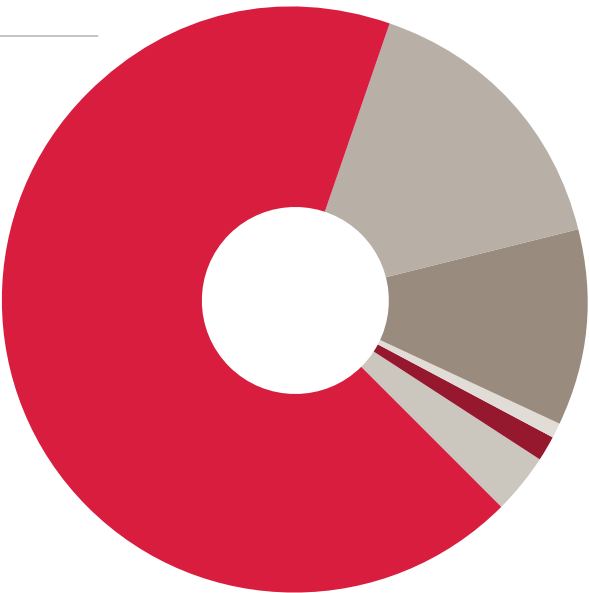
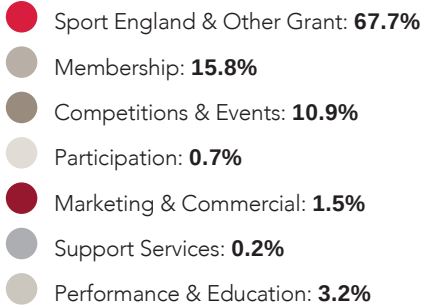
4. MARKETING & COMMERCIAL	2023/24	2022/23
INCOME		
Commercial & Marketing	42	31
Total income	42	31
EXPENDITURE		
Branding Materials/Collateral	63	68
Strategy Development	0	0
Other	34	20
PR Costs	43	36
Staff	154	156
Insight	0	0
Website/CRM Development	93	74
Total Expenditure	388	353
5. SUPPORT SERVICES	2023/24	2022/23
INCOME		
Approval fees	0	0
Legacy	0	0
Interest	5	1
Total income	5	1
EXPENDITURE		
Depreciation	30	30
Insurance	68	38
Irrecoverable VAT	144	141
Office Costs	13	13
Strategy Development	0	0
IT maintenance and infrastructure	45	26
Other	60	72
Legacy	0	0
Printing	2	2
Professional Fees	107	71
Rent	-2	11
Staff	135	129
Total Expenditure	603	534

DEPARTMENTAL INCOME & EXPENDITURE £'000

6. PERFORMANCE & EDUCATION	2023/24	2022/23
INCOME		
EDP	11	18
Coaching Courses	81	74
Talent Pathway	0	0
Total income	92	93
EXPENDITURE		
Competition Programme Support	28	21
Personal Awards	116	105
Training and Preparation (Squads, Coaching)	344	318
Technology and Equipment	3	9
Coach and Tutor Development	94	40
Science and Medicine Support	107	114
Other	0	-
Staff	285	284
Total Expenditure	978	892
7. SPORT ENGLAND & OTHER GRANT INCOME		
INCOME		
Other Grant income	0	0
Revenue Grant	1,947	2,029
Total income	1,947	2,029
EXPENDITURE		
Capital Investment	0	0
Total Expenditure	0	0

FINANCIAL REVIEW

INCOME 2023/24



EXPENDITURE 2023/24

