



Wrexham Squash at the Brymbo Sports & Social Complex Limited Feasibility Study and Business Plan

Wrexham Squash - Background

- Seven years ago, a group of squash players in Wrexham, playing as Phoenix Squash Club and Sports Connection, had a simple vision: through an initiative between the two clubs in Wrexham, to promote the game of squash at a junior level (up to age 19 years).
- This collaborative venture sought to encourage a sustained and steady growth in the number of young people playing squash. Encouraging personal sporting development, through a structured programme of coaching, to reach maximum achievement at club level, hopefully leading to progression through to senior squash and, possibly, representational level.

Our Achievements

With support over the years from the Phoenix Club members, the juniors have been fully integrated into the club with a regular Centre of Local Development (COLD) session, junior club nights and junior leagues. We have also developed links with other clubs across North Wales to encourage match play through competitive friendly matches.

Our junior numbers have grown steadily, sustained by a successful Wrexham Schools Squash Programme. Using a local primary head teacher network and with assistance from the Wrexham Borough Council's Sports Development Unit, the Schools Squash Programme has involved two local schools with a third school lined up for the new year. This programme is in its second year and offers taster sessions for Year 4 pupils. Following this introduction to squash, those juniors who wish to continue playing were invited to join the Wrexham Squash coaching programmes.

Wrexham Squash are a fully constituted organisation and have a commitment to involve all parents through informal discussion at coaching sessions, a more formal annual meeting and through an occasional newsletter.

To assist our junior programme, we have had some success in obtaining funding from the Community Chest / Sportslot. This funding has allowed our organising committee to make plans to build on what has been achieved and, most importantly, to help us become more sustainable in developing a programme for coaches.

Some of our individual young people have really excelled in their sport and have been developed further through the Centre of Regional Development (CORE). We are proud to say that some have gone on to represent Wrexham, taking honours at Regional and National level in their respective age groups.

Our desire is to maintain this momentum in developing links with schools across the district And providing greater opportunities for squash taster sessions, as well as providing local young people with a centre where they may continue to develop their game and skills.

Our Proposals and Long Term Plan

Twelve months ago, the organising committee for Wrexham Squash developed an action plan "*The Way Forward for Squash in Wrexham*". This identified some of the issues around the progression of Junior Squash in 2005, including our desire to bring into use the venues across Wrexham district in support of the Centre of Local Development work at the Phoenix Squash Club. Our intention would be to develop the Brymbo facility into this Centre of Local excellence with a club atmosphere that is attractive and encouraging to all.

We believe that a thriving junior section is not only a beneficial element for a sporting club; it is key to future sustainability. If the Board accepts our proposal, we would hope to commit to the local Primary Schools in Brymbo, Tanyfron, Coedpoeth and Gwynfryn as a priority part of our established Wrexham Schools Squash Programme.

The club would expect to achieve maximum court use through an open membership of new and existing and members, ladies and men team players and our juniors.

We hope in the future to be able to come to the Board seeking approval to extend the facility. With a third court, the Brymbo Squash facility would become eligible to host regional tournaments, with all the associated extra benefits that a raised profile and increased cash flow would bring to the social side of the complex.

Members involved within our organisation

The improved and more secure facility at Brymbo, would allow us to develop our senior membership for social and team play. Our Ladies play in the Cheshire League, at home on alternate Monday evenings. We have a junior and senior team each Tuesday in the North Wales League as well as two teams in the North West Counties League on Thursdays.

Existing junior coaching programmes take some downtime during the day as well as two evenings. The improved facility together with the added benefit to members and their parents of the Social Club will be a huge boost. We have the full endorsement from Squash Wales, our Governing Body, to continue development of the Schools Programme across Wrexham, a Programme that is commended by them as a model of excellence. Our junior section currently has around thirty-eight members and a potential membership, with the Schools Programme, of around sixty.

Possible Benefits to the Complex

- Should our proposal be accepted, work could be started almost immediately from within our own and our members' resources. In addition to this we would seek additional funding to complete the refurbishment and plan for the future.
- Work will be done by competent and qualified contractors other than cosmetic or superficial areas, which may be done with volunteer workers from within the club.

Proposals document
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- Any external contractors can be subject to approval by your selves if required.
- Bringing the courts back into full utilisation would, in itself, bring benefit to the Complex and we would encourage Squash Club members into simultaneous membership of the Complex.
 - When we have matches against teams from other clubs, we would hope to entertain them within the Complex with food and drinks. For parents, there would be superb advantage in accessing the facility within the Complex and we intend to encourage other social benefits through a series of fund raising events, including sports evenings. Having such a fine facility will have the effect of actually encouraging parents to bring along the juniors, particularly if they know that they are able to stay within the Complex, this would also increase sales within the complex.
 - Our vision is that the Brymbo Complex would become the centre for squash in Wrexham, raising the profile of the Complex would help promotion of the sport across the Borough with other satellite centres feeding into the Brymbo Centre. We would expect that this new sporting environment would introduce our juniors to some of the other sports that are played at Brymbo and that these would be complementary rather than in competition.

Possible Benefits to the Local Community

- A critical element of these proposals would be accessibility to the refurbished facility from within the local community. We envisage access through a membership fee and would market this through taster sessions, we hope, in conjunction with the Wrexham Sports Development Team.
- The local schools would be actively encouraged to join our Wrexham Schools Squash Programme and qualified coaches would run this during the quiet downtime of normal court use. Importantly, we would expect court use on most if not every night of the week.

Affordable rental payments to the Complex

The Phoenix Squash Club and Wrexham Squash will work in partnership to make this venture a success. Phoenix represents the interests of our senior section, while Wrexham Squash is involved with the development of junior squash across the district. Both are Constituted bodies and our members pay an annual membership fee.

We would, of course, want to negotiate on what the rental payments should be and would expect this to be on the basis of a fair commercial rent based on membership and facility, security of tenure, length of Lease, and responsibility for repairs etc. We have also described how, if this is possible, that all of our members should also become members of the Complex

Conclusion

We are proud to have some key partners in support of the work to develop junior squash in Wrexham. The Wrexham Borough Council's Sports Development Team have assisted with the Schools Squash Programme and we have been fortunate to get some solid backing from our network of local primary head teachers. As a Centre of Local Development, helping some of our juniors to national success and rankings, our work has been accredited and encouraged by Squash Wales.

We do have a vision and need to take the opportunity presented by a potential refurbishment of the squash courts at Brymbo. This vision requires us to maintain our momentum, which is about sustainable development of our sport in Wrexham through the juniors. It will also require us to explore all avenues of funding to refurbish the facility, but we welcome this opportunity to become good and open partners with the Brymbo Sports and Social Club. Thank you.