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Facing Sustainability Challenges in Squash Facilities

In a series of articles, the SFN wants to provide an overview on various possibilities of how to implement sustainability in squash and racket facilities and show possible savings strategies. Our sustainability expert Wolfgang explains what these are.



conscious users.

Last time we were talking about the various available alternatives of upgrading existing Squash and Racket facilities, from simple and cheap actions to more extensive and costly options. Improving the energy efficiency and increasing importance of sustainability within the world of Squash (and Racket) Sports are the challenges, squash facilities are facing. As we are all aware, the soaring energy costs will not go away in the foreseeable future and balancing high operational costs from ventilation and heating systems to energy and water use, while reducing the environmental impact, is critical for operators for not falling behind.

Further, expressing a commitment to sustainability not only helps reducing costs and the carbon footprint, but it is also attracting today's eco-

Sustainability is no longer a luxury or choice; it's essential. Instead, it can be seen as an opportunity to improve the facility's performance and reputation

Financial Incentives for Sustainable Renovations

Not only can a facility reduce its operational costs through sustainable renovations, but subsidies or grants may also be available depending on your region or government to motivate sustainability upgrades and energy-efficient renovations.

Case Study: Lockerbie Squash & Racketball Club

It's interesting to see the ideas and actions other clubs have implemented and their experiences. Today, we highlight a successful example: the Lockerbie Squash & Racketball Club (SCIO) in Scotland. Just in time for their 50th anniversary, the club trustees faced a major challenge: soaring energy prices consumed over 60% of their annual revenue, threatening the club's future.

Innovative Sustainability Solutions Implemented

The club decided to install solar panels, battery storage, and an air-to-water heat pump. This decision was part of a broader business plan that included a net-zero mission statement, instrumental in securing a successful Community Asset Transfer from the Dumfries and Galloway Council. Substantial financial grants from local, regional, and national organisations made this ambitious project possible.

Becoming a Net Zero Club

Now, the Lockerbie Squash & Racketball Club produces its own energy and has become a Net Zero club. Excess energy produced by solar panels during summer generates income through a feed-in tariff, offsetting winter energy costs. Additionally, the club replaced expensive air-to-air heating units with more efficient thermic electric court heaters and upgraded all lighting to LED.

Benefits to the Community and Members

The facility serves local schools, the community, and its 82 members. Improved finances aim to stabilise or reduce playing costs, attracting more members and community use. As the club proudly states, being a Net Zero club sets an important example, encouraging sports enthusiasts to choose environmentally responsible facilities.

We wish Lockerbie Squash & Racketball Club continued success and will follow their story closely.<https://lsrc.sportyhq.com/w/homepage>

Here a link to an article from the BBC
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy89jdn8pn6o>

Best Practices from Squash Operators in Southern Germany

Talking to successful squash operators in southern Germany revealed clear insights:



Key Action: Insulation and Heat Management

Most importantly, insulating roofs and walls significantly reduces heating costs, regardless of how heat is generated. Facilities use either air-to-water heat pumps or fossil fuels (where alternatives are limited), yet drastically reduced their fuel consumption due to improved energy efficiency.

Energy Generation and Efficiency Standards

All facilities have photovoltaic panels installed, covering approximately 80% of their electricity needs. Switching to LED lighting has become standard practice. Additionally, charging points for members' electric cars are increasingly common.

Personal Engagement: The Heart of Sustainability

Interestingly, personal engagement and regular building maintenance ("sometimes I feel like a janitor," one operator said) have proven essential. Many facilities, even over 50 years old, remain in excellent condition due to continuous investment and care. Constantly high numbers of satisfied members are proof that active, ongoing facility management is true sustainability.

