

Knighton Park TTC Official Opening

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Members of the English and Brazilian Paralympic squads recently helped to officially launch the new Knighton Park Table Tennis Club after a £400,000 grant from Sport England helped the club to develop its facilities.

The club has benefitted from the new premises since last November but only last month produced an official launch event where local members, friends and family alike were invited to celebrate the club's new home.

It's been a long road to success for Knighton Park, which began just after the end of the Second World War when two table tennis clubs needed a venue to play in the Leicester League.

The two clubs, Clarendon Park and Byron and Knight, duly joined forces and began to play at the Adult School in Avenue Road Extension, calling themselves Knighton Park.



ETTA VC Richard Scruton with Knighton Park Chairman David Morley

At the time there were two full size snooker tables and one table tennis table. As time progressed this became one snooker table and two table tennis tables and then, to herald the 80s, the old wooden building was pulled down and a brick one built in its place to provide first class and exclusive table tennis.

The club grew, and grew, and had reached an important crossroads in the latter half of 2012 when the English Table Tennis Association approached the club with the help of a large grant from Sport England to transform the

Knighton Park facilities.

Club Chairman, David Morley, took the whole project under his wing and went about his task with tremendous gusto and it was his leadership that was responsible for the project reaching fruition despite extremely severe time restrictions.



Club Chairman David Morley with founding member Harry Ward

The Cooperative Association's Wheatsheaf Theatre on Knighton Fields Road East was bought, the old premises sold and work commenced to make the new building into one that would be available every day to play table tennis under the finest conditions.

Patrick Carton, a club member who is also in the building trade, was able to bring a team together to completely revamp the insides of this graded building and what a fine job they did.

Now, ten tables can be played on at any one time on club nights, as well as the ability to set up six tables in first-class tournament conditions. Already club membership numbers have soared upwards.



Not only that but the club is now in a position not to have to turn junior would-be members away because of restrictions in space and increases to the original 80 juniors being coached are already apparent.

Most of the plaudits for this state of affairs goes to club coach, Shirley Pickering, who is untiring in her multi-tasking, while Club Secretary, Gordon Sanders, has been in the thick of things all the way through.



John Bowness Publicity Officer (October 1, 2013)

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