

## Table Tennis

Did you know there is a thriving table tennis club in the village? Flackwell Heath Table Tennis Club has about 45 members, ranging from 12 to 76 years old, all of whom play. It is the largest club in the High Wycombe league - Hazlemere is next. There are 15 or 16 clubs entering teams in the adult league, about half the number of 25 years ago. This reduction is largely due to the loss of many works teams when their sponsoring factories closed or moved away.

The Flackwell club has been going since at least 1961 (anyone know when it started?), and they field 7 adult teams, each of 4 people, 3 of whom play in any one match. Three teams of two play in the junior (12 - 18) league. Although most of the club members are male, teams can be mixed, and selection is entirely on merit. One team's members are all over 70 years old. Matches are on Tuesdays through the autumn and winter, with home matches in the Community Centre. Play is from 7.30 to 10.30pm, and visitors are welcome to watch. Playing standards are good, with teams doing well in the League, and some individuals succeeding at district and county level. This encourages people to join, but members also play each other just for fun: the club runs a recreational evening on Fridays throughout the year from 8 to 10pm at the Centre, where everyone can get a game. There are 4 tables.

Why does the club flourish? Ken Norris must be one reason: he's been Secretary since 1974! Team organisation is down to him (thankfully, arranging the fixture list is the League's responsibility). Ken plays himself, and his experience as a middle-distance runner at Olympic and international level also enables him to provide sound advice on tactics and motivation. The club doesn't have to do much fund-raising: the annual subscription (£5) and match fees (£3.50 per evening) cover the league fees, hall rent and balls. Players buy their own bats and clothes, but these need not be expensive.

Whatever the recipe, this club looks set to continue to thrive. If you'd like to join, get in touch with Ken Norris (01628 521786) or drop in on a Friday evening. The club would particularly like to encourage more junior members. They have experimented with coaching sessions for juniors on Sunday afternoons, but they need 10 people to make it viable. If your son or daughter is 10+ and interested, please ring Mary Heffernon (01628 525930) to discuss it. The cost per session would be £2.50. The club will also have a table at the Cherry Fayre on 16th July.

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