



# CASE STUDY:

INNOVATIVE WAYS OF IMPROVING THE  
SQUASH EXPERIENCE THROUGH FACILITY  
DEVELOPMENT

**SQUASHGYM PALMERSTON NORTH**



**SQUASH**  
NEW ZEALAND

## OVERVIEW

We know we have a carbon footprint because we have to turn on the lights and provide water for our showers. There are many things we can do to make our squash clubs more sustainable. Some of the ways we can promote a better and healthier way of living is to use recycling stations to reuse rubbish, choose environmentally friendly products, save water with low-flow mechanisms, install efficient heating and air conditioning systems, utilise solar panels to save energy and provide members with access to information on public transport options. Many of these services are provided by the FREE LiteClub service. SquashGym Palmerston North have also placed pot plants in strategic places throughout their facility to take another step towards becoming a 'green' club.

### CHALLENGES

#### Health costs

We live in a society that is battling obesity and inactive ageing. This requires more and more dollars to be spent on chronic illnesses that can be easily prevented through getting people moving in motivating environments.

#### Indoor lifestyles

Most people spend roughly 90% of their time indoors these days. Indoor air pollution is between 2-5 times higher than what is generally found outdoors. This means we need to take care of our air inside our facilities.

#### Building condition

A common issue for many squash facilities is condensation – sweating walls make it difficult to play the ball.

### SOLUTIONS

#### Pot plants - visual appeal

Research shows people who have regular contact with vegetation are more likely to have reduced stress, be more positive, have better ability to focus, less likely to be mentally fatigued and have improved performance on cognitive tasks.

#### Pot plants - indoor air cleansing

Studies show that pot plants improve health by providing better air quality (cleansing the chemicals in the air) as well as the psychological value of creating a more visually appealing environment.

#### Pot plants - maintenance costs

In buildings, plants create a microclimate effect that helps cool the air around them. This helps to decrease heating and air conditioning expenses.

### RESULTS



6+

Plants installed.



Member feedback.



Healthy club environment.

## CONCLUSION

When most people think of sustainability, they think of things like renewable power, energy and water conservation or recycling. Sustainability also means taking care of the things that take care of us – like our air and our indoor environment.

Do plants matter? The cumulative body of evidence from over a decade of research show that contact with vegetation, in a variety of circumstances, is highly beneficial to health and well-being. It also suggests that exposure to plants can be helpful for creating welcoming facilities.

Going 'green' doesn't mean you have to think big. It is okay to start small. Regardless, the result will bring a healthier and energising place to play squash. Anyone who has played on the courts at SquashGym would agree.

## BECOMING A GREEN CLUB

Several initiatives can be used to promote better, more sustainable and healthier facilities:

- Utilise recycling stations to reuse rubbish, compost organic matter and dispose of light bulbs.
- Choose environmentally friendly cleaning products.
- Use energy-efficient products.
- Fit efficient air conditioning and heating systems, including double glazing.
- Install solar panels to heat water.
- Reduce paper through online marketing.
- Underlay flooring from recycled products.
- Place plants throughout the facility to give fresh air.
- Provide members with access to information on public transport options.



**For more information: <http://www.environmentalchoice.org.nz/>**