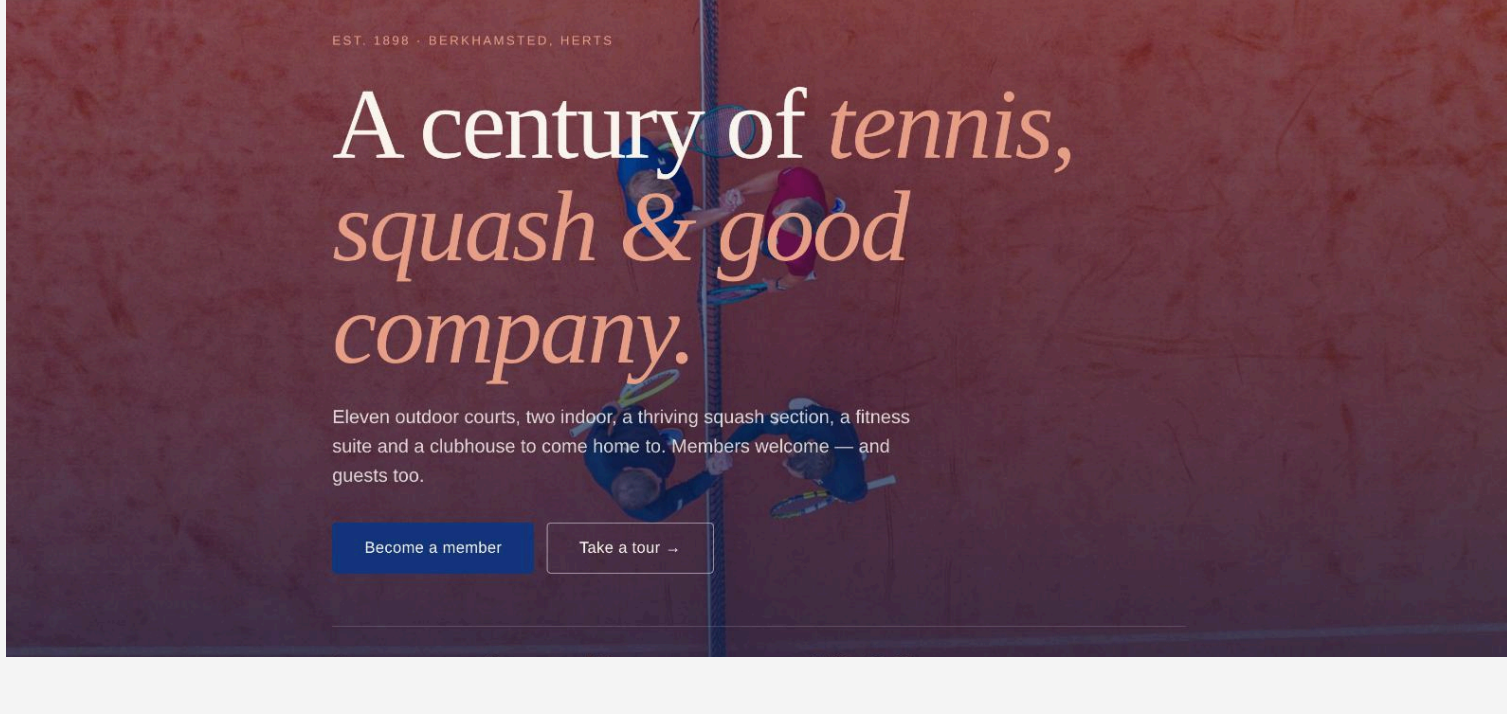
Jonathan Loudan-Nicholas


EST. 1898 · BERKHAMSTED, HERTS

A century of *tennis, squash & good company.*

Eleven outdoor courts, two indoor, a thriving squash section, a fitness suite and a clubhouse to come home to. Members welcome — and guests too.

CASE STUDY · 2026

Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis & Squash Racquets Club: rethinking the prospective member journey.

How a freshly-redesigned club website still loses prospective members at the moment of commitment. And what a user-led approach reveals.

ROLE
UX Design & Research

TIMELINE
2 Weeks · April 2026

TOOLS
Figma

OUTPUT
Research + Redesign

01 — THE PROJECT

Why I chose this project

BLTSRC is a multi-sport members club in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, offering tennis, squash, racketball, fitness and social facilities. I am a member. The club has recently completed a year-long website redesign and the friction is still there.

This case study focuses on one journey: how a prospective member arrives at the site, decides the club is right for them, and takes the next step toward joining.

I chose BLTSRC for two reasons. First, I am close to the problem. I use the site as a member and feel the friction first-hand. Second, this is not a case of neglect. The site has just been redesigned. The problem is not effort, it is process. The previous redesign did not start with user needs. This one does.

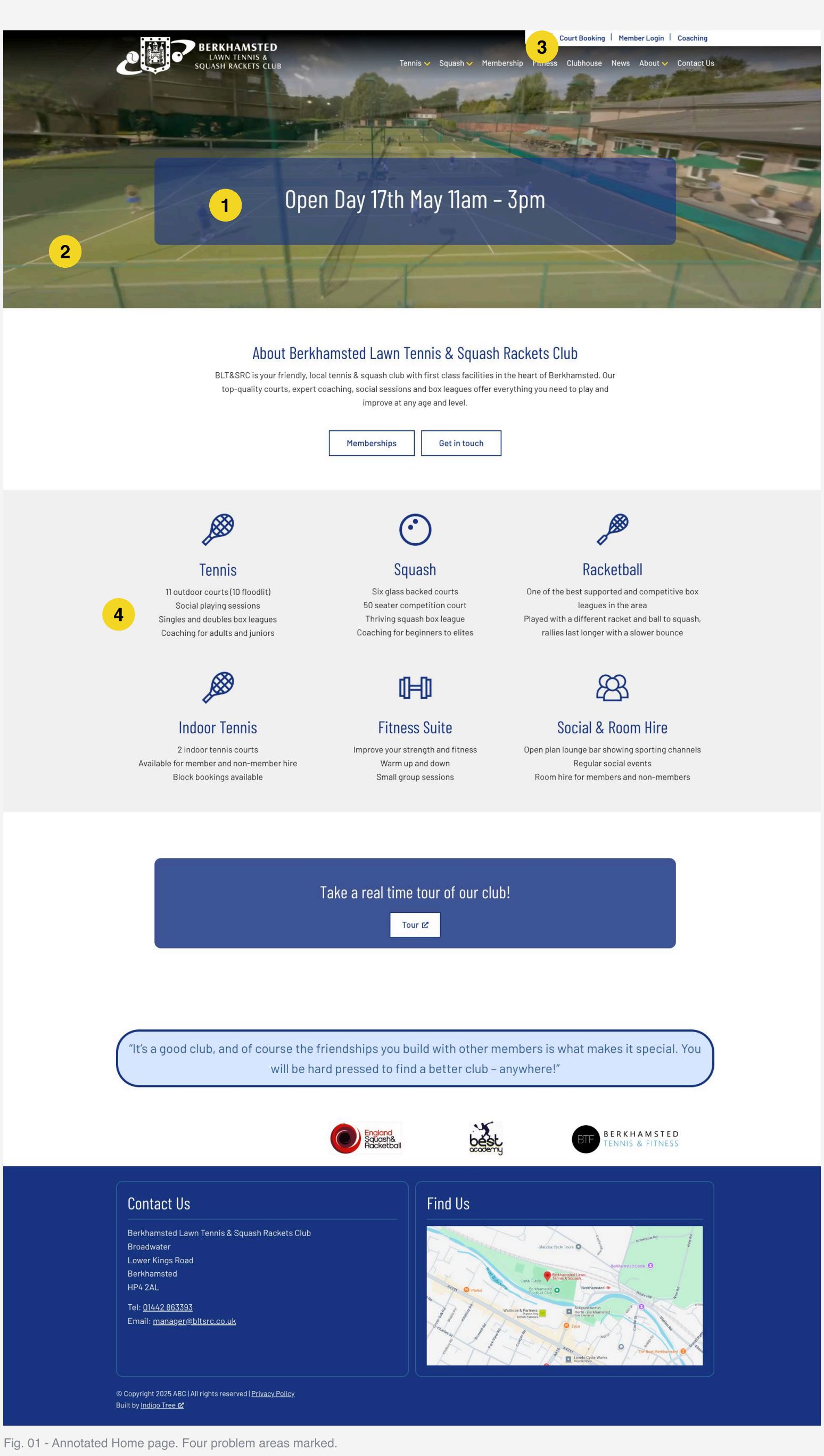
02 — THE PROBLEM

The website presents information but does not guide a decision.

Six facility cards compete at the same visual volume. Pricing is fragmented across multiple sections with overlapping categories. The most prominent element on the homepage does nothing when clicked.

Outbound links to third-party systems break trust at the moment of commitment. The result is a site that performs well for casual browsing, and falters every time someone tries to act.

1. Open Day banner is the most prominent element — but does nothing when clicked.
2. Hero is a looping drone video; "giving me a headache" (P3). The CTAs sit below the fold.
3. Navigation splits into two areas and members related content leads to third-party systems (Court Booking, Member Login)
4. Sports and facilities are categorised with a single visual weight.



About Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis & Squash Rackets Club

BLT&SRC is your friendly, local tennis & squash club with first class facilities in the heart of Berkhamsted. Our top-quality courts, expert coaching, social sessions and box leagues offer everything you need to play and improve at any age and level.

11 outdoor courts (10 floodlit)
Social playing sessions
Singles and doubles box leagues
Coaching for adults and juniors

Six glass backed courts
50 seater competition court
Thriving squash box league
Coaching for beginners to elites

One of the best supported and competitive box leagues in the area
Played with a different racket and ball to squash, rallies last longer with a slower bounce

2 indoor tennis courts
Available for member and non-member hire
Block bookings available

Improve your strength and fitness
Warm up and down
Small group sessions

Open plan lounge bar showing sporting channels
Regular social events
Room hire for members and non-members

Take a real time tour of our club!

"It's a good club, and of course the friendships you build with other members is what makes it special. You will be hard pressed to find a better club – anywhere!"

Contact Us
Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis & Squash Rackets Club
Broadwater
Lower Kings Road
Berkhamsted
HP4 2AL
Tel: 01442 863393
Email: manager@bltsrc.co.uk

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Built by Indigo Tree

Fig. 01 - Annotated Home page. Four problem areas marked.

03 — WHO I DESIGNED FOR

The person in the middle of life, deciding where their time, money and family should go.

My primary user is a prospective member in their 30s to 50s, living in or near Berkhamsted, evaluating the club for themselves or their family.

The club's existing membership ranges from schoolchildren to people in their 70s, but those relationships were typically formed through schools or family ties. The website's job is to win the person in the middle of life deciding where their time, money and family should go.

They want to understand what the club offers, see what membership costs, and take the next step.

P1	P2	P3
32-36	40-45	40-45
Graphic Designer	Senior Buyer	Nurse
REMOTE	REMOTE	IN PERSON

04 — METHOD

Two tasks, three users, four follow-up questions.

I ran moderated usability testing with three participants matching the primary profile. Sessions ran 15 to 30 minutes, two remote and one in person. Each participant completed two tasks. Four follow-up questions explored first impression, value comprehension, confusion and decision intent.

TASK 01
Comprehension
Find what the club offers, what it costs, and whether it suits you.

TASK 02
Conversion
Take the next step toward joining.

05 — WHAT I FOUND

Four pain points emerged across the three sessions.

P1
Comprehension
Find what the club offers, what it costs, and whether it suits you.

P2
Comprehension
Find what the club offers, what it costs, and whether it suits you.

P3
Comprehension
Find what the club offers, what it costs, and whether it suits you.

0/3

ONLINE CONVERSIONS. THE SITE WORKS FOR DISCOVERY AND FAILS FOR CONVERSION.

01 Pricing and membership categories do not match how users see themselves.

None of the three could compute the cost of joining. There is no clear adult tier, "Senior" contradicts the site's own "Over-70s" category, and family pricing is opaque.

> *"missed the £150 joining fee entirely."*
> — P1
>
> *"still doing that sum in my head."*
> — P2
>
> *"I am not a senior, I am not a junior."*
> — P3

02 Third-party fragmentation breaks trust at commitment.

All three hit a Manage My Match registration wall before they could join. Box leagues, courts and coaching live on separate systems.

> *"Their main problem is that it is not centralised."*
> — P3
>
> *"I would prefer if the club could simply take my details and I could simply join."*
> — P1

03 Information overload defeats the decision.

Each participant met more options than they could process. P1, acting on their own initiative, dug into coaching and found it presented as text only, with no photos.

> *"[The tennis page is] bombarding you with the different options."*
> — P3

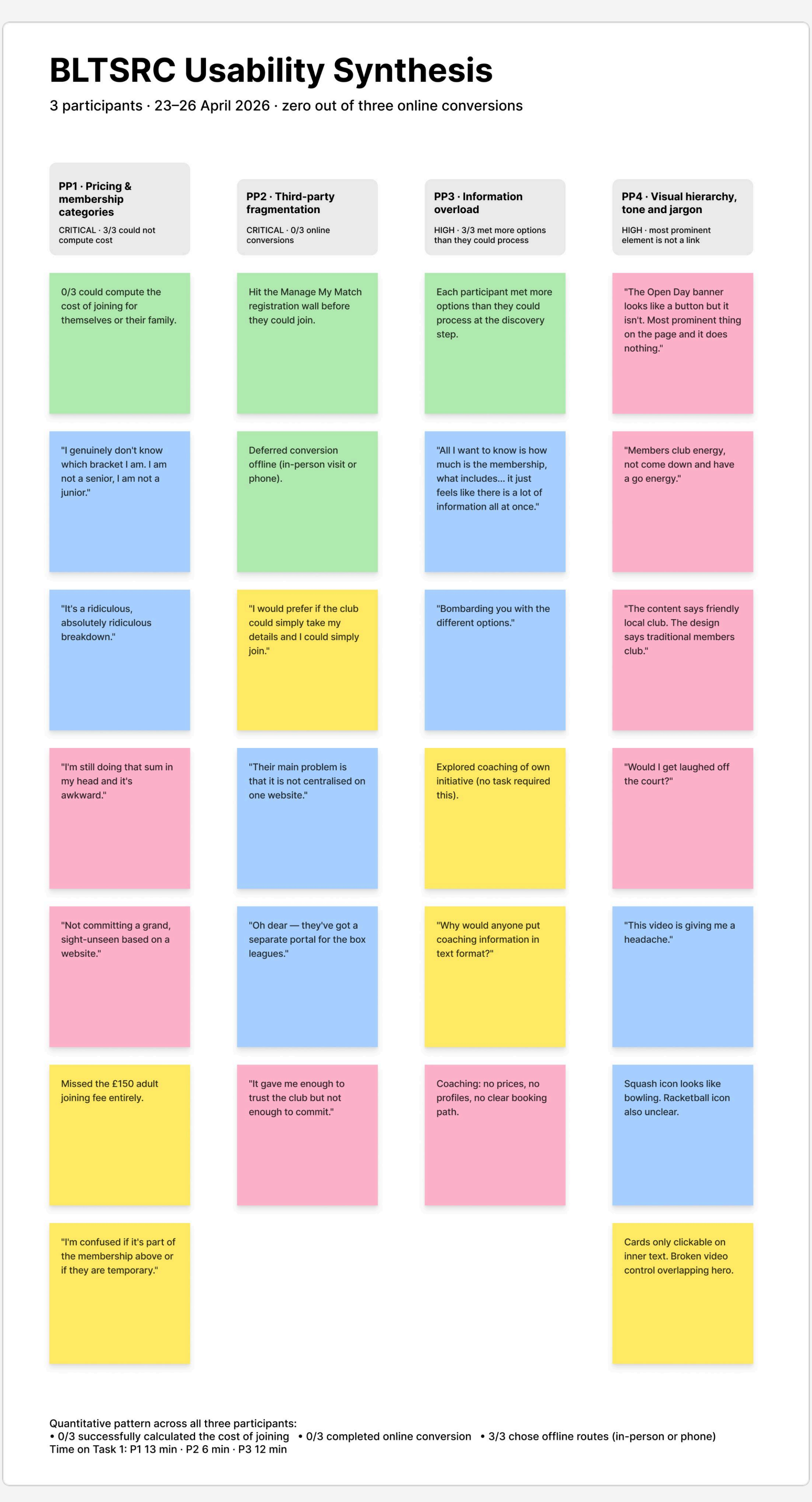
04 Visual hierarchy and tone misdirect.

P2 tried to click the Open Day banner first; it is the most prominent element on the page and not a link. P3 said the homepage video "is giving me a headache."

> *"the content says friendly local club, the design says traditional members club."*
> — P2

Pattern recognition across three sessions.

Quotes from each session were transcribed onto sticky notes and clustered by theme. Yellow notes are P1 (graphic designer), pink P2 (senior buyer), blue P3 (nurse). The four columns are the four pain points that emerged. Where colours co-occur in a column, the pattern was shared across participants, not specific to one.



BLTSRC Usability Synthesis

3 participants · 23–26 April 2026 · zero out of three online conversions

PP1 · Pricing & membership categories CRITICAL · 3/3 could not compute cost	**PP2 · Third-party fragmentation** CRITICAL · 0/3 online conversions	**PP3 · Information overload** HIGH · 3/3 met more options than they could process	**PP4 · Visual hierarchy, tone and jargon** HIGH · most prominent element is not a link
0/3 could compute the cost of joining for themselves or their family.	Hit the Manage My Match registration wall before they could join.	Each participant met more options than they could process at the discovery step.	"The Open Day banner looks like a button but it isn't. Most prominent thing on the page and it does nothing."
"I genuinely don't know which bracket I am. I am not a senior, I am not a junior."	Deferred conversion offline (in-person visit or phone).	"All I want to know is how much is the membership, what includes… it just feels like there is a lot of information all at once."	"Members club energy, not come down and have a go energy."
"It's a ridiculous, absolutely ridiculous breakdown."	"I would prefer if the club could simply take my details and I could simply join."	"Bombarding you with the different options."	"The content says friendly local club. The design says traditional members club."
"I'm still doing that sum in my head and it's awkward."	"Their main problem is that it is not centralised on one website."	Explored coaching of own initiative (no task required this).	"Would I get laughed off the court?"
"Not committing a grand, sight-unseen based on a website."	"Oh dear — they've got a separate portal for the box leagues."	"Why would anyone put coaching information in text format?"	"This video is giving me a headache."
Missed the £150 adult joining fee entirely.	"It gave me enough to trust the club but not enough to commit."	Coaching: no prices, no profiles, no clear booking path.	Squash icon looks like bowling. Racketball icon also unclear.
"I'm confused if it's part of the membership above or if they are temporary."			Cards only clickable on inner text. Broken video control overlapping hero.

Quantitative pattern across all three participants:
- 0/3 successfully calculated the cost of joining
- 0/3 completed online conversion
- 3/3 chose offline routes (in-person or phone)

Time on Task 1: P1 13 min · P2 6 min · P3 12 min

Fig. 02 - Affinity diagram. 23-26 April 2026

06 — WHAT I CHANGED

Four targeted redesigns, mapped one-to-one with the pain points.

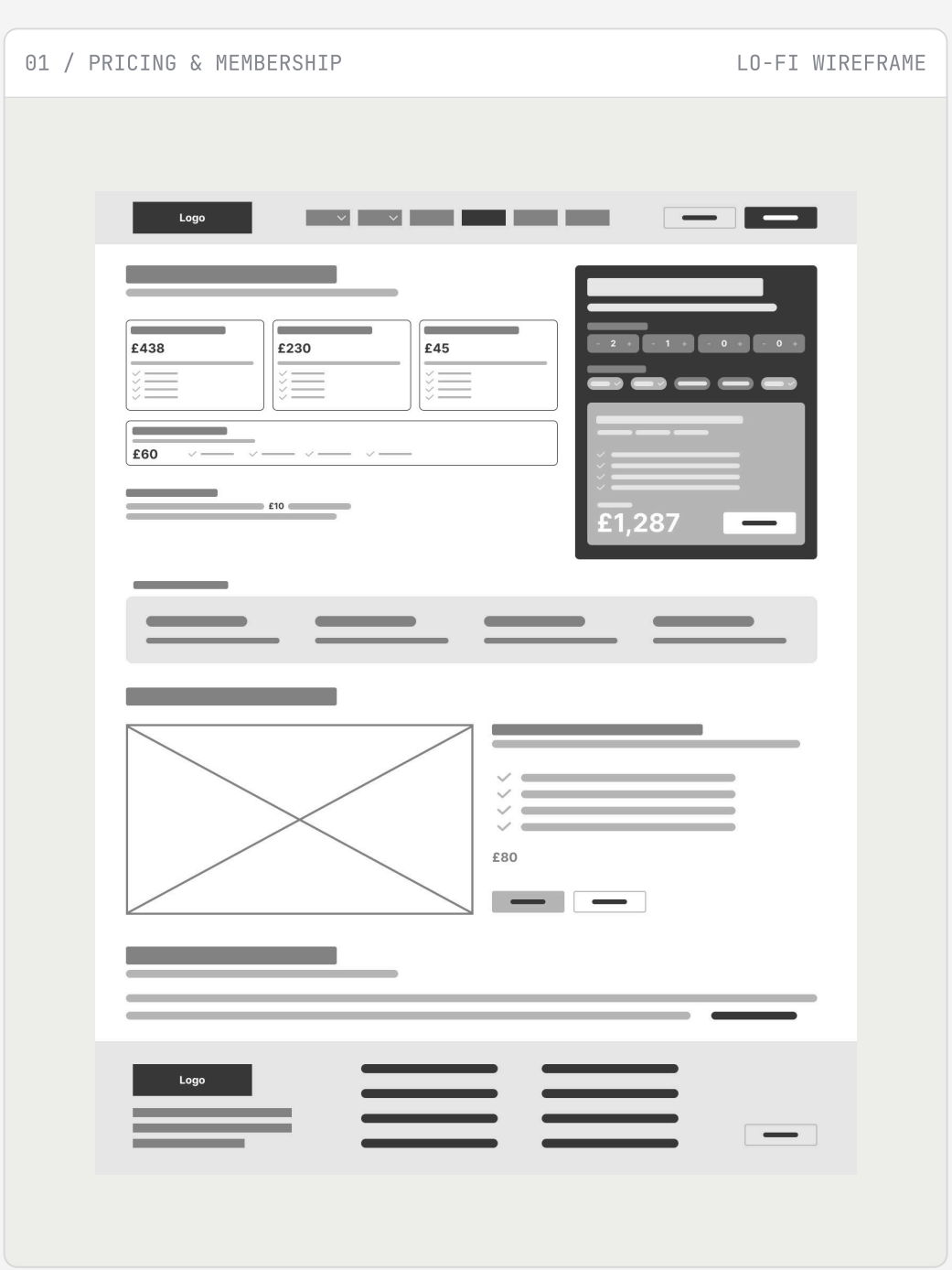


Fig. 03 - Low-fidelity sketch, pricing.

01 PRICING

Show pricing per sport for adults and let a calculator absorb the category question.

P3 could not identify her bracket in the original. The calculator answers by asking household composition rather than forcing her onto a label like "Senior." Replace every "Cost: N/A" with a clear inclusion statement.

`Nielsen #2 (Match Between System And Real World)`
`Nielsen #6 (Recognition Over Recall)`

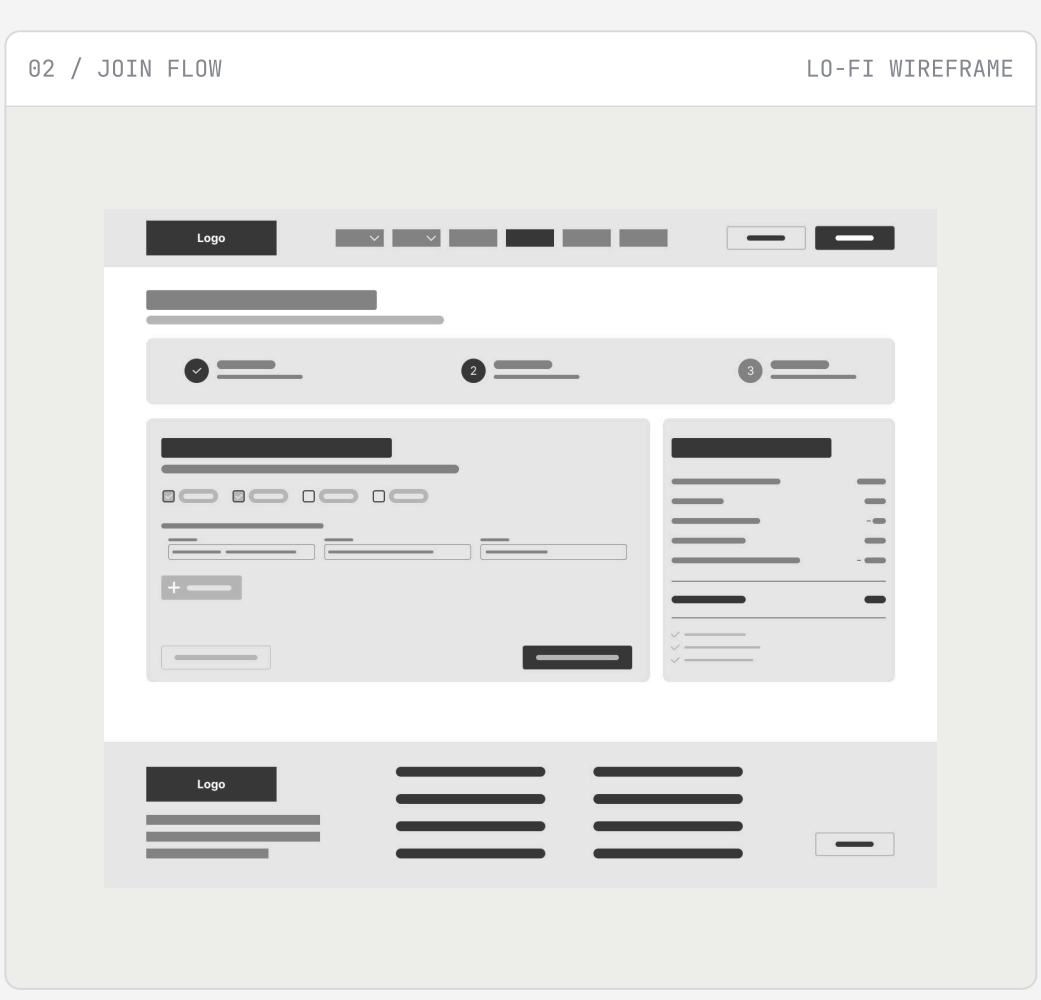


Fig. 04 - Low-fidelity sketch, join flow.

02 JOIN FLOW

Bring the join flow back on-site.

Fold the essential join fields into BLTSRC's own pages. Defer Manage My Match registration to post-application, framed as the user's court-booking login. Consolidate coaching, box leagues and bookings under a single account.

`Jakob's Law · Nielsen #4 (Consistency And Standards)`

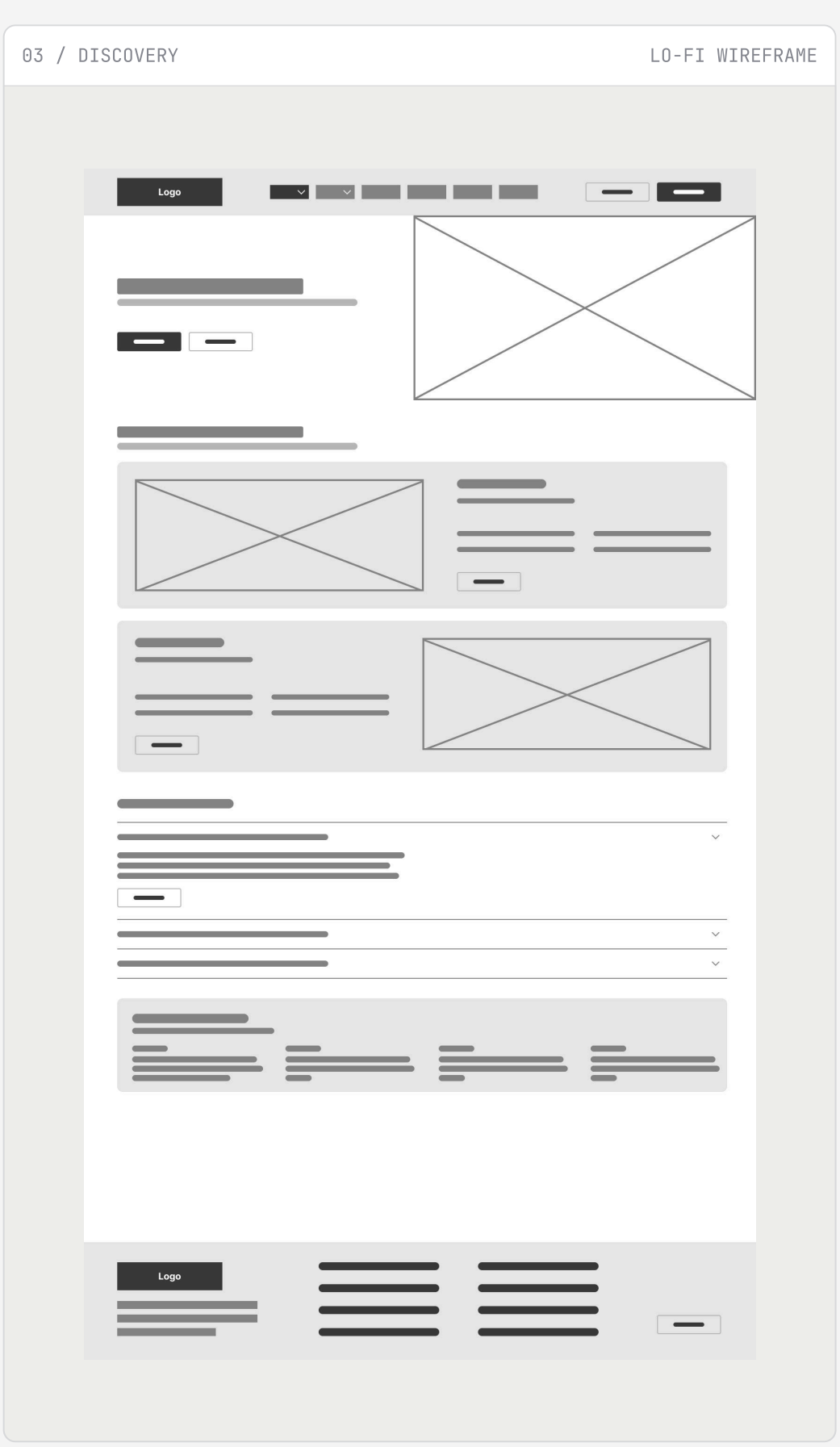


Fig. 05 - Low-fidelity sketch, discovery.

03 DISCOVERY

Reduce information density at the discovery step.

Strip the tennis page back to a clear value summary and a single primary action. Move coaching, box leagues, social sessions and fixtures into progressive disclosure. Add a glossary explaining terms in context.

`Hick's Law · Nielsen #6 (Recognition Over Recall)`

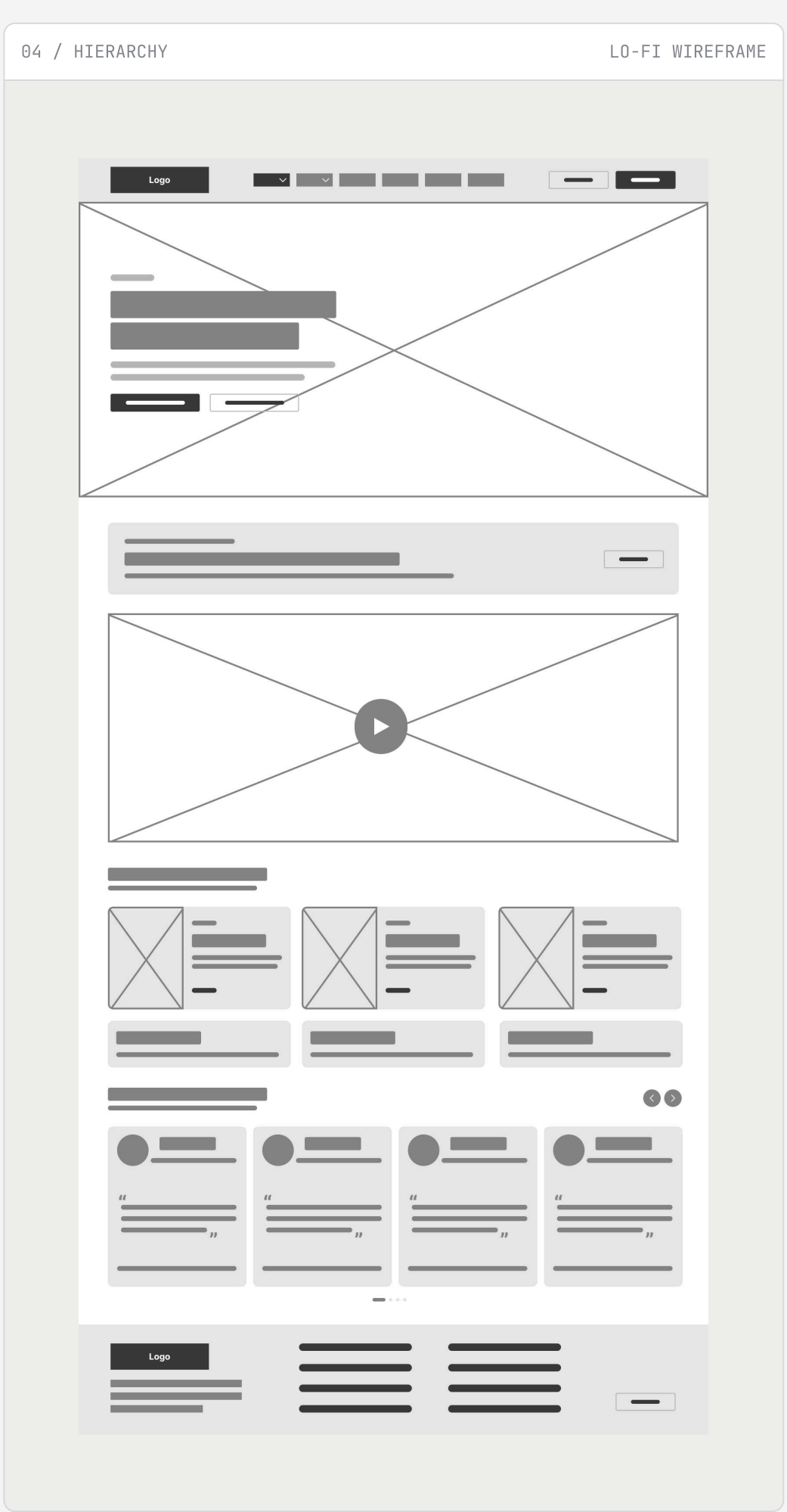


Fig. 06 - Low-fidelity sketch, Hierarchy

04 HIERARCHY

Match the design to what the content claims.

The Open Day banner becomes a primary CTA to a dedicated page. The headache-inducing video moves out of the hero, demoted lower on the page rather than removed (the club has invested in the asset). Cards become fully clickable. Human faces replace the empty hero.

`Harley (Proximity) · Nielsen Heuristics`

07 — REFLECTION

The metric a club website most needs to move.

Three interviews is a small sample, but the deferred-conversion pattern appeared in all three. The strongest signal was not what users could not find. It was where they decided to give up online and go offline. That is the metric a club website most needs to move.

With more time I would retest the proposed flows and recruit at least 7 research participants from a broader range to see how the design affects a more diverse range of participants.

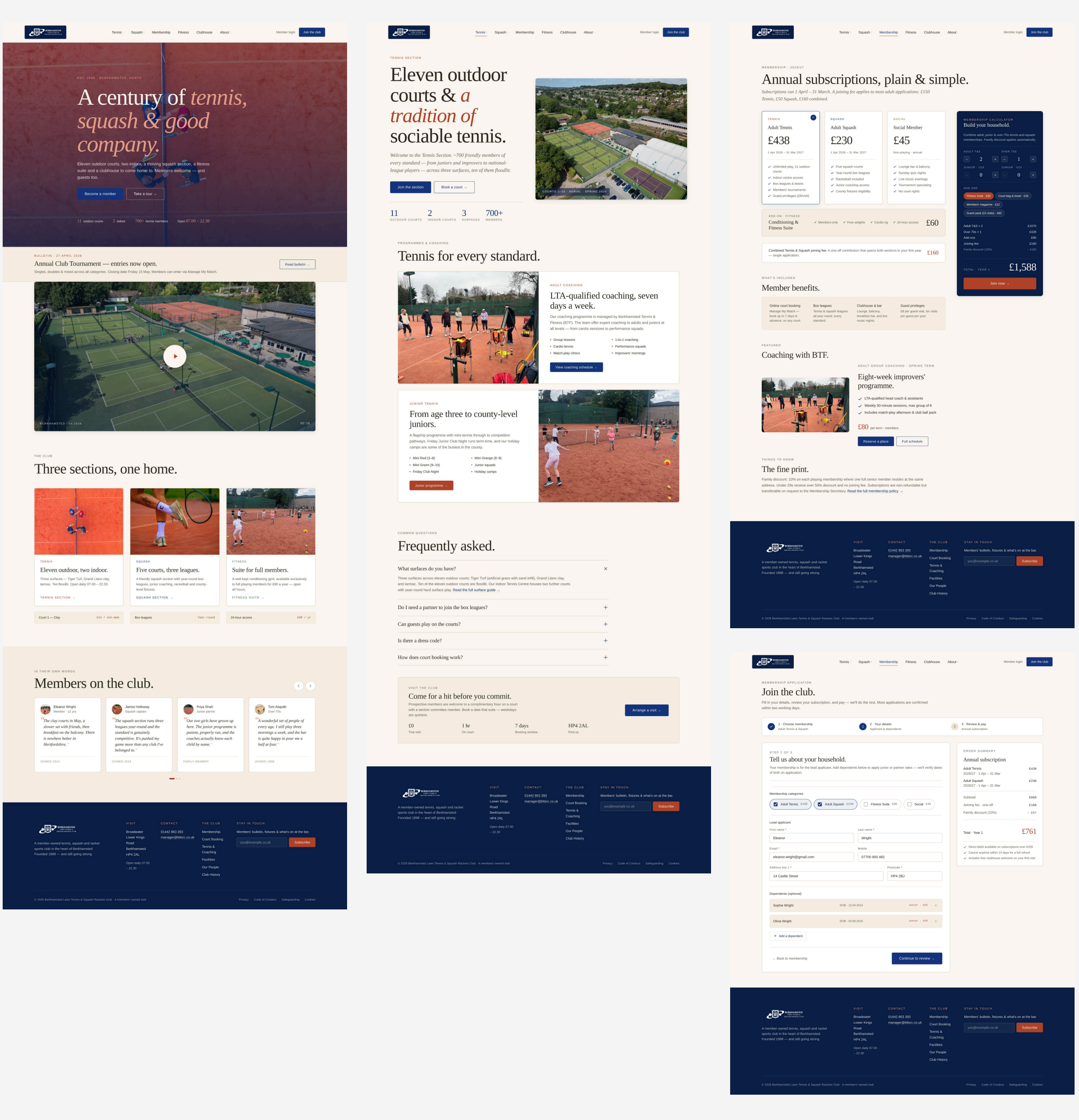
08 — AI AIDED MOCKUP

Using AI tools to preview the design

Modern design tools now include AI-assisted previewing that can take a lo-fi wireframe and render it at hi-fidelity with a stated design system applied. I used this for each of the four pain-point redesigns, feeding the wireframe and the BLTSRC design system in and getting back a coloured, typeset preview.

The exercise was experimental. The lo-fi sketches, the user research and the case study reasoning are mine. The hi-fi previews are not finished designs. What they gave me was the chance to see whether the wireframe held its shape when type, photography and brand colour were applied, before committing to a full hi-fi prototype.

Used this way, AI is a preview surface. It provides designers with a quick way to experiment and test designs without spending a lot of time in Figma prototyping.


A century of tennis, squash & good company.
Annual Club Tournament — entries now open.
Three sections, one home.
Eleven outdoor, two indoor.
Five courts, three leagues.
Suite for full members.
Members on the club.
Eleven outdoor courts & a tradition of sociable tennis.
Tennis for every standard.
LTA-qualified coaching, seven days a week.
From age three to county-level juniors.
Frequently asked.
Come for a hit before you commit.
Annual subscriptions, plain & simple.
£438
£230
£45
£60
£1,588
Member benefits.
Coaching with BTF.
Eight-week improvers' programme.
The fine print.
Join the club.
Tell us about your household.
£761

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Thanks for reading.

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