

PROMOTION, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TEAM
Report for Management Committee Meeting 13 May

1. Aim and Objectives

We propose the following overarching aim:

To increase the number of people enjoying bridge in and around Oxfordshire and to encourage them to join in events at clubs affiliated to the OBA

And the following more detailed objectives which we recognise that our clubs share:

We want to encourage and support clubs in

- providing additional opportunities for people
 - to learn to play bridge
 - to play bridge in a variety of formats
- understanding and sharing best practice for developing club membership
- publicising learning and play opportunities on the county website and through use of national, local and social media

The support we give can include loans or grants from OBA funds.

We also want to promote activities in which all clubs can share to attract social players and help them to appreciate the benefits of playing at affiliated clubs.

We want to encourage more experienced players in the OBA to contribute to the development of other players by sharing their expertise.

We invite the Management Committee to retrospectively approve these objectives.

2. The team held two meetings towards the end of 2018 at which these proposed objectives were discussed. We allocated clubs between members of the team. Since then Robert Procter and Lawrence Haines have worked on a Powerpoint presentation to describe the nature of the demographic problems facing our many smaller clubs. Subject to technical capability this will be shown at the meeting. As has been reported in America, there is a trend towards the few large clubs being able to sustain themselves whilst the rest decline. If we want duplicate club bridge to be available nearby wherever a person lives in the county we have to reverse the decline of the smaller clubs and the first step is to recognise the problem and encourage a discussion about what to do. The Management Committee is invited to support its promulgation to all OBA members. Our intention is to put the presentation up on the website and write to all members with a link inviting them to watch it there.

3. Lawrence Haines and Tony Hughes conducted a review of the website. Whilst they concluded that most of what we would like to have on the website could be found there somewhere, they agreed that there is a need to make it more accessible. In particular newcomers to the site including those who don't yet play bridge should be given more help to find their way around. Robert Procter is to draft a summary of the activities of the Association with a view to this sitting at the front of the website and including links to each of the areas that newcomers to the site might wish to access.

4. Festival: no detailed plans are yet in train. We believe that it is in the clubs' and members' interests to support an event that targets existing bridge players who are not members of affiliated clubs. Attracting such people to attend depends upon marketing efforts, primarily of our members who play bridge outside their affiliated club e.g. at an unaffiliated club. Costs could be significantly reduced by holding events at our clubs rather than more expensive and possibly more attractive venues. We could include an introductory course for beginners. The Management Committee's views are welcomed.