

OXFORD BRIDGE CLUB



Newsletter 2013-3

December 2013

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EGM scheduled for 15th January 2014

Your committee is calling an Extraordinary General Meeting for 6.00pm on Wednesday 15th January 2014. The purpose of the meeting is to present for member approval a set of documents that will modify the arrangements for running the club such that we will become a charity formulated as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). A CIO is a new format for a charity that happens to fit our circumstances very well.

At the meeting we will also take the opportunity to report on the progress towards the refurbishment of the club premises and answer questions from members.

You will find additional information over the page under “Becoming a charity” and a “Simple Guide to CIO Structure and Club Management”.

Update on the building refurbishment

Progress on completing the detailed design of the extension to the building was delayed during the summer while we upgraded the specification of the new kitchen and found a way to fit it into the space available. The structural design is now complete. Some remaining actions relating to the mechanical and electrical fitting out have to be resolved before the design can be sent out to tender. We now expect that this will happen in January. We all have to keep in mind that it is only when we have a quote back from a willing building company that we will know whether the project can be brought in within an affordable budget.

Gift to the club

I am pleased to let you know that we received a generous gift to the club from Michael Ling, the son of Winnie Ling who died earlier this year just after her 100th birthday. The current proposal is to use this money to support installing a hearing loop in the refurbished building.

John Fleming, Secretary

Becoming a charity

In recent charity legislation the definition of sports organisations was expanded to include mind sports. This has meant that bridge clubs with a suitable constitution can apply for charity status. The committee has reviewed the implications for Oxford Bridge Club and concluded that becoming a charity is consistent with our desire to encourage the growth of the game and also has certain advantages from a financial point of view.

As a charity we may be able to take advantage of gift aid and get any reductions in rates for charities. The only change is one that we have already made to the process of managing a waiting list. A charity is required to operate a first come, first served rule for a membership waiting list. Of course since we expanded the number of sessions played each week we have not required a waiting list. In summary, the committee's view is that we should become a charity even in the absence of the other considerations about our present circumstances.

John Fleming, Secretary

Simple guide to CIO structure and club management

1. Club currently managed by a Management Committee of 12 elected members. Property is legally owned by the trustees on behalf of the club (which, being an unincorporated organisation, cannot legally own property).
2. A CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) is a body corporate which can legally own property. It has to have a constitution approved by the Charity Commission (CC) which is in a highly prescribed form. Within the confines of what the CC requires, the aim is to replicate the current management structure as closely as possible.
3. Below the constitution, will sit what will be called the CIO Articles of Association (AA) which will provide much of the detailed rules for running the club which are inappropriate to include in the CIO constitution (in other words they cover the balance of the detail in the current club constitution).
4. The CIO is managed by the (Charity) trustees who are the equivalent of the current Management Committee, but will also encompass the functions of the current OBC trustees relating to the property. Number of trustees is to be 13 rather than the current 12 members of the Management committee, to reflect these additional duties.
5. Trustees can delegate their management functions to committees (but not again to sub-committees), but any such committee must have at least one trustee sitting on it.
6. Most senior officers will thus need to be trustees.
7. There are two types of trustee: elected and ex-officio.

Elected trustees: elected by the membership at the AGM for a three year term, and 1/3 of elected trustees have to retire at each AGM but can stand for re-election. They can only serve for three consecutive terms ie generally 9 years.

Ex-officio trustees: not directly elected, but hold trusteeship by virtue of being elected to a particular office of the CIO. They can thus be trustees for as long as they hold the office.

They have to be specified in the CIO constitution, making the constitution less flexible if future management changes are needed.

8. The main officers of the club will continue to be elected annually by the members (and in the process become ex-officio Trustees), but some posts will in future be appointed by the trustees.
9. To achieve the best balance of constitutional and management flexibility while ensuring the senior officers are involved in general management decisions, the CIO will have 10 ex-officio trustees (ie the senior officers) and 3 elected trustees.
10. The ex-officio officers who will become trustees are: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Chief Tournament Director, Tournament Secretary, Premises Officer, Conduct Officer, Social Secretary, Education Secretary and Membership Secretary.
11. There will be a further 3 elected trustees from the general membership. These (without portfolio) trustees will help manage the CIO and be available to sit on committees when required.
12. A further 3 senior officer posts, Technology Officer, House Officer & Captain will be elected, but these officers need not be trustees.
13. The remaining 10 officer posts will all be appointed annually by the trustees.
14. Additionally, the role of President will be revamped. The President will be elected by the members for a three year term, and will act as adviser/mentor to the Chairman and trustees. The President will not be a trustee and will be off-line to the management of the CIO.

Chris Kerr, Treasurer

Best Behaviour at Bridge

First of all, we should get issues of conduct in proportion. Lots of visitors have said how much they enjoyed their sessions at OBC, and found members most pleasant and welcoming.

Nonetheless, there have been a few cases in the past year when some members' conduct has fallen short of the highest standards. In two cases, there was a referral to the Conduct Committee. In both cases – and in one or two others that were not referred – it was not a matter of ill will, but simply of a member not being fully aware of how their manner impacted on other players.

Members are reminded that the EBU code of “Best Behaviour at Bridge” does not merely require players to avoid offence; it is much more demanding, including among other things:

- *Greet others in a friendly manner prior to start of play on each round.*
- *Be a good 'host' or 'guest' at the table.*
- *Make bridge enjoyable for yourself, partner and opponents.*
- *Give credit when opponents make a good bid or play.*
- *Enjoy the company as well as the game.*

I'd like to record my thanks to Denis Talbot and the rest of the Conduct Committee, who have carried out their task with diligence and discretion, and who are helping us to try to make OBC an even more welcoming and enjoyable bridge environment.

Richard Sills, Chairman (chair@oxfordbridgeclub.com)

Update on officer changes and vacancies

For various reasons we have had to make some changes since the AGM elections in the slate of officers who run the club on our behalf. The vacancies exist either because of a resignation or where we did not elect anyone to a post at the AGM. Whilst each slot has been covered by another officer on a temporary basis, this is not ideal for the club or the individual. As you may be aware the Management Committee has the power to co-opt a member to fill a vacancy during the year.

So I am pleased to let you know that Lorraine Jones has assumed the role of **Bar Officer** and that Pam Eyton has assumed the role of **Web Officer**. It really is helpful when people come forward to help.

In a similar way Richard Sills has been doubling up as **Match Secretary** but we have not yet managed to co-opt a willing member from the upper teams playing in the Wessex League.

Pat Lewis who was elected as Education Officer has been helping out as **Social Secretary**. This is a busy role for the club and as a consequence the committee has asked Pat to make this her primary role. As a consequence we are now looking for someone to volunteer to help out as **Education Secretary**.

The committee has also co-opted Carol Benzie as Cashier to help with keeping track of the money when the Treasurer is away.

Finally, there are two other gaps that the committee would very much like to fill:

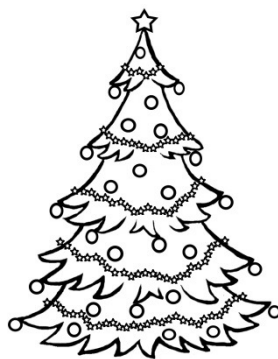
Technology Officer – still vacant from the AGM (Chris Kerr has been filling in)

Premises committee chair – you will see from the EGM materials that this role is proposed as an officer role. (John Fleming has been covering this position). When the responsibilities of the current building trustees are folded into the main club management, we definitely need a separate person for this role.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who are already helping in some way or another with running the club. As you will see from the above, there is a need for two or three more people to ease the task for us all by taking on some responsibility to help the club. If you can assist in any way, please let me know.

John Fleming, Secretary (sec@oxfordbridgeclub.com)

Merry Christmas to all our Members . . .



. . . and very best wishes for enjoyable bridge in 2014