

WELWYN GARDEN CITY BRIDGE CLUB

PLAYERS WITH DISABILITIES

The general policy of our club is to actively welcome any player who may have a disability, and to do whatever we reasonably can to make adjustments and provide help to enable them to have easy access to the bridge room and whilst playing there to be able to do so on the same terms as those players who do not have a disability.

Our main method of implementing this policy is as follows:

We have various aids available now but to help us improve and develop membership forms we ask if new or existing members would like to discuss any specific needs they may have or concerns due to having any disability.

Guests with a disability coming with a member are the responsibility of that member who is asked to establish what needs their guest may have and then approach a committee member for any help that may be required. Guests coming without a member are very welcome and should phone or email the club Tournament Director for information or help.

Physical access to the Stadium and to the Bridge Club Room is the responsibility of GSP (Gosling Sports Park) with whom we have an excellent relationship. To facilitate access they provide a lift and assistance from reception if required. Any member experiencing a difficulty with physical access that cannot be resolved by direct contact with GSP should contact our JMC Representative who is our nominated member for dealing with GSP.

Note that as from 1 November 2006 GSP will be actively seeking disability information via its membership form in order to ensure that members' experiences of GSP meet their expectations.

GSP also intends to install Hearing loop systems at all GSP access points and in the Bridge Club Room as part of forthcoming larger project.

There are dispensations and wide ranging powers all within EBU rules and regulations available to Tournament Directors to accommodate players with disabilities. There are also various forms of equipment available here at the club from the T.D. for people with speech and hearing impairment to overcome any problems to do with verbal announcements. These include a portable loop system and some 'silent announcers'. Players who want to find out what is generally available and what dispensations exist should either contact the club Tournament Director who is in overall charge of Directing our events or they can ask the T.D. of the particular event they are attending.

The ethos of the Club is to be welcoming and understanding of the needs of players with disabilities. But this cannot be done well unless we know what a player needs. So our policy is to ask of players in this category to make us aware of what they want.

We are introducing on a trial basis a "buddy" system. This is for players or candidates for membership who might prefer to discuss their needs with a member who may have a similar need for assistance.

We have members who are physically, hearing and visually impaired. The club Tournament Director attempt to arrange contact with an appropriate member on request.

The club is well aware that improvements come from positive suggestions and enquiries rather than from people who leave without complaining so we welcome suggestions about what we are doing or can do better for people with disabilities. Any committee member can be approached with suggestions.

Dennis Spruce, Honorary Tournament Secretary. October 2006.