

MINUTES OF THE A.G.M OF SURREY COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Held on Sunday 3rd July 2016 at

Oxshott Village Centre

APOLOGIES: None were received
60 members were present.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS YEAR

The minutes of the 2015 AGM were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Charles Chisnall gave the following address:

Welcome to the 2016 AGM.

After many years of service the following members retired from the Committee:

Julia Brough, Jill Cook, Mac Derwig, Steve Foster, Bomi Kavarana, Frances Trebble.

New members on the Committee are: Ian Lewis and Tim Warren

The work carried out by the retiring members has been taken on by the new members and re-allocated to exiting members, nevertheless we are in need of some additional volunteers to help with our development programme.

Last summer we opened an online survey so that Surrey members could tell us what they like and don't like on a range of topics. We had 200 replies and it was clear from the response that many of you had taken a great deal of time and trouble to express your concerns and ideas for the future. Thank you. From the replies it was also clear that it will be impossible for us to please everyone so of necessity we are having to go with the majority view. Set out below are some of the key messages we have taken from your replies and what action we have, or will be taking as a result of your input.

Timing: There was a clear majority in favour of retaining a 1pm start on a Sunday for our events.

Provision of food: There was little support for retaining the plated teas that we used to provide, there was also a view that we should move away from self-service teas and coffees. We now employ a caterer for our events who serves free teas, coffees and biscuits upon arrival and throughout most of the event. People now have the option of bringing their own food or ordering freshly made sandwiches and cakes from the caterer.

Venues for our events: There were suggestions that we should have our events at somewhere more luxurious than Oxshott. We have investigated the use of nearby hotels but the cost would be prohibitively expensive. We are currently working on developing a 5 year plan for the committee which will include having a regular review of possible venues. In the meantime though Oxshott does have a number of advantages: it is geographically quite central, it is where we store all our County equipment, at ~26 table capacity it is large enough to hold most of our events and there is free parking.

Publication of results: Some concern was expressed about the time taken for the results of our events to be published and for them to be uploaded to the EBU for NGS purposes. The way our results were displayed was also considered not best practice. Since the survey we have dispensed with the concept of Provisional Results, and, subject to there being no appeal, our results are now available on our website within an hour of the event finishing and they are uploaded to the EBU for NGS purposes shortly thereafter. We have also carried out a significant modernisation of our website

Increasing attendance at our events: We asked if you had any thoughts on this and there were two recurring themes in your replies: Advertise better, and improve attendance. This last point refers to the vicious circle of people being put off from entering poorly attended events. Our Communications team has since made significant efforts to bring our events to the attention of people who may be interested in them. The results have been dramatic.

Whereas a year ago we would make a loss on many of our events and even had to cancel some at short notice, now our recent events have been run at capacity and we are now resorting to the use of waiting lists.

How to bring more people into the game: We asked if you had any suggestions on this. We have worked with the University of Surrey to establish a bridge club, which we are currently supporting by providing a teacher and equipment. We have recently run a Teach the Teacher course for mini-bridge and have embarked on a significant Youth Programme initiative in which we are contacting schools with a view to helping them establish mini-bridge teaching as one of their activities. Our inter-schools competition in February was attended by a record number of schools. We are also working with the Sussex Bridge Association on a Southern Counties Junior Teach-in event.

We are working with one Surrey Club to reverse the decline in their membership. We plan to roll out these ideas to other interested clubs in the near future.

Future feedback: The members survey was of great help to the Committee to help us understand what is good and what could be improved in what we are doing. We plan to repeat the survey every few years, but in addition we are always willing to listen to comments and suggestions at any time. If you have any suggestions or concerns please speak with any member of the Committee or use the Contact Us facility on our website.

Special thanks are due to - Shirley Pritchard for making significant improvements to the organisation and running of our events.

- Douglas Wright for the enormous amount of work done in promoting our events to an ever wider audience as well as working with individual clubs to help them maintain and improve their membership.

- Ian Lewis for creating and maintaining an excellent 21st Century website that others are seeking to emulate.

- Mike Clements our Treasurer for being a rock solid safe pair of hands for our finances.

- Tim Warren for taking on an extremely ambitious School's programme.

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2015

Mike Clements presented the accounts.

Acceptance of the accounts was agreed.

APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY AUDITOR

Thomas Lundqvist was appointed as the auditor for the coming year.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The election of officers was agreed as follows:

President: Charles Chisnall

Chairman: Trevor Hobson

Secretary: Gail Norman

Treasurer: Mike Clements

Match Secretary: Jeffrey Allerton

Competition Secretary: Shirley Pritchard

Communications Officer: Douglas Wright

Web Manager: Ian Lewis

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

The following were elected to the committee.

Richard Millard

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none