

Chairman's Report 2022/23

After more than two years away from the bridge table, Abingdon Duplicate bridge Club saw the return to F2F bridge in July 2022. This was later than hoped due to the constraints placed on us by our venue at the Health and Wellbeing Centre. The committee decided to retain our successful online session on Tuesday evenings which meant that our evening F2F session had to move to Monday evenings. In addition, our Wednesday morning F2F "gentle bridge" has restarted. Numbers at our Wednesday morning sessions are buoyant and have returned to pre-covid levels. However, after an encouraging start at the inaugural session, our Monday evening sessions have proved to be a disappointment and were discontinued at the start of 2023 in favour of a Monday afternoon session. This is also struggling to attract sufficient support and is likely to be abandoned unless numbers improve significantly.

Turning to our Tuesday online session, this was very well attended during lockdown, attracting a number of visitors from outside the area. Originally run on BBO, it is now run on Realbridge which, after a few teething problems, has proved to be more popular with members. My thanks to Peter and John for running the sessions each week. Unfortunately, numbers have dropped away since the end of lockdown and the return of F2F bridge. There is a sense that there is now too much bridge with both online and F2F sessions on offer and this is being addressed at county level.

Membership of the club has dropped over the last year and currently stands at xx members. The age profile of the membership has increased and the concern is that we are not attracting the new younger members which will ensure the club's survival over the longer term. A key difference between ADBC and the more successful clubs in the county is that we do not offer teaching and this is something that next year's committee may wish to address.

The club has fielded 2 teams in the Wessex League this year but were unfortunately unable to put out a C team due to lack of numbers. All matches have been played on Realbridge. The A team is mid table in Division 1 and the B team, in spite of winning 2 matches, is lying 6th in Division 2 (they were promoted last year) and are likely to be relegated. We also have 3 teams of 4 in the daytime league all in Division 1 after the C team were promoted last year. The A team is currently in first place, the B team in fourth place and the C team in fifth place and therefore likely to be relegated. My thanks to all the team captains for their work in organising the matches with opposition captains and for directing home matches on Realbridge.

The Len Salmon match against Wallingford Bridge Club has not been held since 2019 and, due to the continued reluctance to play F2F bridge, it was decided not to hold it in 2022. Hopefully next year's committee will be able to generate enough support to revive this popular friendly competition between our two clubs in 2023.

On a brighter note, after a similar break, we held our blue point Swiss pairs event again in February, attracting 11 tables. A good time was had by all with excellent refreshments at half time and, hopefully, this bodes well for next year's event. My thanks to Keith for masterminding the whole event, the Ruth, Jan and their team for the catering, John for directing, Karen and Andrew for duplimating and, last but not least, xxxx for moving the boards around. The results were:

1st place: Norman Gascoyne and Isobel Townley Freeman

2nd place: Charlie Bucknell and Gary Jennison

Non experts: Stuart Coltman and Virginia Parker

Finally, in addition to those who I have mentioned already, I would like to thank the outgoing committee, in particular Kevin, our outgoing Treasurer and Ruth who is also leaving the committee, Peter, our outgoing Secretary, Karen, Viv (Weekes) and Kay who share the scoring for our F2F sessions, Karen and Andrew for duplimating throughout the year, John who is our senior director, Richard our auditor and Kay again who acts as our partnership host.