

# Bagworth Whistlestop Bridge

## Annual Report 2025-2026



### BAGWORTH WHISTLESTOP BRIDGE GROUP



#### Message from the Chair

I am pleased to report another year of progress. The number of members continues to increase. We now have 77 members. We regularly have ten or more tables at a Thursday afternoon session. Our finances are robust.

Mandy Bearne took over as treasurer at the beginning of the club year. She, with help from me, introduced a new semi-automated invoicing system. This was required to cope with the much greater number of table fees that needed to be accounted for each year. After some minor teething problems this system works very well.

Having visited Stamford Bridge Club for three years we decided that this year we would visit Stratford Bridge Club. Twelve players enjoyed a wander round Stratford followed by an afternoon of bridge. The best-performing pair on the trip were Trish Gallop and Isabel Stanley who finished second in the duplicate session.

The trip was organised by Shelagh Rumbelow, who organises much of the club's activities. This includes the training courses for beginners, which are a source of a regular stream of new members. I thank her for all the work she does and for all the work she has done over many years.

Roger Horsgood is standing down from the committee at the AGM but I am pleased to report that he will continue his work with the the dealing machine. I take this opportunity to thank Roger for the work he has done for the club during the eight years he has been on the committee.

Thanks are also due to Carol Stephens (lead director), Shelagh Rumbelow and Andy Brown for directing; to Neil Stokes, our webmaster; to Mary Weeks, our membership secretary; to Shelagh for acting as host to our Thursday sessions, to Sue Allgood, who is in charge of refreshments and to Richard Smyth for leading the team who set up the room on Thursdays.

I will be stepping down from being chair of the club at the AGM in line with the constitution and will be standing down from the committee at the same time. The club is in very good shape to deal with the future.

### **Treasurer's Comments**

The Financial Statement is below and is shown on the website. The excess of income over expenditure for the year was £1,671.95, increasing the club's bank balance from £4,277.34 to £5,949.29 at 31 May 2026.

We would like to thank all members for their support and patience in adopting the new invoicing system hosted by Bridgewebs. Following a few initial teething problems, the system is now operating smoothly and has greatly simplified the monthly administration process. It also provides a clear and transparent record of each member's activity throughout the year.

A further benefit of the system is that the club has now become effectively cashless, with payments being made directly into the bank by transfer or cheque. This has improved both security and financial administration.

The accounts have been independently audited by Richard Chantler, and we would like to thank him for the speed and efficiency with which he completed the audit.

The financial position for the year remains healthy. Total income increased significantly, driven by higher table money receipts, increased raffle income and a rise in membership subscriptions. Table money income rose from £2,870 to £3,371, reflecting continued strong attendance throughout the year.

Members will notice that expenditure on room hire increased from £1,770.50 to £2,227.00. This reflects increases in venue costs which is broadly in line with inflation and experienced by many clubs. Despite this increase, overall expenditure remains well controlled.

The increase in the "Raffle Prizes" category from £484.35 to £846.20 is largely due to a change in how these costs are recorded. The figure now includes the weekly £10 bottle of wine used for the regular raffle, in addition to the traditional Christmas spot prizes and the treats and celebratory items provided at Easter and the AGM.

It is also pleasing to note that bank charges fell significantly following the removal of the HSBC monthly banking fee. Refreshment costs were lower partly due to the weekly raffle bottles of wine being included in a different entry on the balance sheet.

The club has continued to support charitable causes through donations associated with Swiss Teams and ECats events, contributing £250 to LOROS and £70.20 to MIND during the year. Overall, the club remains in a strong financial position and is well able to meet its ongoing operating costs and future replacement expenditure. Our reserves are now

sufficient to fund the replacement of the dealing machine, which remains the club's most significant item of equipment.

In view of the club's healthy financial position, and despite increases in a number of operating costs, I am not recommending any increase in annual subscriptions or table fees for the coming year.

<b>Income &amp; Expenditure Account - 1 June 2025 - 31 May 2026</b>
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<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
HSBC balance carried forward @ 1 June 2025	£2,913.46	£4,277.34
BBVA	£465.60	£424.62
Annual Membership Fee	£340.00	£402.50
Raffle	£1,422.00	£1,705.00
Stamford /Stratford Trip	£525.00	£375.00
Swiss Teams		£492.00
Table Monies	£2,870.00	£3,371.00
Beginners & Improvers	£493.00	£267.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,029.06</b>	<b>£11,314.46</b>

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
Advertising		£346.00
Bank Charges	£60.00	£16.60
Bridgewebs - Website Annual Fee	£48.00	£72.00
ECats Ltd - Charity Pairs Comp.	£19.80	£34.20
Equipment etc	£230.20	
Flowers/Gifts/AGM&Xmas Spot Prizes	£413.11	£293.34
Hire of Room	£1,770.50	£2,227.00
Insurance	£134.47	£156.74
Raffles prizes(wine/swiss teams/ xmas /AGM)	£484.35	£846.20
Roberts Coaches Stratford Trip	£620.00	£425.00
Swiss Teams food etc		£146.24
Tea/Coffee /milk/biscuits	£443.29	£386.65
Annual Subscription EBTA	£45.00	£45.00
Trophy/Engraving	£111.00	£25.00
Refunds	£6.00	£25.00
<b>Charitable Donations</b>		
LOROS donation from Swiss Teams	£300.00	£250.00
MIND donation via ECats	£66.00	£70.20
HSBC balance carried forward	£4,277.34	£5,949.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,029.06</b>	<b>£11,314.46</b>

## Competitions

There were two competitions that were concluded too late for inclusion in last year's report. The first of these was the Stephens Cup for the most improved player, which was won by Richard Smyth.

The other was the Swiss Teams event that was won by Steve Fieldhouse, Andrew Billson, Philip Price and Robert Missenden. There were 10 teams of four taking part in the competition, which consists of four rounds of six boards.

These were followed by the usual round of internal and external competitions. A full list of previous winners is shown in the competitions section of the website. Ros and Mick Legg did particularly well in the Ecats Charity Simultaneous Pairs, not only winning at our club but coming 4<sup>th</sup> overall nationally out of 417 pairs. There were many rounds and many pairs as well as a bit of luck in this year's knockout competition so well run by Steve Fieldhouse. This was resoundingly won by Andy Brown and George Strang. The Jubilee Cup for random pairs saw a close competition within the Morris family but Marilyn came out on top partnering Anthony Calverley. The most improved player of the year is ..... (to be announced at the AGM).

For our social competitions we held our friendly teams match with Market Bosworth who treated our members to a delicious afternoon tea. It was a match of two halves with Bosworth winning the first half and then the tea set in and Bagworth won overall. Our interclub social swiss teams match took place in July 2025 with the usual celebratory cake and medals generously provided by John and Marilyn Morris. We had 10 teams of four from three different clubs and the winners were Steve Fieldhouse, Andrew Billson, Philip Price and Robert Missenden. Overall, we were able to donate over £250 to LOROS due to the generosity of members providing the food and the club providing the drinks.

Thanks go to the following for helping us to run competitions – Christmas fun bridge (Carol Stephens), Swiss Teams (Simon Learoyd, Shelagh Rumbelow and Carol) and the Knockout Trophy (Steve Fieldhouse)

2025-6 saw our first full year of having a handicapped winner each week. There were 41 winners in total and 9 winners with 3 or more weeks. Below is the list of top scorers in the handicap system

Name	Surname	
Graham	Alford	7
Nigel	Brewster	5
Jane	Chilvers	4

<b>Marilyn</b>	Morris	4
<b>Lesley</b>	Neville	4
<b>Ian</b>	Grudgings	4

There were 17 pairs who also received a free week having gained more than 70% at a duplicate session. Graham Alford and Ian Grudgings feature frequently with over 70 % as do George Strang and Andy Brown who had a massive score of 76% one week. A full list is available on the website.

## **Our members**

Our membership continues to grow and since May 2025 has increased from 68 to 77 members and we have 5 others from the beginners' group who currently do not pay subscriptions. The increased number is largely due to the reputation of the club as people refer their friends to us, thank you all. Overall, our members come to play quite regularly and whilst we have several members who have personal circumstances preventing their attendance – illness, holidays or the golf course and sometimes work. We are in touch with all of them and they will return to the club when this is feasible for them. Most members communicate with us electronically, but we have four members who either do not have email or have opted out.

We continue to send birthday greetings to members and flowers or similar for special birthdays. The special birthdays this year have included Anne Gurd, Simon Learoyd, Carolyn Owen and Carol Stephens. We send regular e\cards to mark members birthdays, and these continue to be enjoyed by all and 99% are all acknowledged and thanked for and much appreciated!

We also issue a membership pack for new players which includes the latest newsletter, an application form, our business card and promotional leaflet and health and safety information about the centre and information about the club. Our members are the backbone of our club and central to our mission and thanks go to all for providing such a convivial atmosphere, helped along quite a bit with the quality of our refreshments! Thanks go to Sue Allgood for her organisation and to Marilyn Morris for the generous donation of meringues, cakes and hot cross buns!

We encourage our members to enjoy bridge widely and socially and many attend bridge holidays. Nine attended the County bridge holiday, two of our beginners joined a holiday for novice players.

## Teaching and Learning

25/6 has been a busy year for us as we ran a beginner's programme with Shelagh and Neil co-teaching. Learners were few in number- 5 and 100% have stayed the course attending regularly. This year we used the EBU fast track resource supplemented with Andrew Robson and Paul Bowyer materials along with hands derived from BBO. The programme has run for 33 weeks with two weeks holiday at Christmas and one at Easter. Two of the beginners have progressed to join our duplicate sessions. In February we expanded the group to include improvers with a supervised play session. This has included bidding but mainly playing techniques as well as a three table duplicate pairs. As the summer holiday period approaches, we are losing a few players for holidays and the golf course, but we hope to continue this Monday morning session into the autumn and throughout the year as a supervised relaxed duplicate. We do not plan to run a beginner's course in 26/7 unless we have sufficient enquiries for it.

Additionally, we have run two online coaching sessions using BBO and Whats App, one for improvers with Carol and Shelagh and one for beginners with Shelagh. Both have proved popular. We actively encourage learners to join online playing platforms and take bridge holidays. Interestingly the main bridge holiday providers have started running bridge novice holidays and two of our group have attended one. Another has joined Andrew Robson's webcasts, another Vu-Bridge and another Into Bridge. Thank you to our learners who have made it such fun.

## Bagworth Whistlestop Bridge Group Mission

***Our mission is to share and spread the game of bridge to local people for their enjoyment, health and well-being in a friendly, safe and comfortable environment.***

### Principles / Aims

- To establish a local bridge group playing duplicate bridge for members' health and well-being and their enjoyment.
- To create a setting for social but challenging bridge and with a friendly and convivial atmosphere.
- To work alongside and with other clubs for their enhancement and not to their detriment to broaden the range of bridge playing opportunities available.
- To build resources to enable an excellent as well as a self-sufficient playing environment
- To promote the group to other clubs and the wider bridge playing and non-bridge playing community.
- To draw in grants to build resources for the club.

## Achievement of Targets for 2025-6

The targets agreed at the last are numbered as below and comments on progress are written in colour.

1. To introduce an automatic simplified system for the circulation of invoices based on the bridge webs attendance module.  
Completed and after a few teething problems is working well
2. To research and test an automatic card payment system for members.  
The treasurer researched the matter which the committee considered and other ways around this were found using cheques for non-internet banking users
3. To expand the committee in line with the growth in membership and to bring in wider views.  
During the year a new member was co-opted onto the committee giving three general committee members in line with the revised constitution
4. To recruit a team of teachers to deliver a beginners' programme, starting in September.  
Programme was set up and has continued and there are further opportunities for members to join the teaching team
5. To maintain our current membership numbers and financial position.  
Target achieved, although with 10% growth in members and subsequent better financial situation.
6. To ensure that we retain our reputation as a warm and welcoming club by celebrating members achievement, welcoming new members when they come to play, ensuring courteous behaviour at the table and maintaining our social events.  
Thankyou all members. People regularly comment on the warmth of members
7. To encourage more members and non-members to participate in RealBridge with another swiss pairs event.  
The RealBridge platform continues to grow but slowly and two of our learners have joined. The swiss pairs event was not held
8. To encourage more members to participate in LCBA and EBU competitions.  
Several players have joined the Samani Salver from the LCBA, two were selected for the EBU Joyce Cup and came 7<sup>th</sup>.
9. To encourage teachers and others with specific roles to participate in training opportunities where these are offered.  
No local training opportunities were available but the club teachers continue to attend in service training run by the EBU and encouragement and training is given to those thinking of director or scorer training.

## **Targets for 2026-7**

1. To continue to maintain current financial position and systems.
2. To maintain the current level of teaching and learning opportunities.
3. To build the level of expertise in the new committee.
4. To maintain the current level of competitions, encouraging participation in both club and external competitions eg those run by the LCBA or EBU.
5. To develop a team to play in the LCBA winter league and to provide support and training where this is needed.
6. To monitor attendance and any subsequent demands on equipment.
7. To encourage participation and provide the opportunity for a club bridge holiday.