

♣♦ BOOKHAM AFTERNOON BRIDGE CLUB ♥♠

Minutes of the 54th Annual General Meeting, Monday 14th October 2024

1. Welcome by Chairman: Jerry Broers welcomed 67 members to the 54th AGM.

Copies of the agenda and financial statement were distributed in the hall.

2. Apologies for absence:

44 received. Names posted on notice board.

3. Minutes of last AGM :

Previously circulated to members by email - read, accuracy agreed and signed by Jerry.

Their acceptance was proposed by Margaret Lawson, seconded by Carol Newton.

4. Matters arising:

None.

5. Chairman's report:

Good morning ladies and gentlemen,

The first year of my tenure as Chairman has been and gone. It seems to have passed rather quickly. I started with a vision of building on the existing aims and strengths of the club to make it a friendly, welcoming place where high-quality bridge could be enjoyed in this lovely venue.

Looking back, and around the room this morning, I am pleased with what we have achieved so far.

Luckily for me, the key members involved in the smooth operational running of the club, Kate, Marilyn and Sue, stayed in post which meant that the Club continued to be run efficiently and without incident! New members are welcomed; rotas are prepared; table vouchers are collected and the tea and biscuits magically appear – all thanks to the efforts of the Committee. I am also delighted to tell you that Sue MacDonald has agreed to stay on as Treasurer for another year – which is good news for us all. It will be her seventh year as Treasurer which is a long stint – she surely deserves a medal for her staying power!

Fortunately the Committee was bolstered by three new members, Yvonne, John and Richard, who brought additional talents to the table. I felt that we could exploit the skills of the whole group, to set an ambitious plan for the Club. As the year progressed the following priorities emerged:

Continue the previous Committee's plan to improve efficiency and increase the membership back to pre-Covid levels.

Increase the Club's 'technical human resources' i.e. Directors, Scorers, Dealing Coordinators.

Spread the knowledge of these key people more widely.

Generally to continue to make this a high quality bridge club – at every level. This involves improving little things and is ongoing. For example the Bridgemates which used to stick or which had marks on the screen, have been repaired or replaced. The cards we use are renewed constantly and I know from what you tell me, how everyone appreciates playing with new cards.

Progress was slow at first because it took time for everyone to get used to the new Chairman after five years of Neil, and change is hard! However, I am very pleased that the Committee trusted the plans and allowed the technical wizards the space to develop the new dealing and scoring systems which were at the heart of the efficiency drive. This is not to say that there weren't some lively discussions but it is good for change of this magnitude

to get a full and frank airing. In achieving the changes I would like to thank Richard Arnatt, Neil and Marilyn for working so hard and closely together and getting us to where we are now. Marilyn has produced the new notes for the Duplimators to follow and big thanks must also go to all the Duplimating teams for adopting these so well. It is much appreciated – thank you all.

Neil has shared his detailed knowledge with Richard Skeet and Robert Newhouse – further strengthening our technical base!

The sharing of this knowledge will stand us in good stead in the future because we will have several people who will be experts in the key roles. We won't be dependent on just one or two individuals and we will have cover when they go on holiday.

In conversations with people from other Clubs, it is clear that Bookham Afternoon Bridge Club is at the cutting edge of these new dealing and scoring processes. They will help to improve your enjoyment of the game and this is evidenced by our growing membership and the constant stream of visitors who come to play.

Turning now to the Directors, I would like to thank our existing pool of hard-working Directors who have supported the Club so well over many, many years. Unfortunately, that team has been dwindling but I am pleased to say that the Club is increasing the pool significantly. We currently have six members attending the four day Directors Course being run in the Harrison Room. It really won't be long before Marilyn will be spoiled for choice in deciding who should direct!

I have mentioned several members of the committee by name but I would also like to thank every member for their contributions this year. We need our listeners and our thinkers as much as we need our technical wizards. Ron, and Miranda who has now taken over from Ron, also deserve a big vote of thanks in running the website so well. Our website is excellent - precise and clear.

Finally, a club is only as good as its members and that is where every one of you plays a key role each week, by coming and playing. Please continue to tell your Bridge friends about the Club and how they will be assured of a warm welcome and an enjoyable day's play if they were to come along. We will even give them a good cup of tea and a choice of biscuit. You can also help by embracing the contents of the 'Tips of the Week' we put out to improve your own understanding of the EBU laws and regulations. Being open to increasing your own knowledge of the game is surely a good thing for your own bridge.

The other thing I have come to value this year is how critical the social and supportive side of the Club is. The buzz at tea time, the hoots of laughter (mostly not at Adrian's appalling jokes) and the gentle ribbing between members is part and parcel of a happy place. The over-subscribed Christmas event; the sell-out AR Master Class; the raffles and the generous charity fundraising tell me this is not just a Bridge Club - it is a place of genuine warmth and kindness.

The big plan is by no means complete – no plan ever is, but I think it has been an exciting and successful start. I am grateful for all your support and look forward to sharing the next year ahead with you all.

Thank you for listening.

- No questions were raised.

6. Treasurer's report:

**Bookham Afternoon Bridge Club
Treasurer's Commentary on Accounts for the year
1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024**

The accounts show a loss of **£1560** in the year which can be explained by the investment in the future of the club by the training of 6 new directors at a cost of £1722.

In 2023-24 we raised £3564 for charity. We held an Andrew Robson master class event which generated additional funds for charity. The charities supported this year: Children in Need, Queen Elizabeth Foundation, Bookham Barn Hall and Village Week, Cherry Trees, Princess Alice Hospice.

We have included in the income and expenditure account the value of the vouchers redeemed as payment for a session played. The value of unredeemed vouchers is shown in the balance sheet - £2770.

We wish to recoup the cost of the directors training over the next few years so that we maintain reserves which will be used for replacement of equipment such as the duplimating machines and bridgemates as this becomes necessary. Our direct playing costs - rent, tea service, pay to play - continue to rise each year. The value of the vouchers at £2.70 does not cover these costs. We have therefore as a committee decided that we need to increase the cost of playing and the cost of the annual subscription.

**Annual subscription which becomes due on 1st November will increase to £18.
Table money for members will increase to £3.25 and for visitors to £4.25.
We wish to continue to sell books of 10 vouchers at a discounted price so a book of ten vouchers will increase to £30.**

Subscriptions can be paid via the contactless machine or by payment online.

Bank account details as follows:
Acct name: Bookham Afternoon Bridge Club
Sort code: 30-92-70
Account number: 01242266

The accounts have been independently reviewed by Chris Pullan. Our thanks to him for doing this.

Any questions on the accounts for last year?

Thank you

Sue McDonald
Treasurer

14th October 2024

The following questions were raised:

- Nigel Taylor queried the amount received by Andrew Robson for his event earlier in the year. Response: £650. Sue made it clear to Nigel that the sum paid to Andrew Robson was not shown because the figures were net of his fee. Neil also explained that more of the surplus was paid to Barn Hall than Princess Alice Hospice because we had not paid any rent for the Hall. So we included the rent foregone in the donation to Barn Hall.
- Trevor Gaskell suggested that a one-off subscription of £40 should be levied in order to wipe out the deficit.
Response: No need for this if table numbers remain high. Deficit due to unusually high expenditure on director training and equipment during the year
- Bob Mankin, as an accountant, did not consider that the deficit should be regarded as a loss because the club had spent the money on an asset which would give lasting benefit to the club over several years. It could therefore be shown on the Balance Sheet with only say a third of the expenditure being shown as an expense in the income and expenditure account. This view was supported by others with similar professional experience. However the way the committee had decided to treat it was also acceptable because it was an expense the club had incurred during the year and therefore part of the income and expenditure account.
- Lesley Noble asked if it was possible to 'write back' any vouchers which were unlikely to be used because they were misplaced. Sue said we had decided not to do that this year because old blue vouchers were still turning up. We will be doing an evaluation at the end of next year.
Since December 2022 172 different individuals have bought books of vouchers.

Bob Mankin proposed acceptance of the financial statement and this was seconded by Renate Lane.

7. Secretary's report:

Good morning everyone.

Since our last AGM it is with great sadness that I have to report the death of three members, including Jean Suckling who died in July shortly before her 93rd birthday. She was a founder member and chairman of the club. Bridge was her passion and at her funeral it was mentioned that she gave instructions that her funeral date should not be held either on a Monday or a Thursday!

But the club has also seen happier times with the enrolment of 26 new members, and we are so pleased that Ve Godfree and Pauline Zeronian have been able to rejoin us. Our membership now stands at 205 with 7 visitors applying for membership so we are nearing our maximum of 210.

I am delighted at the progress made on a number of fronts as detailed by Jerry. However, one cause for concern for us all, and in my view considerable concern, is that we were unable to fill the current vacancy on the committee. Our Constitution does not stipulate how many years committee members may serve but typically, after three years, committee members have stood down. Our present committee are all standing again and some will have served considerably more than three years by the time of the next AGM. If approved, this coming year I will be entering my tenth year as Secretary. The committee, in addition to other duties, play a very vital part in ensuring the routine management of the Club. Our Constitution provides for twelve committee members and the duties undertaken are not unduly onerous when spread among twelve. Having fewer than that can present problems because total availability for all our sessions cannot be guaranteed; we all have lives outside the club! I therefore urge all who feel able, in the coming months, to consider whether you could volunteer to join the committee or know of someone suitable who might do so.

I would like to thank all those members who have so willingly signed up as spare partner on multiple occasions. The host facility which we offer is one of our club's strengths. And as has been said on many occasions, if more members signed up the duty would be spread much more evenly.

I suspect that some of the membership contact details I have may require updating so I will be in touch shortly to invite members to let me have any new addresses, preferred phone numbers or email addresses.

Finally, I wish to thank the committee for their unstinting support for myself and for you as a club. Ensuring that everything is in place for our twice-weekly sessions requires a considerable amount of organisation and dedication, not to mention all the work which takes place behind the scenes and is undertaken by many non-committee members on the duplimating teams and coping with technical aspects. We all wear a number of hats where the different responsibilities and roles are concerned but when help is urgently needed there is always someone who will volunteer.

Bookham Afternoon Bridge Club is a wonderful resource for us all and it is our membership who make it so.

Thank you all.

*Kate Castree,
Hon. Secretary,
BABC*

- No questions were raised.

Acceptance of all reports was proposed by Veronica Lawton and seconded by Lawrence Penney.

8. Election of Officers and Committee Members

BABC 54th AGM 2024 COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

POSITION	NOMINEES	PROPOSED BY	SECONDED BY
CHAIRMAN	JERRY BROERS	Pam Harrison	Anneke Prior
VICE CHAIRMAN	ADRIAN FILKINS	Julie Kamieniecka	Trevor Gaskell
HON. SECRETARY	KATE CASTREE	Bob Mankin	Diana Trayler
HON.TREASURER	SUE MCDONALD	Anitra Trout	George Romanowski
COORDINATOR of Directors and Scorers	MARILYN CLARKE	Susan Tavner	Trevor Gaskell

9. ELECTION OF SIX COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NOMINEE	PROPOSED BY	SECONDED BY
RICHARD ARNATT	Ulla Adilz	Renate Lane
YVONNE McCONNELL	Fredrik Adilz	Carry Kurk
JILL PATTISON	Felicity Crego-Bourne	Brigid McDonald
ANGELA REID	Carol Newton	Lesley Milton
JOHN STEWART	Trevor Gaskell	Margaret Lawson
CINDY TROOP	Pauline Zeronian	Valerie Ross
VACANCY		

10 . ELECTION OF HON. EXAMINER

NOMINEE	PROPOSED BY	SECONDED BY
CHRIS PULLAN	Lawrence Penney	Neil Higgins

All nominees were re-elected, unopposed. There is one vacancy for a committee member. Committee members stood to be identified with the exception of Jill Pattison who was away on holiday and Angela Reid who was unwell. Their apologies had been recorded.

The original signed nominations are in hard copy files.

Trevor Gaskell proposed acceptance of all those nominated, seconded by Dilwen Collier. Trevor further proposed a vote of thanks to the committee for all their hard work.

11. AOB:

- A reminder from the Treasurer that subscriptions will be due from the 1st November but she will be happy to take them after the meeting by contactless card payment. They can also be paid online using the club's bank details, taking care to identify the member in the reference field.

12. Presentation of trophies:

The Chairman, Jerry Broers, invited Adrian Filkins, as Vice-Chairman, to present the *Anniversary Plate* to Alick Fraser, overall individual winner.

Adrian presented the *Queen's Jubilee Cup* to Alick Fraser and Steve Lock as Best Pairs winners.

Jerry presented the *Gordon Jenner Trophy* to Adrian Filkins as Best Improver.

The winners of the *Chairman's Handicap Challenge Cup*, John and Kath Green, were unable to be present. They will receive their trophy at a later date.

13. The meeting closed at 11.40 am

followed by a break for lunch when tea and cake were provided by Jubylee Bakeries who train people with learning difficulties. This provision was arranged by Cindy Troop.

Members were given the opportunity to sign up for the Christmas Party on Thursday 12th December.

The afternoon session of duplicate bridge followed, free to all who attended the AGM. Normal table money for those attending the bridge session only.

