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Bridge in the New Normal April 2021

1 message

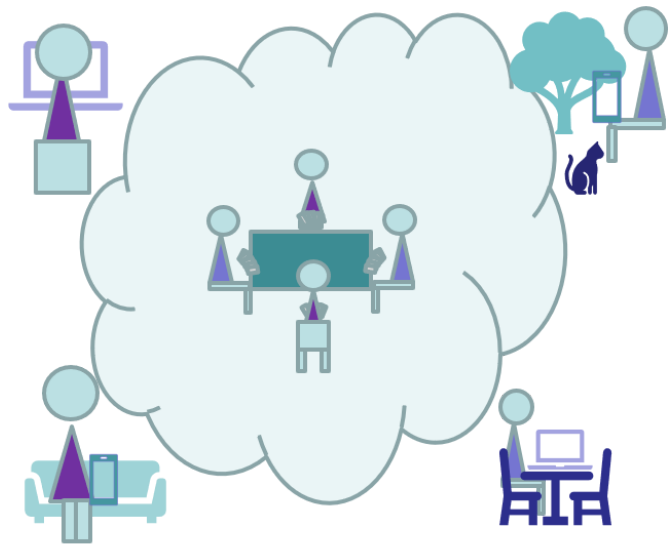
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New Normal News

April 2021



www.bridgeforpleasure.co.uk

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The Restart

Rugby Village Bridge Club is planning to restart face to face bridge on

May 17th 2021.

We will be operating, as we did last year, in a Covid secure way. Many of our members cannot wait to get back to the table and to see each other again.



Regulations

The daily government bulletin continues to focus on cases, vaccinations, science, PPE supplies, the performance and services from government departments. Updates and new guidance have appeared relating to education. Guidance on business, sport and leisure activity has been pretty stable generally being updated in line with the road map.

There is reduced emphasis on transmission by touch. A charity shop operator interviewed on Radio 4 stated they are no longer quarantining donations for 3 days. It may well be that the need for a set of boards at each table could now be relaxed. This has been a challenge for many clubs.

However, there is definitely more evidence of air born transmission,

and therefore recommendations to maximize ventilation. Our venue is adding a ceiling extractor fan in a "sheltered" corner. We will continue to open front and back doors to ensure a draft!

Please always check the latest documents, and maybe take advice, before you make any decisions. In the past this sort of rules/guidance has changed rapidly and probably will again. It has often not been clear enough for everyone to be sure, and agreed, on what it means.

Bridge for Pleasure - Regulations Information Page

Reasons to restart (part of a dialogue I have had with another club pondering reopening)

- We have members who really want to play
- It looks like we can fill four tables at two afternoon sessions by the second week, if not the first.
- Rugby Village already has the gear, the supplies and the experience
- Most of the players who will come early will also have done it before and we know the problems that may arise with 2/3 of them!
- The longer we delay, the more our players will become unused to playing, infirm, or even pass on (about eight deaths during the year)
- The longer we delay the more competition from outdoor activities, family occasions and travel there may be
- It may help to build the habit if we get in before travel and some other indoor entertainment gets going
- I think that the June "aspiration" to remove all ("legal") restrictions at the end of June may not be possible. Covid secure operation may be the only way we can have face to face for longer than "planned".
- We hope to get at least some of the local players taught online to the table
- It will make a little money
- Real world bridge for players seeking company and a little intellectual challenge is needed.

We considered using a bigger room with more tables but decided not to:

- We would have to buy more plastic screens, organise more sets of boards etc
- It might only be for 6 weeks, and then maybe all restrictions get lifted (for this reason I would advise people thinking of investing/stocking up/planning for the first time now to consider that it could be for a short time).

BUT There is also a strong possibility that the "17th May" step will be extended, beyond the end of June, much further into the year in which case investment will pay off.

Reasons against restarting:

- Infection rate in Rugby was stubbornly high (This has actually materially improved of late)
- It's hard work and quite stressful
- We will have to cut back on online teaching, which is going remarkably well

Researching the Restart

I have been monitoring changes in over two hundred in bridge web sites of which 175 and growing are bridge club sites.

I will particularly be looking for clubs restarting face to face sessions. (There are already two clubs restarted on Guernsey.)

Many club sites sadly show no activity since last spring.

Many others have invested time and effort running online sessions. These have highly visited and regularly updated sites. A few are starting to hint at face to face restart.

Perhaps the most encouraging of all is the number of clubs and teachers who have switched to teaching online and are offering very good incentives to beginners.

What makes a good bridge club web site?

92% of the clubs use BridgeWebs as their host; 1% use Pianola.

There are two more bridge club specialist hosts and some clubs are using general purpose host/designers.

Looking at so many sites a few things have struck me that make sites more attractive and easier to look at:

- Pictures. Any picture cheers up a site. People in a bridge context and smiling are great. Photos of venues are good. Lambs, flowers, cartoons or anything else still enhance any home page.
- Larger, easier to read fonts are vital. I recommend Tahoma (my adopted favourite), any Arial font, or Calibri. Many sites default to small font Times New Roman. It's not attractive or easy to read (IMO). Stick to one font.
- Edit your text down to the fewest words XpossibleX. My bad habit is adverbs. After everything I write I XimmediatelyX go through and delete the XexcessX adverbs and it shortens the text Xstraight awayX! Then you can use big fonts.
- Choose a limited colour scheme and stick to it. It's so easy to keep introducing new bright colours but, XhonestlyX, it makes it harder to read and understand.
- Finally, BridgeWebs offers more design opportunities than you might at first think. When you have time, explore rounded corners, shadowing boxes, larger text menu buttons etc.

Virtual Conference: Bridging Academia, Policy and Practice, 28 June to 1 July 2021

I am going to be on the panel for one discussion!

<https://bridgemindsport.org/conference-2021/>

EBU Director Representing Clubs

You will remember that, at some speed, an election was held at New Year. Gayle Webb was elected by the clubs and appointed by the EBU Board. I contacted her recently to invite her to come to our Zoom conference and to report on activity representing clubs.

She doesn't think she will make it to the meeting and she has nothing to report on the club representation front.

Return of Elite Bridge

Elite bridge has typically involved large numbers of players travelling long distances to congregate in a crowded venue for long periods of time. This was already becoming difficult to offer at a cost and convenience that attracted enough players from an ageing population to be viable. Such events carry a high risk of Covid transmission among a vulnerable community.

The EBU cannot see a future for such events anywhere but online. The high level of cheating online is causing a strain on the EBU disciplinary process, but no doubt they will learn and adapt to it.

The Road Map is understandably vague about the lifting of restrictions on large indoor gatherings and the only reliable statement is that it will not be before the end of June.

The EBU has provided some information about conformance to legal and insurance requirements. It looks beyond the end of June for face to face.

However, small, well managed, Covid secure, Real World Bridge events can resume 17th May. This is not the EBU's kind of bridge, one of whose directors recently referred to 4 tables as "organised social bridge" with disdain.

New Normal Zoom Conferences

The meetings are informal gatherings. They are intended to bring together a wide range of perspectives. They should allow constructive debate.

The proceedings are not secret and will be recorded and published widely.

Zoom conferences took place on:

16th September
21st October
18th November
16th December 2020
20th January 2021
17th February 2021
17th March 2021.

A link for the **April 21st 2pm Zoom** conference is below:

Nicky Bainbridge is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: New Normal April 2021
Time: Apr 21, 2021 02:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81045439105>

Meeting ID: 810 4543 9105

Zoom link for the next New Normal Bridge Zoom Conference

New Normal Newsletter

This is issued once a month generally on the third weekend. It is written and distributed on an entirely non profit basis, takes no advertising or commission.

Previous New Normal newsletters and a subscription form are available on the Bridge for Pleasure web site.

There is also information on playing Covid-secure bridge.

A freely available bridge teaching scheme with lesson plans, notes, deals, homework quizzes and answers is there for all.

Bridge for Pleasure - Information Web Site

Please forward the letter to anyone in the bridge world who might be interested. Anyone can subscribe using the link below,

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