

Bridge in the New Normal September 2021

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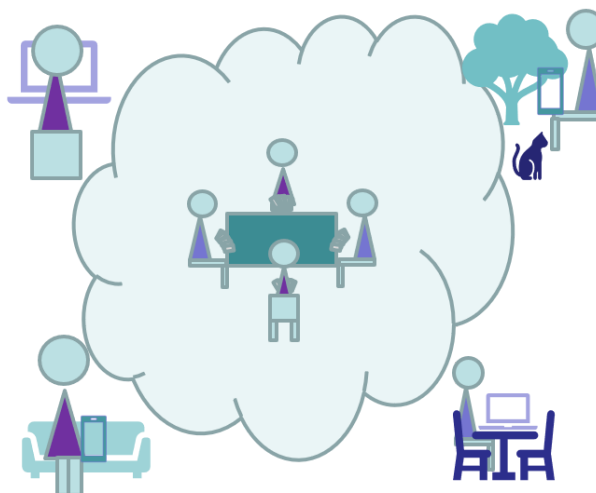
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19 September 2021 at 21:57

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New Normal News

SEPTEMBER 2021



www.bridgeforpleasure.co.uk

In this edition...

Face to Face Activity

What online offers attract players?

Free Training for Clubs

EBU<->Club Communications

Zoom Conferences (Including Link for Next Meeting)

Thanks to everyone who contributes to the conferences and gives feedback about the newsletter, or lets me know they watch the conference recordings. As long as I know this is useful, I will keep going!

The audience for this newsletter is fast growing. If you would like to receive it, you can subscribe at:

[Click here to subscribe to this newsletter](#)

Face to Face Activity

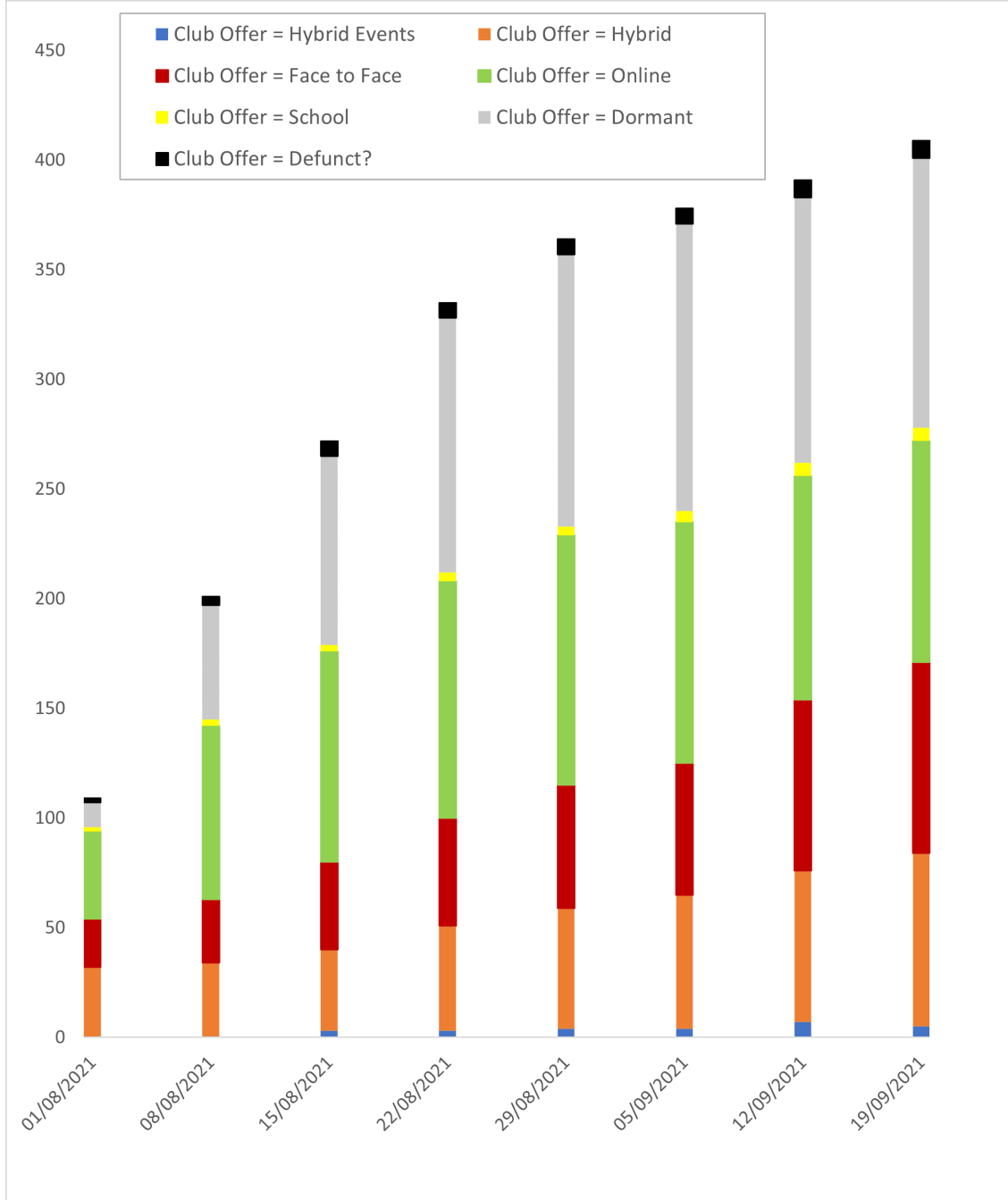
The Return to Face to Face.

Face to Face Sessions Offered per Week	410
Clubs Offering Face to Face	171

Activity on club web sites spiked in the first part of September and continues at a high level. The numbers of face to face only clubs and hybrid clubs (offering both face to and online) have both increased, and the number of clubs offering only online has dropped for the first time. The number of dormant clubs is steady at around 30% of the sample.

Fields in face to face sessions are usually in the 3-5 tables range, though a few clubs have steady higher turn outs. Only a handful of clubs are offering combined online and face to face events, and one has given up.

This sample grows as about ten clubs a week are added. The profile of additions tries to follow that already monitored, with a bias to dormant/small/unaffiliated clubs as they are probably underrepresented.



A page of statistics and comments from clubs (some direct to me, and some from their web pages) gives a good insight into the emerging new normal. Here's one important chart. You can look at the web site page for more detail at:

[BFP Club Statistics Page](#)

What online offers attract players?

Online bridge was the only game in town during the "total" phases of lock down. It was popular with the players who took to it, and brought players limited in mobility back to bridge. A great many new players learnt bridge online.

Stronger players liked the BBO EBU daily competitions. More social

players took to the casual area of BBO, free to all, and to the social area on Bridge Club Live.

Access to online platforms for club events was enabled initially on BBO by the EBU, then on the Bridge Club Live Platform, and latterly by the highly successful RealBridge. For many, bridge in the room, is the only form of the game they want. Sometimes this is discomfort with technology, but often it's the increased social, or psychological, element that they like. Some players believed that online would displace in person bridge, and the eventual balance remains to be seen.

Face to face is on offer, perhaps in rather more places than expected. Fields are small, though seem to be growing. Many clubs have gone from dormant to face to face and others have replaced online sessions with face to face. Locally three clubs have just started five evening face to face sessions between them, all evening. This is going to test the proposition that players will not leave the comfort of their homes on a winter's evening.

The EBU ran a modest event at Eastbourne, but has cancelled the two face to face events planned for the Midlands. A few counties have planned or held face to face events, but many are sticking with online for the foreseeable future.

Some competitions seem definitely to work better online. Many teams leagues have settled online. There are also new providers of friendly online events achieving considerable success such as No Fear Bridge, Bernard Magee's club and some entrepreneurs starting online only clubs. One club runs all day, seven days a week RealBridge Lounge for a serious fee.

Do clubs need to look at a different "mood" for their online events?

Free Training for Clubs

The wonderful RealBridge made an offer of free training for clubs on the topic of using MailChimp for newsletters. (That's the tool used for this newsletter, and for free). Sorry you've missed them. This is the second time they have done so. Previously they offered training on producing posters.

We have talked about offering something ourselves, and here in Rugby we will be happy to take visits, by prior arrangement, from anyone wishing to observe some face to face directing as a refresher.

I also wondered about producing something on movements for low numbers of tables, as some clubs may be more used to larger numbers of tables.

EBU<->Club Communications

The existence of this project was confirmed at the May Chairmen's meeting, but no idea of progress or when clubs can look forward to improved information flow. With the emphasis on "collaboration" in the meeting, a two way dialogue is hopefully on the cards.

A focus group meeting was held in May and, in June, club attendees were asked for examples where communications could have been improved.

We really hope to see regular communication, to all clubs, about this project.

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
- 21st April 2021
- 19th May 2021
- 16th June 2021
- 21st July 2021
- 18th August 2021.

A link for the next Zoom conference is below:

Nicky Bainbridge is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: New Normal September 2021
Time: Sep 22, 2021 02:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88670629923?pwd=UDE4eHpYTU5XZmxEbU5ZTXFxM1JZdz09>

Meeting ID: 886 7062 9923
Passcode: 127350

Zoom link for the next New Normal Bridge Zoom Conference

New Normal Newsletter

This is issued once a month generally on the weekend before the third Wednesday. 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

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