

COUNTY BRIDGE CLUB (CIO) ANNUAL REPORT April 2021 – March 2022

Registered Charity: 1179979

CHAIR'S REPORT: Ian Walkerdine

The club closed on 16 March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The last two AGMs (15 July 2020 and 16 May 2021) were held virtually. 25 June 2022 marks our first face to face AGM since 2019.

On 26 June 2020 we started our CBC virtual club with the introduction of BBO, shortly followed by Realbridge. It has now been running for almost exactly 2 years.

During lockdown, the club underwent a professional Covid risk assessment 15.10.2020, with further reassessments on 18.3.2021 and 2.11.2021 to ensure St Oswald building remained fully Covid compliant. I am grateful to all our trustees and committee members who got the building prepared and to such an excellent standard in preparation for opening our doors during the pandemic. Many thanks to our secretary who provided the medical expertise to help guide us through the labyrinth of changing government guidance and provided regular medical updates and advice to inform our actions at the club. Thanks also to our members who showed great forbearance during the time of imposed restrictions, and cheerfully agreed to have temperature checks, bring proof of vaccination, and check their lateral flow tests when advised to do so. It is as a result of all these things, that when we did finally open, we were able to keep the club open as Covid 19 cases continued to occur locally.

Then came Open Day 21 Aug 2021. I was delighted that we welcomed more than 60 people that day. Shortly after that we had our first face to face session on Friday 3 September 2021. This resulted in an unprecedented 12 tables. We decided to continue to run some of our virtual sessions alongside the face-to-face sessions.

There was a brief re-closure over the Christmas period from 11 December 2021 as cases of Omicron in the country soared, but we re-opened again on Friday 28 January 2022. Finally on Friday 1 April 2022 government restrictions lifted, although we continue to encourage sensible measures at the club which benefits from excellent air conditioning, automatic no touch doors and taps and contactless payment.

Overall, we have continued to run three sessions at the club and two sessions online weekly, together with the teaching.

Celebrations:

The first inaugural meeting of the CBC was on 22 June 1961 at 70 New Walk. Sadly, we could not celebrate CBC's 60th birthday last year as we were still in lockdown. Now, on the occasion of our 61st birthday, I would like to take a moment to recognise the foresight and hard work of the original members, Mr J Milton, Mr D B Smith, Mr and Mrs Hammersley, Mrs E Elias, Mrs M Cole and Mr A Woodier, who set up the club that has given so many people the opportunity and pleasure of playing bridge and making friends. We will raise a glass and toast the club and its members, past and present at the end of the AGM.

Charitable donations

Children in Need: £150 was raised following the E-Cats November 2021 session. It is notable that Peter Halford and Mick Mahoney achieved a phenomenal 3rd place from 500+ entries and achieved 70%+

Ukraine Disaster Appeal: On the 4 March 2022, in response to the Ukraine invasion, the EBU released a statement deploring the invasion of Ukraine. Both the World Bridge Federation and the European League similarly released statements and disallowed Russian or Belarussian participants into their events. CBC decided that our session on Friday 4 March 2022 would be a Charity Session in support of the Ukrainian Disaster Appeal. It is clear from the fantastic response that our players had wanted to help.

We raised a whopping £1114. Thank you all for your incredible generosity.

Teaching Bursary: We continue to offer up to 4 bursaries annually to potential students suffering financial hardship.

CBC Bridge holiday, Torquay

This has been one of the casualties of the pandemic. We continued to defer the holiday during the pandemic, hoping that restrictions would lift. Our last booked dates were Mon 21 Mar to Fri 25 Mar 2022, but unfortunately, we did not get sufficient numbers to make this viable, and we finally decided to cancel the holiday. All deposits to members have been refunded. We hope to revisit the idea of a holiday later in the year.

Changes to fees

Membership fees: As you will remember, we waived these fees for the last 2 years, but they are reintroduced for this financial year. These fees have risen to £20 per year.

Table money: This has now increased to £3 per person.

Our Trustees and Committee have been busy during the year; we have a most enthusiastic and cooperative team. I would like to record my thanks to all of them for their continued support.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Isabel Crump

Due to the Covid 19 government restrictions, the trustees and co-opted committee members have continued to meet remotely by Zoom every 4-6 weeks. We returned to face-to-face meetings in January 2022.

The Trustees members on 31 March 2022

Chairman/trustee	Ian Walkerdine
Secretary/trustee	Isabel Crump
Treasurer/ trustee	Anthea Byrne
Trustee	Charles Gurr
Trustee	Alastair Lennox
Trustee	Simon Stokes

Kate Boulter resigned as Secretary/trustee June 2021

Co-opted committee members on 31 March 2022

Frank Travers June 2021 resignation

Richard Bell October 2021 resignation

Peter Ablett October 2021 as the new premises/health and safety officer

Kate Boulter remains as social secretary

CBC Policies

- Membership policy has been updated, so it is more streamlined, is compliant with General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR UK), and includes sign up to gift aid
- Updated and new Privacy policies for personal data and CCTV use to ensure compliance with the new GDPR UK
- Health and Safety policies to include Covid 19
- New policy on Adult Safeguarding and a new Safeguarding lead Dr Cathie Sawers
- New Volunteer policy

All the documents are on the website under 'policies' and can be made available as a paper copy if required.

Training

We have had a number of lively and interactive in-house training days, drawing on members expertise to run these, together with several funded external courses.

- 20 Feb 2020 Red Cross First Aid course
- September 2021 New duplimating processes – buddy system and printouts
- 7 October 2021 British Heart Foundation Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and AED (Defibrillator) training
- 21 October 2021 Level 3 Adult Safeguarding course Anne Craft Trust (ACT)
- 2 December 2021 Adult Safeguarding
- 26 February 2022 General Data Protection Regulations UK 2018 Workshop
- April 2022 Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety for Catering, Certificates x2

Defibrillator

Just before the pandemic, one of our members suggested that we may want to consider buying a defibrillator for our new club. We thought it was an excellent idea and have purchased a fantastic fully automated Zoll AED 3 defibrillator model. It is wall mounted in the foyer. The defibrillator is also registered with East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS). The trustees and committee members have undergone training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) supported by the British Heart Foundation and in the use of the machine, supervised by your secretary who has a medical background.

Catering

The club has installed a new professional catering kitchen this year, overseen by Kate Boulter our social secretary. County Bridge Club is registered as a food business with Leicester City Council and I am pleased to announce that the Club has received the top Food Hygiene Rating of 5 (the highest possible) following a recent Leicester City Council inspection in Spring 2022. In addition, Anthea Byrne and Isabel Crump have completed their level 2 food hygiene certificates to help support Kate with the catering.

Events

Improve Your Card Play: Peter Halford's excellent 10-week course which started in early October 2021.

In November 2021, the Club provided its premises for a Youth 'Go' championship day.

A Cheese and Wine evening took place on 7 September 2021 at St Oswald, to celebrate and to thank our CBCT volunteers - Teachers, Assistant Teachers, and administrative support - for creating and delivering our very successful online Teaching Programme earlier in the year. One of the highlights was the presence of our Guest of Honour, John Milne, retiring from Bridge Teaching after more than 50 years. In his introduction, our Chair, Ian Walkerdine, noted some of John's achievements over the years, and John responded with modesty and charm. What a fantastic 50 years of contribution to the club and the game of bridge.

Social Bridge: In March 2022, a very popular new Thursday session was established, played in a friendly, sociable, relaxed atmosphere with time to discuss hands, and a light lunch provided.

LCBA: Unfortunately, there have been no events this year due to the pandemic.

Forthcoming highlights in the new financial year

Decisive Defence: Paul Bowyer has temporarily suspended this 4-week course, but the first evening session May 2022 was extremely popular and well received.

Play bridge with Ben Norton -The Ups and Down of a World Championship: Our member Ben Norton represented England in the recent World Championship in Italy. What a fabulous achievement. Two evening sessions featuring England's progress in the 2022 Bermuda Bowl have been arranged in June and July 2022 where he will review some sample boards from the event with us. The two sessions are open to all local bridge clubs and have been sponsored by LCBA and us, CBC. A great opportunity to share in his insights.

Newsletter

Thank you to all those contributors who have made the newsletter so popular.

Trophies

Our collection of cups and trophies have been collected and displayed in our new trophy cabinet. Some new ones have been made. From now, winners of tournaments will be presented with a cut glass engraved tumbler or highball and have a presentation photograph taken. The original trophy will however remain on display at the club.

Volunteers

Finally, my thanks go to all the volunteer members who offer their time to the club. This includes our webmaster, who has transformed the CBC website, the duplimators who have spent hours preparing boards for our sessions, and those volunteers who offer their time for gardening duties, for the tidying up rota, those who have helped to set up our new library with books donated by members. These are a just a few examples but there are many more. Their support has been and remains invaluable to the running of our club.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Anthea Byrne

The Committee have the pleasure in presenting the Financial Statements of the Club to the membership, and report on another momentous year. The Club has made a loss of £8,444 primarily due to losses made on the drop in market value of the investments due to world events.

As the Club has been closed for part of the year, there is some income from table money, but not yet to pre Covid levels. We still have some money generated by online games, small rental income, and no holiday income. We have not charged subscriptions for the second year because we were closed for much of the year. Teaching income benefited from being able to run a full set of lessons, but timing was affected by closure in December/January. Therefore, the costs of running the club have risen compared to the previous year reflecting the partial reopening. Income from bridge activities being lower meant we would have operated at a loss, but we have been in receipt of Government grants because we were forced to close of £16,786 and this has allowed us to cover our costs and re-open in a gradual way when Government restrictions allowed.

The loss on investments of £8,419 is due to world events and is the main driver of the loss for the year of £8,444.

The Club has benefited from going cashless and can now take card payments, bank cheques remotely and are using the Bridgeweb's attendance module to run individual accounts for the members.

The Club continues to improve the premises and completed work on resurfacing the car park during the year.

We are continuing to use external audit for the Accounts prior to submission to the Charity commission. We thank Richard Smith for all his time and expertise in working with the Finance Team to produce the formal accounts.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Charles Gurr

It is with great sadness that I report on the following members who passed away over this last year:

Terry Green David Hurwich Norman Williams Cynthia James Ian Dent Ruth Allenby David Deane

Tony Wood David Betterley Robert Northage Bill Grindley Mick Mahoney
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At last year's AGM we recorded having 314 registered names on the club's website 56 of whom were listed as visitors, making a total of 258, but in addition, this number included

individuals taking lessons during that year. During the last year we have received 26 new members. 33 resignations have been recorded in the last two months as we performed some housekeeping work to refresh the membership list.

The trustees are continuing to contact members who have not played at the club or online since the last Annual General Meeting. The latest figures show a current membership of 209.

TOURNAMENT SECRETARY: Alastair Lennox

Unfortunately, due to the club being closed to Covid only three competitions have been completed through 2021/22. The winners of these competitions were: -

Woodier Cup Winners: Anne Wright & Ian Bruce

Spring Bowl: Keith Preston and Richard Smith

Spring Bowl 9 high: Anthony Calverley and Simon Learoyd

The Spring Bowl competitions were so well received they will be repeated through October and November and unsurprisingly will be called the Autumn Bowl and Autumn Bowl 9 High.

It is my intention to run 13 competitions through the 2022/23 season, which will include new events for our non-expert members having NGS 9 and below. Keep a look out on the club's calendar for all future competitions.

PREMISES REPORT: Alastair Lennox

Although the club was closed most of last year many projects were completed notably refurbishment of the 2 tea rooms, new committee room, resurfacing and extension to the overflow car park and installing four automatic doors. I am pleased to say this completes all the planned major projects at the club. Thank you to those volunteers who have helped with the garden and grounds. It has been a huge help.

I have now handed over this role to Peter Ablett who is in the coming months looking at the feasibility of installing solar panels to eliminate our electricity bill.

TEACHING SUBCOMMITTEE: Simon Stokes

A significant amount of work was completed leading up to August 2021 to market the Club's teaching programme for years 1, 2 and 3 with a targeted campaign on 'My neighbourhood websites', local ads magazines, and various local gazettes. Lucy Pathan went on Radio Leicester on Monday 2 August 2021 on the Ben Jackson Show, and talked about the history of the club, and the teaching programme. She was an excellent ambassador for the Club.

I am pleased to report that we were able to run 3 classes of face-to-face lessons from October to the beginning of April with a small break after Christmas during the final period of lockdown. The teaching programme has had 34 students in the formal classes. All the documents have been assembled into a single file with all pages numbered – this makes it

easy to prepare boards and print handouts. CBC has its own separate teaching website CBCT <https://www.bridgewebs.com/cbct/>

Each class had between 8 and 12 people on average. Year 1 classes covered the basics of bidding and play ending with lessons on the finesse. Year 2 lessons dealt with the varied topics of weak twos, takeout doubles, and percentage plays. Year 3 classes learned about the intricacies of slam bidding and the art of effective defending. It is safe to say that many a club player, even those with years of experience, would still benefit from attending a year 3 or even a year 2 lesson.

Lessons have been attended by many keen, hardworking students and it is to be hoped that everyone has had an entertaining and instructive year. Of course, the main teachers could not function without the assistance of their deputies. Thanks for all their hard work behind the scenes with administration and correspondence with students. Their support to the teaching programme has been invaluable.

A Student survey was carried out in December 2021 to evaluate the Autumn lessons. Responses were overwhelmingly positive. Support given by Teachers and Assistant Teachers was highly valued. Some thoughtful and supportive suggestions were received from the students, and these have been actioned. We discovered that most of our new recruits come to us through a recommendation from other members of the club. We thank you for this, which, during this challenging time for the game, attempts to gain more support for this amazing pastime. We would like to encourage members to actively canvass friends and relatives in the expectation that maybe just one will feel interested enough to come to lessons.

Forthcoming teaching

Lessons are continuing throughout the summer. Steve is planning a full season of lessons on defence, surely, not just of interest to his year 3 students but enthusiastic learners from year 2 and any club players who wish to brush up on this most difficult aspect of the game. Lyn with some help from Simon is running supervised play sessions at the moment and there are plans for some short courses later on in the summer. Our teaching programme is thriving.