

CHEPSTOW ARCHWAY BRIDGE CLUB

DRAFT AGM MINUTES 28TH OCTOBER 2019

23 members attended the AGM.

1. Apologies for absence: six written and many verbal received.
2. Minutes of AGM 2018 were approved without alteration.
3. Chairs Report:

There was a great upheaval as the Palmer Centre underwent extensive renovations. We bravely played on in the face of building dust, cancellations, no kitchen and a somewhat dysfunctional single toilet arrangement. We got through with patience and humour. We live in hope of getting new chairs still, I bring this subject up regularly with the management.

I regard our new website as a major positive development for our Club. I'd like to thank Greg Howell and Neville for hosting our previous web site. Peter Taylor has done an enormous amount to successfully create our fabulous new web site and effect a smooth transition across to it. He has also given me much helpful advice and support. He keeps the essential IT for our Club in fantastic order with the support of our club scorers – David Green, Graham Eele and Stuart Anderton. Thanks to all of them. Peter has quietly done so much work for the Club, I'd like to present him with a small token of our appreciation.

Another person quietly working away in the background making the club run smoothly is Richard Stevenson. He has dealt all the hands we have played this year, saving the club money. He has been totally reliable, and I'd like to also give him a token of appreciation.

We introduced 4 new competitions last year. 5 new trophies were generously donated by Carolyn Ogden and Hugh Green (mixed pairs plate), Graham Eele (cross imps open pairs cup) Greg Howell and Richard Stevenson (George Smith plate), Ray Mardon and myself

(mens pairs trophy) and Sue Blake (ladies pairs plate). This year we will run ladies and mens pairs on the same night, so there will be 4 competitions including the Claret Cup all on Monday nights. The intention behind the competitions is to encourage inclusive participation and to make them enjoyable occasions. I was so pleased to see there was a great turnout for the Claret Cup last week.

Sue Blake organised our local derby with Monmouth Bridge Club this year, thanks go to her. It was a good fun event we did eventually work out the scoring.

We had three lovely parties at Christmas, Easter and the Summer. I thought they were really fun and I hope everyone who came enjoyed themselves.

We had two well attended charity events. The Chairs charity event raised £360 for Barnardos, and the e cats sims event raised £210 for Children in Need. What a lovely generous lot you are!

Graham Eele thought up the splendid idea of holding an open meeting in July. It was well attended and produced some very interesting ideas and points of view. It was great to get all your input, and I think it would be valuable to hold a similar meeting on an annual basis.

The Club has had successes in outside competitions this year. Greg and Richard were our entry in the Champion of Champions national pairs competition, they did really well. They were joint 8th out of a national field of 24, well done guys! Our teams of eight (capt Richard Stevenson) got through to the national finals. One of our East Wales league teams got promoted up a division (capt Sue Blake) and we have a team up there in the first division (capt Brian Harden). This year there is a third team entering the league (capt Ray Mardon)

I thought you might be interested in looking at this bar chart about attendance figures.

As you can see Thursday is paying its way but it is the least attended night. Wednesday and Monday are roughly on a par. Attendance was poor in September on all nights, I suspect a lot of people were away. Over the course of the building works attendance was also a little down.

I think on the whole the chart demonstrates the numbers are holding up well. It would be nice to see Thursday numbers going up, but it has not been subsidised by the other nights.

Lastly I would just like to thank all of you who contribute to the weekly running of the Club – all you directors and scorers and setters up, all you providers of party food.

Thanks for the fun and the great bridge this Year!

4. Treasurer's Report. This was prepared by John Whiteside and read verbatim by the Chair:

Apologies for not being here this evening.

As anticipated this year has been quite challenging financially: Our expenditure for the year exceeded our income by £582 and this was with the benefit of a contribution of £125 from the WBU and a temporary reduction of rent from the Palmer Centre whilst building work was being done. We will not have these benefits next year. However, our cash holding showed a more modest decline of £360 to about £3,200.

The membership this year was 83, a small drop from last year. However, the table numbers were similar, although undoubtedly we have been adversely affected by increased competition.

Our expenditure this year has been considerable, with the rent for the Palmer Centre weighing heavily on our finances. Apart from the rent and to a lesser extent depreciation of the equipment, other major items of expense include a major upgrade of the Duplimates and Sheilas attendance on an EBU course for trainers. The club also rightly sponsored our (successful) teams in various events.

We have purchased a new computer, new stock of playing cards and new bidding cards.

We also introduced master points last year. Should this be continued, the cost would be about £200 per year.

We now subscribe to Bridgewebs, which is a great improvement on the earlier web site.

The effect on our finances caused by the rent is considerable. Notwithstanding any other expenses, we now require 4.25 tables a night just to pay the rent, a number not always achieved, particularly on Thursday.

The Club subscription will remain at £7.50. However, the WBU have raised their subscription by £1 to £11. Therefore, I propose to raise the total cost of subscription to £18.50 to cover this.

Although we have reasonable cash reserves of over£3,000 for a club of this size, I would not like it to fall much below this. However, unless finances improve, particularly the table numbers, I think that table money might have to rise eventually, although there are no immediate plans for this to happen. However, any increase in rent would almost certainly cause an increase in table money.

Many items of expenditure this year were exceptional and are not expected to be repeated in the coming year. Provided that table numbers remain steady I would hope that any losses, if any, would be greatly reduced.

Finally, I would like to thank Hugh Green for auditing these accounts and for help in the printed presentation of the accounts.

The accounts were adopted by the meeting (proposed Tony Waters, seconded by Bridget Evans)

Hugh Green has indicated he is prepared to continue in the role of Auditor and this was approved by the meeting.

Matters Arising:

Review of Master Points: There was a discussion about the options regarding Master Points. Ray Mardon pointed out that £125 would need to be repaid to WBU if Master Points were discontinued in the next four years. There was some support for them to be awarded only on Mondays (5 votes) but the majority (11 votes) wanted to keep them unchanged. No-one voted for their discontinuation. There will be a review next year.

Afternoon Bridge: Only 2 members showed interest in this.

Annual Open Meeting: the meeting approved this to be on the Club calendar.

Annual Subscription: Subscription raise by £1 approved unanimously. (proposed John Mayo, seconded Dave Smith)

Election of Officers: The committee were re-elected en bloc. Dave Smith was elected as an additional committee member.

There were no motions received.

AOB:

After the Chair completed her remarks, Peter Smith mentioned that he felt Marion Shewell should have received a token of appreciation for her 10 years services to the Club. It was agreed to take this to the Committee.

Brandon Waters suggested that Wednesdays results should be announced and presented on the web site as adjusted for handicap. The meeting agreed that this was desirable, but Peter Taylor was unsure that would be technically possible, and would look into it.

The meeting was closed at 7.30.