

Minutes of the DBA Executive Committee Meeting held on August 12, 2025 on Zoom

The meeting opened at 10am.

1. Officers & Members Present

Jacqui Munns (JM) chair; Jeremy Childs (JC), vice chair, Neil Marsden (NM), treasurer, Bill Luscombe (BL) Sheila Ferguson (SF).

2. Apologies Liz Timbrell (LT), club liaison, Mike Hamon (MH).

3. Minutes of the last DBA meeting held on June 11, 2025

These have been circulated to the committee and are already on the DBA website.

4. AGM Review

The DBA AGM, which took place on Zoom on July 13, 2025, was quorate thanks to several proxy votes, but it was close. The proposal to accept the new Constitution was accepted, and the document is now on the website along with the AGM draft minutes. Next year's AGM will take place on Sunday, July 12, 2026. This will once again coincide with Wimbledon Men's Finals Day.

5. Treasurer's update

There have been only three transactions since the AGM. The interest on the reserve account has gone down to 2.83%.

We have received a credit of £192.72 on our EBU account in respect of our payment for the green-pointed pairs at the 2025 Devon County Congress. We were charged for three sessions, but have argued that playing a total of 70 boards over two days should be charged as two sessions, as the EBU state that one session is a maximum of 35 boards, regardless of any breaks in play. The EBU accepted that their documentation was not clear and gave us a refund as a goodwill gesture.

However, the EBU have informed us that they will be charging our 70 boards as three sessions for 2026 and beyond.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that we should challenge this.

Actions NM to draft an email to send to the EBU, JM will ask organisers of other congresses with a similar two-day format for info and their views.

6. Reports from around the county

Classes for beginners will start in Barnstaple, Exeter, Plymouth & Torquay in September. The EBU County & Membership Development Officer, Mary Cousins, is organising some online advertising for all autumn classes nationwide.

7. Shareholders

Devon shareholders are appointed or reappointed at the first executive committee following the AGM. The current shareholders, JM & MH, are happy to continue in the role and no other nominations have been received. The EBU AGM will take place on Wednesday, November 26, 2025.

8. Subcommittees

The new Subcommittees Terms of Reference (ToRs) document was discussed, amended and accepted and will be posted on the website.

(i) Devon County Congress (DCC) subcommittee

The subcommittee (SF, NM, & BL) has not met since the last meeting. Re the actions from the last meeting; NM circulated a cost projection via email, which was accepted, SF then updated the brochure and this is now available on the Devon Bridgewebs site along with an entry form. JC has identified a backup director for the DCC and for the North Devon Congress. SF is aware that some players have tried to book with the hotel and have been told that they must pay in full. She will talk to the hotel regarding this and their cancellation policy and will update the committee in due course.

(ii) Devon Competitions subcommittee (JM, JC, BL)

Devon Qualifying Competitions JC & JM have met on Zoom to decide on dates for Devon competitions that act as qualifiers for the EBU National competitions;

- The Devon Club Teams of Eight for the Garden Cities Trophy will take place on RealBridge on Sunday, February 15, 2026.
- The Julia Chadwick Premier Pairs for the EBU Corwen Trophy will take place on RealBridge on Saturday, March 21, 2026.
- The Western Morning News Knockout Teams of Four did not take place last season due to lack of interest. JC & JM discussed the possibility of using the John Woolcott Teams as a qualifier, rather than running a separate competition. The EBU has confirmed that this would be acceptable and that a knockout element would not be required. We are waiting to hear whether we would have to restrict entry to Devon players before making a final decision.

JC will TD all of the above competitions.

Western League Warner Solomon has stepped down from selecting the Devon team for the EBU Tollemache competition and also the A Division teams for the Western League, and the committee would like to thank him for his help over many years.

Alex Maddocks has agreed to select for the Tollemache along with Stefan Lindfors, who is already a selector. It is hoped that Stephen Rafferty (SR) will continue to select for the Western League B & C teams. The committee discussed possible successors to Warner and it was agreed selectors should be players that play in the A Division.

Action JM to contact possible selectors.

(iii) Teaching & Transition subcommittee

The subcommittee (JM, JC) has not met since the last meeting. There is not currently a plan for a third No Fear Bridge event.

(iv) North Devon Bridge (NDB) subcommittee

The North Devon Section had their last AGM on June 30, 2025 and the section has now closed. The section committee members, NM, SR, JM & Richard Watkins will now continue as the NDB subcommittee and will report to the executive committee as per the Terms of Reference for Subcommittees. This is one of two subcommittees that hold their own funds, with SR as treasurer.

This subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, August 20, 2025 on Zoom.

(v) North Devon Congress (NDC) subcommittee

This new subcommittee of the DBA previously reported to the North Section, but will now report to the executive committee as per the Terms of Reference for subcommittees. This is the second of two subcommittees that currently hold their own funds. The committee members are JM & Sharon Found, with Sharon as treasurer. The subcommittee will meet soon to decide on the prices for 2026, prior to updating the brochure and adding information and an entry form to the website.

9. Club Liaison Role

LT has recently had to step out of the role but will continue in due course.

10. Website

Ruth Edmondson has done a lot of work updating the Bridgewebs site and has now transferred much of the content from the original site. Old minutes are held on a Google Drive, which is accessible via a link without needing a login. She has suggested that we continue paying the small annual fee to keep the old domain name one we have completed the transfer to the new site. This would continue to redirect people to the new site.

11. AOB

JM suggested we try and find one or two new committee members to better represent the clubs. This was discussed and it was agreed that JM would ask a couple of club chairs, including one from a non-affiliated club, if they would like to join us for one meeting in the first instance.

JC mentioned that he was running a director's course in October, and JM will put this on the Devon website once details are known.

SF highlighted a discrepancy between the DCC brochure and the website page, JM to action.

12. Future Meetings

The next DBA executive committee meeting will be on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 10am on Zoom.

The meeting ended at 10.58am.