

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORTS & ACCOUNTS 2016/17**

**Minutes of the 70th Annual General meeting of the ECBA**

**held on Sunday 14 May 2017 at Barleylands**

**Present** Paul Mollison (*Hon Chairman),* Bernie Hunt *( Hon League Secretary),* Pat Johnson *(Hon Publicity Officer),* Val Mollison *(Hon Tournament Secretary),* Sue Thorburn *(Hon Secretary co-opted),*

Theo Todman *(Hon Webmaster)* and 20 others (a list is available if required)

1. **Hon Chairman’s opening remarks**

Paul welcomed those present and said he was pleased to see so many attendees. He had received a number of apologies (see Appendix E for a full list*).*

See Appendix A for the text of Paul’s remarks.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes had been previously circulated and are available on the website. They were agreed as a true record. Proposed Pat Johnson; seconded Peter Scotting. A copy was signed by the Chairman.

1. **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

1. **Hon Secretary’s report**

During the year there had been a reallocation of responsibilities between the Secretary and Tournament Secretary. The Secretary’s role is now largely to record meetings and provide general administrative support to the committee so a report is not pertinent.

1. **Hon Treasurer’s report**

Sue Thorburn read Linda Fleet’s report. The Income and Expenditure Statement and Balance Sheet were circulated. See Appendix B for the report and accounts.

Tony Philpott had stepped in and completed examination of the last two years’ accounts.

It was suggested that an effort should be made to encourage Essex members to attend the Essex & Herts events. This could help increase the income and participation in an event at this level may improve Essex team performance.

The report was accepted. Proposed Marcia Levan-Harris; seconded Marc Chawner.

1. **Appointment of Hon Examiner for 2017/18**

Petra Bromfield was appointed as Hon Examiner.

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1. **Hon Tournament Secretary’s report**

The report was accepted without questions. See Appendix C for the full report.

Proposed Marcia Levan-Harris; seconded Pat Johnson.

1. **Hon League Secretary’s report**

The only question was whether Upminster should be in the West Essex division. Bernie said one has to draw the line somewhere and the current arrangements kept the leagues at roughly equal sizes.

See Appendix D for the full report. Proposed Alaric Cundy; seconded Marc Chawner.

1. **Proposal to increase the number of boards played in the Essex Seniors Cup**

The proposal was made by Peter Scotting; seconded by Paddy Murray.

Peter said his original proposal had also included a suggestion that there should be a single central venue for the three events but he accepted this was not a practical option and he had withdrawn this part of the proposal.

He said that the current event is scheduled to start at 10.30 with play beginning at 11.00. As 24 or 27 boards are played this means that only 6 boards are played after lunch. He suggested the start of play should be 10.45 and 16 or 18 boards should be played both before and after lunch.

It was pointed out that the current timetable is based on a number of factors; the event is intended to be partly a social occasion allowing members time to talk before play and during lunch; the finish time needs to allow for long journeys avoiding rush hour; the venues may need to be vacated by late afternoon; the number of attendees will influence the number of boards and movement.

It was agreed the committee would look at starting a little earlier and having a simpler and shorter lunch break. The aim would be to increase the number of boards but that would need to be reviewed on each occasion depending on circumstances.

No vote taken.

1. **Proposal to consider ways of improving the performance of the A and B teams possibly by discontinuing the subsidy for the Tollemache.**

The proposal was made by Ray Clarke; seconded by Paul Mollison.

Ray was unable to attend the meeting and may not have been aware of discussions at the recent committee meetings. It had been decided to:

* 1. Give the same subsidy of £50 per person to the Corwen, Pachabo and Tollemache.
  2. Revive the Warboys competition on a monthly basis followed by expert analysis of the hands. Funding for the analysis would come from reserves and the results would be reviewed towards the end of the year.

Rob Elliott will run the Warboys and said that pairings may change but would be largely based on NGS rankings. He would aim to maintain Tollemache pairs to give them additional practice in the lead up to the Tollemache in November.

Paul said the initiative had been limited to the A and B teams. Marc Chawner’s excellent seminars were available for the less experienced C team. It was suggested that the C team would benefit from more training. Paul agreed this should be considered possibly by using the Warboys expert analysis.

No vote taken.

1. **Election of officers**

Audrey Hartley and Keith Thompson had resigned from the committee. The remainder were willing to continue including Sue Thorburn who had been co-opted. The proposed committee up for re-election is:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Position** | **Nominee** |
| Hon. Chairman | Paul Mollison |
| Hon. Secretary | Sue Thorburn |
| Hon. Treasurer | Linda Fleet |
| Hon. Tournament Secretary | Val Mollison |
| Hon. League Secretary | Bernie Hunt |
| Hon. Publicity Officer | Pat Johnson |
| Hon Education Secretary |  |
| Hon. Web Master | Theo Todman |
| Hon. Committee Member | Dennis Valtisiaris |
| Hon. Committee Member |  |

No nominations were received for the vacancies and the committee was re-elected as a whole.

Proposed John Sutcliffe; seconded Marcia Levan Harris.

1. **Any Other Business**

It was suggested more should be done to encourage development of the game, particularly youth development. Previous initiatives had not been successful and really need to be lead from within the schools. Val said the committee would be happy to support anyone who was willing to develop and promote a structured programme. Bernie said Barleylands was available Saturday afternoons.

There was a concern that Play with an Expert was not a level playing field as the NGS grading was only impacted if the non-expert was from an affiliated club. Val agreed to follow this up and particularly look at the implications of the re-introduction of Code 11.

There was support for Paul’s suggestion that engraving of trophies should be discontinued as a history of winners was available on the website. Several of the plinths were already full and there would be a saving in time and money. It was suggested that a certificate might be given.

1. **Presentation of trophies**

Trophies were presented to the competition winners.

Paul then declared the meeting closed.

**Appendix A Hon Chairman’s Opening Remarks**

Welcome to the Essex Contract Bridge Association AGM for 2017. Firstly thanks to you all for attending today and helping us to achieve our quorum.

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I would like to offer my thanks to my fellow committee members, some of whom give up a considerable amount of their spare time to make Essex Bridge run smoothly. In particular, I must single out Val for special mention. I have witnessed first-hand the considerable amount of work that she has put in getting to grips with the many jobs that fall to the Secretary, plus a few extra jobs that came in from nowhere.

This year has been particularly onerous as she has had to train herself from scratch in the use of Bridgemates and EBUScore. Val being Val, she has brilliantly risen to the occasion, and has even found a way to run our County events on them. Essex has now offered details of how to do this (for free) to all the other South Eastern Counties.

Thanks also go to Tony Philpott for stepping in to do the Accounts this year.

This year is a bit special in that people do not normally come forward and offer to help us in areas where we have been struggling. Like London Buses, two have suddenly appeared over the last twelve months.

Firstly, Alan Rodger became a County Director last autumn and has provided us with a new and different option for Directing at our events.

Secondly, Sue Thorburn has volunteered to help us with various admin jobs and, in particular, is doing a splendid job with the minutes for our Committee Meetings and the AGM.

Sue Thorburn has agreed to take on County Secretary role and Val will switch over to be the Tournament Secretary.

May I offer a special welcome to Alan and Sue and, once again, repeat how important their roles are, particularly it has freed up Val to focus on all the issues of running the tournaments.

We are saying goodbye to Audrey Hartley, who has served Essex Bridge in many capacities over the years. Tony Philpott, who could not be with us today, has written the following tribute to Audrey:

This AGM marks the end of an era in Essex Bridge with Audrey retiring as a member of the Committee. Aside from her administrative work Audrey is no mean player having represented England in the Lady Milne Trophy in 1998. Outside Essex she has also been instrumental in setting up two new clubs in London I believe based at the Young Chelsea.

On our Committee she has served a number of roles including Tournament Secretary and Secretary. The latter of these was very difficult when taking over from Margaret who had only been Secretary for 55 years! She nevertheless put her own stamp on the role including amendments to the constitution and in particular setting up the disciplinary committee. She has been an EBU shareholder and an Essex delegate since 2011 always attending the meetings and never afraid to speak up on behalf of the County.

Whilst teaching mathematics in her school she set up the school club and is of course a County Director. I can well remember at one event an extraordinary movement she introduced, we all feared the worse. Naturally being Audrey it turned out for the best. Finally I believe she is probably the longest serving member at the Chelmsford Club.

It is not of course all good news she did once make a big mistake. Whilst playing in the trials for the Lady Milne Trophy suddenly a mobile phone went off, whose could it be but Audrey’s? The results was a 2 point fine which moved her from first to second with only first place qualifying by rights for the team. It all ended happily as she was picked anyway.

I am sure the AGM will pass on their thanks for all she has done including staying on the Committee while the new regime settled in.

We are also saying goodbye to Keith Thompson and thank him for his efforts as the Education Officer.

Alan Rodger’s arrival has allowed us to use him as the main Director for most of our events.

In the coming season we are also bringing in Gary Conrad again to help with the Fletcher/Cup for Clubs event.

The committee believe that this will address the concerns that were raised last year about Directing at our events.

We are attempting to listen to the ideas put forward by our membership, so please keep making your suggestions to members of the committee about how we can improve Essex Bridge.

One previous suggestion was to look at running some events on a Saturday. We have implemented this idea and the Gwen Herga proved to be very successful running on a Saturday. There were 32 pairs in total, which is the highest since 2010/11 season.

We have also continued to host Bridge Seminars (brilliantly run by Marc Chawner) for improving players. All these seminars (and the pdf files that go with them) have been very well received by everyone who has attended. We hope that Marc will have another one ready for us in the autumn.

We are also starting to focus on improving the standard of Bridge in the top level of the County. A new initiative by Rob Elliot and the Selection Committee is to reinstate the Warboys competition once a month during the summer at Barleylands on the second Wednesday. We are hoping to buy in some expert analysis of some of the hands played – I will say a bit more about this when we come to the item submitted by Ray Clarke.

This year we have generally maintained or improved attendances at our Essex events.

Thank you very much to those who have come out and supported our events and please continue to do so.

Thank you.

**Appendix B Hon Treasurer’s Report**

**Bank Balance at year end**

£9,411 - Barclays

£15,685 - Skipton

As you can see from the accounts we have a deficit of £322 (Surplus - £619 - 2016) – I have transferred £351 from the Development fund to cover the seminar expenses. The deficit has mainly been caused by the reduction in surplus from the Essex and Herts Green Point events in July and September last year - this year £750 was received compared to £1,100 last year. The competition expenses were substantially increased (£9,506 this year compared to £8.191 last year)

Unfortunately, Michael Vandome was unable to complete his examination of last year’s accounts due to ill health. I would like to thank Tony Philpott for stepping as a Temporary Independent Examiner and completing the examination of two years’ accounts. I would also like to thank Tony for his help in compiling the list of clubs and the amount of P2P collected.

**Competitions**

Overall the competitions during the year made a small deficit of £27 but we still funded hotel expenses for the Tollemache team.

**P2P**

Total for the year £2,668(£2,787- 2016). The EBU portion has increased from 36p to 37p from 1st April 2017. The amount of the Essex portion which remained the same last year, will be put on the agenda for discussion at October meeting this year

**Essex & Herts GP**

We are starting to get the entries in for this July’s event – Mike Minting has resigned as tournament secretary for Herts and his role for the Essex and Herts events has been taken by Alan Woof. We are examining ways of making the September event more profitable by maybe a change of venue.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **ESSEX CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION** | | | |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | **BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31/03/2017** | | | |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | **31/03/2017** | ***31/03/2016*** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | £ | *£* |
|  | ASSETS |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Stock of vouchers and stamps | | |  |  | 0 | *0* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | DEBTORS | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Entry fees due & Prepaid Halls | | |  |  | 0 | *341* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | CASH |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | On current account and in hand | | |  |  | 5816 | *5504* |
|  | On Business Bonus Account | | |  |  | 3515 | *3514* |
|  | Skipton Building Society 90 Day Account | | | |  | 15686 | *15519* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 25017 | *24878* |
|  | LESS CREDITORS | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Hire of halls, fees in advance and prizes | | | |  | 1622 | *1161* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 23395 | *23717* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | REPRESENTED BY | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | New Equipment Fund | | |  |  | 2500 | *2500* |
|  | Youth Development Fund (see Note 1) | | | |  | 802 | *802* |
|  | Development fund (See Note 1) | | |  |  | 0 | *351* |
|  | Tollemache Reserve Fund ( see Note 2) | | | |  | 1000 | *1000* |
|  | Capital account | |  |  |  | 19064 | *18199* |
|  | Excess of Income over Expenditure | | | |  | 29 | *865* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 23395 | *23717* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | HONORARY TREASURER: Linda J Fleet | | | |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | I have examined the books and records of the Essex Contract Bridge Association and, | | | | | | |
|  | in my opinion, these give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 31/03/2017 | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | ACTING HONORARY INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Anthony Philpott | | | | | |  |
|  | **Note 1**: The Youth Development Fund represents funds originally donated by the Thurrock | | | | | | |
|  | Club on their closure with the express wish that they be used to develop youth Bridge. The | | | | | | |
|  | Fund was subsequently topped up by the ECBA but has now been taken back to original | | | | | | |
|  | amount and the difference held in Development Fund to assist in developing players of any age. | | | | | | |
|  | During the year £669 was spent on seminars ( Expenses of £1,119 less £450 collected) | | | | | | |
|  | The remaining balance of £351 in the Development Fund was transferred to Income and Expenditure | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Note 2**: The Tollemache Reserve Fund is to cover the extra costs involved on the occasions | | | | | | |
|  | when Essex qualify for the final. | | |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Note 3**: It is the policy of the committee to write off expenditure on trophies, cards, boards | | | | | | |
|  | and stationery in the year of purchase. | | | |  |  |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Essex Contract Bridge Association Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2017** | | | | | | | | |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | 2017 | | |  |  | *2016* | | |  |  |
| **INCOME** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **P2P & Other EBU income** |  | **2,842.28** |  |  |  |  | *3,138.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Less Life Members |  | **-84.00** |  |  |  |  | *-112.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | *3,026.00* |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 2,758.28 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Competitions Fees** |  | **8,996.00** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Collected at County Matches** | | **360.00** |  |  |  |  | *8,885.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Sponsorship |  | **200.00** |  |  |  |  | *200.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Seminars |  | **450.00** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | 10,006.00 |  |  |  |  | *9,085.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Competition Expenses** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Accommodation & Catering |  | **5,365.00** |  |  |  |  | *4,114.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Boards & b/Mates |  | **675.00** |  |  |  |  | *470.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Directors& Expenses |  | **1,527.70** |  |  |  |  | *1,186.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Pay to Play |  | **480.16** |  |  |  |  | *295.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | EBU Competition Entries |  | **268.00** |  |  |  |  | *698.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Prizes |  | **1,162.00** |  |  |  |  | *1,428.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Paid to ECL for County matches | | **28.36** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | 9,506.22 |  |  |  |  | *8,191.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 499.78 |  |  |  |  | *894.00* |  |  |
|  | **League Fees** |  | 600.00 |  |  |  |  | *280.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Prizes |  | -160.00 |  |  |  |  | *-141.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Tollemache Contributions |  | 575.00 |  |  |  |  | *250.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 1,015.00 |  |  |  |  | *389.00* |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Sundry - Interest |  |  |  | **168.33** |  |  |  |  | *155.00* |  |  |
|  | Sundry - . |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Essex & Herts Joint GP Events | |  |  | **750.00** |  |  |  |  | *1,100.00* |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 5,191.39 |  |  |  |  | *5,564.00* |  |  |
| **EXPENSES** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | County Matches & Tollemache | | **3,180.30** |  |  |  |  | *3,125.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Printing & stationery |  | **2.72** |  |  |  |  | *85.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | AGM (Current) |  | **180.00** |  |  |  |  | *200.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | AGM (Previous) |  | **40.00** |  |  |  |  | *82.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Seminars |  | **1,119.00** |  |  |  |  | *246.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | TGR Expense |  | **40.00** |  |  |  |  | *100.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Telephone & postage |  | 0.00 |  |  |  |  | *47.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Trophies & Engraving |  | **300.00** |  |  |  |  | *180.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Website |  | **91.00** |  |  |  |  | *88.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Playing Cards |  | **225.05** |  |  |  |  | *0.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Score Cards - given to Clubs |  | 0.00 |  |  |  |  | *792.00* |  |  |  |  |
|  | Directors Course |  | **245.00** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Miscellaneous |  | **90.69** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 5,513.76 |  |  |  |  | *4,945.00* |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME** | | |  |  | -322.37 |  |  |  |  | *619.00* |  |  |
| **Plus transfer from Development Fund** | | |  |  | 351.00 |  |  |  |  | *246.00* |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | £ | 28.63 |  |  |  |  | *865.00* |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | The Sponsorship of £200 was kindly provided by Barbra Cornell in memory of her late husband Ray Cornell and presented to the club entering the Garden Cities Trophy | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Appendix C Hon Tournament Secretary’s Report**

I started the year as General Secretary, a role which in recent years has included a number of jobs related to tournaments. Much of the role that used to be done by the Tournament Secretary has, over the last couple of years, been absorbed into the roles of other members of the committee and so when the post of Tournament Secretary became vacant part way through the year we decided it made sense to move the Tournament related jobs from the General Secretary to the Tournament Secretary and leave the General Secretary, the role that Sue Thorburn was co-opted to fill, with the general admin functions. Hence I became Tournament Secretary but doing more or less the same jobs that I was doing before, minus the general admin work

During the year, I took on the task of learning about using EBUScore and Bridgemates for our County events while Alan Rodger, our newly qualified County TD, took on the role of directing the majority of our events. On the whole this has worked well, but I would like to thank players for their patience and understanding while we resolved any problems that did occur. I would also like to thank Paul and Alan with their assistance in helping me run trial events to test out the system.

My aim is to eventually make sure that we always have more than one person capable of setting up the computer for events. To this end I have been compiling a guide/simple manual with specific Essex events related information, to aid anyone doing this job in future.

I have also introduced computer scoring of our home County matches, mainly so that the creation of Butler data for individual partnerships can be automated and I have compiled a guide for that also, although recent changes to EBUScore software means some changes to this are now needed.

Over the last year we have made a couple of experimental changes to the calendar. One is today's trial of holding an event on the same day as the AGM. The intent was to boost attendance at the AGM. It looks like it has worked. We chose the mixed teams for this trial because it is a single session event, and because the venue we used for this event in recent years is no longer available on a Wednesday evening.

This year we also ran the Gwen Herga events on a Saturday afternoon because turnout for the events on a Friday evening had been dwindling for a number of years. This resulted in an entry of 5 an extra tables compared with last year.

We replaced the Pro/Am event with a really Easy Pairs with the aim of having an event for newcomers playing with their regular partner. Whilst this had 1 table fewer than the Pro/Am, none of the players were Pros so we had 8 more Ams (the players who the competition is designed to attract) than the previous year.

And finally, we also introduced a mentored switch teams. Although this wasn't well attended, it was a late addition to the program and perhaps didn't get sufficient publicity so we will run it again in September this year.

Numbers for events in general are up by an average of over 1.5 tables per event, so the results of our efforts to increase interest in our events seem to be having some effect. Hopefully we can build on this in the future.

I would like to remind everyone that entries for the knockout team’s competitions are due soon. We had an extra 2 teams in the Teams of 4 competition last year compared to the previous year. It would be nice to see more and it would also be nice to see more teams in the Switch cup.

There have been some good results achieved by some of our members at congresses run by the EBU and other counties. I won't go into detail here because these are reported on our website during the year, thanks to Theo, and in the EBU magazine thanks to Pat, so most of you will know about these results already, but congratulations to all those who did well.

**Appendix D Hon League Secretary’s Report**

All matches played in main leagues

West Division

Winners Waltham Foresters

Runners Up Loughton Collier decided on the final match

South East Divisions

Division 1

Winners Barleylands for the fourth year

Runners Up Academics

Relegated Chelmsford Green

Division 2

Winners Crowstone

Runners Up May and Baker

Relegated STC A

Division 3

Winners New Tricks

Runners Up Chelmsford Blue

League tables are available to view on the EBU website with a link from the ECBA website

Friendly Fours

South East

Winners = Trumpit Major and Four Hearts

West Division

Winners Loughts

Runners Up SHAD

The friendly fours appear to have been a success

The divisions have been closely contested

They each had four matches which appeared to work well

An adjusted score has been given where matches were not played but that only related to one team failing to fulfil fixtures

**Appendix E Apologies for absence**

Apologies:

Albert Kitchen

Audrey Hartley

Carol McCue

Chris Taylor

Chris/Margaret Rastin

Dennis Valtisiaris

George/Maureen Vede

Graham Allen

John Peacock

Keith Thompson

Linda Fleet

Margaret Curtis

Martin/Sandy Smith

Mary Homer

Peter Oake

Ray Clarke

Simon Moorman

Tony Philpott

Tony/Sue French