

GLoucester BRIDGE CLUB

Minutes of the Committee Meeting
held at 1100 on 25th March 2025 at Coffee House 43, Hucclecote, Gloucester.

1. Present

Jon Nicholls (Chair), Elizabeth Bourne, Jeff Chaplin, Stewart Harrison, Ken Morritt, Carol Neale, Alan Stanfield, John Stirrup, Carol Wheeler.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 28th January 2025 were approved.

3. Matters Arising from the Previous Committee Meeting

- a) Membership Update. Jon reported – 66 Members, EBU and Club list consistent.
- b) Additional Directors. Ken volunteered to prepare the email request to Members. He will send to Jon for circulation.
- c) Tuesday Player Development. Stewart handed out the (nearly complete) results of his Tuesday afternoon questionnaire on interest in teaching sessions (eg. slam tries, signals and discards), which showed considerable interest in such sessions. Following a discussion, the Committee agreed that:
 - A teaching session would be held on the first Tuesday of each month, starting 6th May. Stewart, Alan and Jon to run the sessions. Stewart to propose topics.
 - The overall session would be split into normal Bridge and teaching sessions.
 - Ken will book an additional room for the training sessions.
- d) Lifts to Thursday Sessions. Jon had emailed Members, no takers. It was worth trying.
- e) School Bridge. Alan reported that we are supporting Denmark Road and Sir Thomas Rich. May also provide taster sessions for St Mary's Primary, Churchdown.
- f) Scores Option on Bridgemates. Stewart has implemented.
- g) Risks.
 - Ken suggested slow play was a risk to the future of the Club. Discussed use of bell / timer, what Members appear to want, etc. It was agreed that no change to practice is necessary at present.
 - Alan identified loss of a key person was a risk. Treasurer – Carol N is now acting as deputy, and Ken's paper records, especially statements would be adequate; Carol W also offered to help. Director – we have some redundancy, and see also 3(b) above. Webmaster – Jeff agreed to act as backup – Jon to liaise with Jeff.

4. Treasurer's Report

Ken handed out the current situation. As usual, ~£3000 balance. Noted.

5. Captain's Report

John: Club Team entered into the Rank Xerox on Saturday 29th March.

6. Correspondence

None.

7. Premises

Ken suggested we could be short of chairs if we had more tables in play.

8. AGM on Afternoon of Tuesday 21st May

- a) It was agreed it should start at 1pm.
- b) Jon will circulate agenda, ask for nominations, etc.
- c) Competition Winners – Jon is liaising with Stewart. The only physical trophy to be awarded is the Most Improved Player, which will be a joint award to Mary and Lesley.

9. Response to Member's Complaints

- a) Jon stated that the Club Constitution requires Members to conform to EBU standards, which require the Director to be called as the first step in the event of bad behaviour. The Director has various remedies he can apply, hopefully preventing repetition, and can formally record any such behaviour at the time. However, calling the Director first is not stated explicitly in Club procedures.
- b) With respect to the recent complaints about bad behaviour at the table Ken, as Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee (Ken, Stewart, Phil R), has circulated a statement (copy attached to these Minutes). Any further bad behaviour should be treated as described in 9(a) above prior to any escalation to a written complaint.
- c) A general discussion was held on the Club response to bad behaviour. Carol N noted that most would only call the Director for bidding/play issues, not bad behaviour. Do we need to improve our procedures, make calling the Director more normal, etc? Alan and Stewart to consider and propose any changes / communications.

10. Any Other Business

- a) The sad news of the death of Stewart Jones was noted. Carol W asked whether the Club had sent a card to the family – we haven't. Carol W will do this on behalf of the Committee.
- b) Following on from 10(a) above, Carol W also questioned whether we should be more proactive in contacting Members who have not been seen for a while, to see if there is anything we can help with. The Committee agreed this is an excellent proposal. Carol W and Carol N volunteered to take on this role for the Committee.
- c) Alan pointed out that we don't have a First Aider. Jon will ask Members who are First Aiders to make themselves known. Do the Community Association have any responsibility in this area? Is there a First Aid kit on site? [Post Meeting Note: Stewart could not find a First Aid kit at Elmscroft.] Jon will ask for a volunteer to follow up.

11. Date and Time of Next Meetings

- The next meeting was confirmed for 11am on 13th May 2025 at Hucclecote Community Centre.
- The subsequent committee meeting (post AGM) is proposed for 10th June, venue to be arranged – Jon.

12. The meeting closed at 12:15

Statement Made under Agenda Item 9(b)

[NB: Name of subject of complaint redacted]

Disciplinary Committee Hearing:

6 March 2025, 17:45

Re: Complaints dated 10.01.25 and 27.01.25 about the behaviour of [] on two separate occasions on 09.01.25 and 23.01.25

[] made a clear, open, unequivocal admission of fault, expressions of contrition and undertakings to change his behaviour.

The Committee finds that: firstly , on 09.01.2025 during the play of board 4, you exclaimed: “for God’s sake “ (or something similar) at his partner for blocking his suit; secondly, on 23.01.25 after the play of board 11, he said to his partner: “ we would have got them down if you had done ...”, which he repeated .

Both of these incidents were perceived by at least one of the opponents on each occasion as sufficiently serious to cause a letter of complaint. The Committee finds that both incidents were in contravention of Law 74A in the EBU rules.

The normal procedure described in “Best Behaviour at Bridge” is to immediately call the Director. The Director under Law 91a, can then verbally warn; issue a disciplinary penalty. The Director has the power to remove the player. Then or on repeated occasions could the Director refer the matter to the Committee to use its powers. In neither case was the Director called.

The Committee decided to proceed as if the correct procedure had been followed, and the appropriate action (under the EBU rules) had been taken by the Director. The sanctions, available to the Committee under paragraph 6.4 of the Schedule of Disciplinary procedures, are all more severe than would have been likely to have occurred. The Committee decided in those circumstances it would be unfair to implement any of the sanctions available to it. Therefore no sanction is issued.

This Committee is notifying the Conduct Committee of this decision.

Ken Morritt,
Chairman Gloucester Bridge Club Disciplinary Committee