GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the GCBA committee meeting held on Tuesday 2nd December 2025 at Cheltenham Bridge Club.

In attendance were Patrick Shields (President), Jim Edwards, Alan Stanfield and Steve Bunker and via Zoom, Paul Denning and Michael Wright.

Apologies were received from Jan Bailey and Richard Butland.

Minutes of the last meeting on the 30th September were approved.

FINANCE

Michael Wright had already sent out the October and November Accounts, he stated that the last month had been a quiet month and the only arrears had remaining is the one Cleverly captain.

He also confirmed that the Accounts were done on an Accruals basis so headed Income and Expenditure. If they were done on a cash basis they would be Receipts and Payments.

Paul Denning asked if at the end of the Midlands Counties League season we only pay matches on-line do we make any money, Michael confirmed we would to the tune of around £100. This factors into the budget for any face-to-face matches. The year end for the MCL is in March.

It was confirmed that the GCBA wished to support any Café' Bridge event, and that the support could involve underwriting financial aspects of the venture. Candidate events are the proposed Café' Bridge event in Cirencester (lead Jim Edwards) and another in Stroud (lead Alison Pritchard). Jim Edwards agreed to contact Alison to make sure the events do not clash. The best contact from whom to obtain advice on how to run a Café' Bridge event is Victor Lesk of BriAn Bridge. Burford Bridge Club had also recently run a Café' Bridge event and it would be also worthwhile contacting them as well.

COUNTY PROGRAMME

There had been very little interest in the Bredon Vale cup by the end of October, Paul reported and the event had been cancelled. Patrick Shields noted that for many players there was a big difference between playing in their own club and in County and Tournament events and this barrier needs to break down.

Paul pointed out that the Rank-Xerox was timetabled for February, which is also an inter-club event teams of 4 competition. We agreed that the format should stay but efforts should be made to advertise it much earlier than in the past There is concern about whether the information on events gets passed down from Club Secretaries to club members.

Patrick confirmed that there were 14 tables for the Everett Cup on Saturday which is the County's Charity event.

YOUTH BRIDGE

Jan Bailey had already sent out her Youth report separately. The highlights were,

- Three from Gloucestershire attended the Youth Camp at the end of October.
- There is currently bridge running at the following Senior Schools – Denmark Road (two separate groups) and Sir Thomas Rich in Gloucester (games option and after school club) and Cleeve (nine students) and Pittville (four students) in Cheltenham. A full year-8 taster session is about to happen is about to happen at Pittville.
- There is currently bridge running at the following Junior Schools – St Mary's in Churchdown, Foxmoor in Stroud and St Gregory's in Cheltenham.
- It was confirmed that there is still an intention to have a sixth form venture at Balcarras and at Cleeve.

Alan Stanfield suggested that it seems that we are not getting anywhere with schools outside the large cities and towns. A possible cause of this is the fact that both Gloucester and Cheltenham have a good number of helpers available to go into schools.

GCBA – GROWING THE MEMBERSHIP

It was agreed that we need to get more Teachers active in Gloucestershire and that we should get EBED to pencil in a date for a new local Teachers Course. Feedback of the recent course in Swindon was that information was better given face-to-face than on-line and that current teachers should get involved with the courses.

Alan reported that Northleach Bridge Club were back up and running (they paused for a couple of months) after a change of their Committee and they were now getting 4 tables each week.

Patrick reported that there are EBED subsidies available for those setting up a University club.

It was noted that 10% of the County membership have not played in the last 12 months. One contributor to this is in fact that all clubs need to let the EBU know when a player has died rather than just revoke their membership from a club. Patrick has recently sent out the EBU County Chairs report on growing the membership.

A.O.B

- Alan reported that he had arranged practice sessions for learners on Realbridge, and there had been 10 to 11 playing being a mixture of Beginners and Rusty Returners.
- Because of the legal and other issues arising it was agreed to not encourage the holding of Gender specific events. Discussion took place about whether we need First Aiders at County events.
- Alan noted that Ian Sidgwick was running a Fast Track Beginners Course at Stow on the Wold at a weekend at the end of next January and also the third weekend in February.
- It was agreed that a Tournament Director's refresher Course organised for TDs in the County would be a good idea.

Date of Next Meeting. 7.30pm on Tuesday 3rd February 2026 at Cheltenham Bridge Club.

The meeting closed at 8.53pm