

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

## Minutes for the GCBA committee meeting held online on Monday 8th January 2024

In attendance were Ian Sidgwick (President), Andrew Bull (Secretary), Ben Ritacca (Treasurer), Alan Stanfield, Patrick Shields, Roger Williams and Richard Butland.  
Apologies were received from Paul Denning and Jan Bailey.

### Teaching

1. Alan reported that Beginners' courses have recently started, or are starting shortly, at Newent, Gloucester and Cheltenham, and Improvers' courses at South Cotswold and Cheltenham. There is also plenty of Gentle Bridge being played. There was nothing to report regarding Smart Bridge online learning.
2. As suggested at the last meeting, Alan has contacted the universities and colleges in Gloucestershire to ask if they would be interested in having bridge taught there.
3. The students at North Cotswolds are keen to get more training, and we are planning to arrange a one-day course for them, with the help of some of the Cheltenham teachers.
4. We have asked clubs to flag up any online teaching they have, and to get in touch if they don't but know of anyone who would be interested in it, or if they require help with training in any way.
5. The unaffiliated Forest of Dean club have asked for support - we will keep in touch with them.
6. Several years ago, Andrew Robson gave a seminar at Cheltenham BC. It was suggested that we should check informally if people would be interested in GCBA arranging another such seminar - possibly at another venue. Patrick will check if Cheltenham BC would be interested in organising such a seminar again.

### Finance

7. Ben reported that he had had an invoice from RealBridge regarding a couple of private matches. Our general policy is that we will only pay for matches in County and EBU competitions; however, it was noted the cost of RealBridge matches is very low, so it was felt that this was not currently a major concern for us.
8. He had also received an invoice for £152 for the leaflets that Tewkesbury BC had produced a few months ago. It was noted that they had been successful in getting new students, and that the teachers in this instance are volunteers.
9. We have received an instance of an enhanced DBS check - we think that "enhanced" is now fairly standard, but will check with Ro Kaye.
10. We had agreed to offer financial support for children who wished to attend the Wessex Youth bridge weekend in March, but it turns out that we have subsidised to a higher level than we were expecting (including the lunches). It was agreed that we need to control this process better in the future, and Ian will discuss this with Jan.

### Youth Bridge

11. It was agreed that progress has been made in the last few years, despite the problems of Covid-19, but that we needed to ensure that this is co-ordinated. Andrew took an action to ensure that Alison Nicholson is invited to the next committee meeting in her role as County Youth Officer.

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12. It was suggested that one way to get more people involved in Youth Bridge could be to work with other neighbouring counties.

### Recruitment

13. As noted in previous minutes, we are looking for volunteers to maintain the GCBA Facebook page, and to be the External Publicity Officer, but have found no-one willing so far. We have also failed to find anyone willing to take charge for GCBA in the EBU Festival of Bridge.
14. Caroline Hartley has volunteered to take on the role of Secretary after the next AGM. We are still looking for a volunteer to take over as President.
15. We have had an offer to make videos for clubs, but will need some more interesting photographs for this to be worthwhile.

### AOB

16. Ian had played at Winchcombe on Friday, and reported that the club is thriving, with a good set-up and ten-and-a-half tables playing.
17. Chipping Camden BC are interested in buying a dealing machine, but would prefer to get one second-hand. Ian will ask around to see if any are available. It was suggested that it would be helpful if the EBU had ways for clubs to pass on redundant kit (cards, tables etc.)