

Dear members.

I'm writing to you on my 30 hour ferry journey back to Portsmouth after a lovely break in France and Spain and raring to get back to bridge.

July is AGM month and after allegations that I could have taken it more seriously last year I have vowed to take it proper seriously this year and do everything by the book. We have at least 1 proposal sent in by a member and properly seconded to vote on so your attendance will be appreciated and worthwhile. Apologies that the day in the club book didn't match up with the date; to clarify the AGM will be on Wednesday the 16th of July and as we have much to get through, we will start at 7.15pm sharp! Otherwise, the bridge afterwards will over run into Newsnight!

At the Committee's meeting in May we set up a subcommittee to further review the Memorandum and articles of association and Articles of association (both dating from 1996) as well as the rules of HBC. This is being done partly because the rules at the moment need to be reviewed for HBC purposes as they stand and partly because 2 members have suggested that these documents may not be legally sound. This is a lengthy process and any recommended changes will be presented to the 2026 AGM for ratification by the members. With the growth of HBC over the 50 years or so from purchasing and paying off 1 building to where we are now with 2 fully paid off large buildings in the centre of Harrogate including income generating flats, the running of HBC still comes down to a committee of volunteers who are trying to do their best for the future of the bridge club. It's understandable the rules that govern the committee should be robust.

I recently attended the AGM of the YCBA, our county body (I was seduced by the free sandwiches) and 2 things struck me. Firstly the worry that there wouldn't be enough attendees for a quorum, sufficient people to represent a reasonable amount of the membership for voting. Secondly, the worry about money and the accounts. The YCBA has made a loss of around £11,000 this year but with good reason, last year a large contributor to the funds, the Easter congress had twice been played in 1 year and not at all in the 2024/25 accounting year. Other concerns are that only 2200 Yorkshire members of EBU affiliated clubs play regularly, whereas other games are getting more popular, despite 2200 people knowing bridge is the best game in the world. Bridge still seems to have an image problem.

I'm other news, there is a special "6 high" pairs event being held at Wetherby bridge on Saturday the 5th July. This is only for pairs with an NGS rank of 6 or below, so everybody should be roughly the same standard. More information is available on the HBC website. I found out from the YCBA AGM this is a trial so it may be your only opportunity to enter and is only being advertised to members at Wetherby, Harrogate, Ilkley, York and Leeds bridge clubs, also an interesting stat, 42% of YCBA members are graded 6 or below, a very popular category to be in.

Well done to Allan Stalker and Roger Litton who came 6th out of 188 pairs in the recent Yorkshire handicapped SIM pairs.

The YCBA in the capable hands of Jim Edwards will be running a club TD training course over the last 3 Saturdays in August for those if you who are interested in

running duplicate events. The course includes understanding the rules and movements used at events. Did I mention it's FREE and it's only at York BC. You may have done some of the course and be interested in completing your knowledge. More information is available on the HBC website.

Please be gentle with me when I return on Monday after weeks away and good luck to those entering the Yorkshire festival of bridge this weekend.

Rob