

Kent Contract Bridge Association
Committee Meeting 11th October 2025
Chairman's Report

I took over as Chairman from Norman Inniss at the AGM during the Phillimore Cup on 20th July. I would like to thank Norman for all he achieved as Chairman and the strong Committee and sound finances I have inherited. Primarily as a club player, I have observed the challenges faced by bridge in Kent: attracting more players, increasing the take up of the game amongst younger people, and so on. These are well known and are reflected across the whole country. Moreover, Kent has the additional challenge of its geography.

KCBA Committee members continue to work hard to address these challenges. My aim, as Chairman, is to support these efforts as much as possible whilst also representing the county at regional and national level. I have met my counterpart in Sussex, Peter Clinch, to maintain the good relationship between the two counties, continue the joint congress and see if there are other areas for cooperation in the future. I shall be attending the EBU AGM in York next month to meet as many national and county officials as I can.

My first challenge on taking office was that of youth bridge. Anton Mauve had decided to resign as Youth Officer for the county. Anton has been a passionate and committed supporter of youth bridge in Kent and I would like to convey the thanks of all the Committee to Anton for the great work that he has done. Over the summer I have sought to find a replacement for Anton. At the time of writing a candidate has been identified who, with Anton's assistance, has been putting a plan for a new phase of promoting bridge in schools. I look forward to further developments in this area soon. I have also discussed the wider issue of promoting youth bridge at a regional level with Douglas Wright of Surrey who is driving initiatives such as the latest youth camp taking place outside Dorking at the end of October. We have been publicising this event on our website but it would be very difficult for Kent to provide more material support, e.g. volunteers, without a youth officer to coordinate these efforts. These are important initiatives both at a regional and national level which I hope we will be able to support in the future.

My other current aim is to observe and understand how bridge is played in clubs across the county, how this determines the relationship between clubs and county, what support the clubs would like to see from the county and hence what the county could provide that they do not receive already. I am looking to play in as many clubs as I can, meet fellow Kent bridge players and see what needs to be done. Thanks to Charles Scott, I have started the process in Beckenham and would welcome opportunities to play elsewhere.

From an administrative perspective Georgina Howe, the Treasurer, and I have been discussing KCBA's banking arrangements. The results are covered separately under agenda item 9. Unfortunately, after the Phillimore Cup several items of our caterer's crockery went missing. I have agreed with Peter Bibb, Chairman of Tunbridge Wells Bridge Club, to share the cost of replacing these. The amount involved is small.

With regard to the Kent competitions over the summer months, I would like to offer my congratulations to William Bourne and Richard Penticost, the winners of the Phillimore Cup. The 9 High F2F Pairs and NGS9 & Below Online Pairs continue to run very successfully. My thanks to Paul Gibbons and Sharon Baynes for their continuing support of these events. My thanks also to Stephen Brown and John Oakland for directing the Kent/EBU Online Improvers Pairs during the Eastbourne Summer Meeting. This attracted nearly 40 tables. The Summer Meeting also provided some notable successes for Kent pairs: Ravi Athwal and Croz Crosswell 5th in the Open pairs and Jeremy Willans and Jill Skinner and Sharon Baynes and Paul Gibbons 4th and 5th respectively in the Mixed Pairs. My congratulations to them all.

Jon Wittmann

5th October 2025