

**Kent Contract Bridge Association  
Junior Bridge Programme – KCBA Committee Briefing Paper  
Meeting with EBED 24 February 2026**

**Date:** 16 March 2026

**Attendee:** Rob Marshall – Junior Programme Lead, English Bridge Education & Development (EBED)

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## **1. Purpose of this Paper**

This paper provides a summary of discussions we held with EBED regarding junior bridge development and outlines a potential role for Kent in supporting the delivery of junior bridge programmes across the county. It also presents options for the committee to consider regarding how we should proceed with Kent's involvement.

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## **2. Background**

The **English Bridge Union (EBU)** is focused on developing and delivering value-added programmes and competitions for its members. **EBED (English Bridge Education & Development)** operates as the training and development arm responsible for education initiatives.

EBED has a strong track record in designing and delivering bridge teaching programmes and has developed junior bridge camps aimed at nurturing the next generation of England junior bridge players.

EBED has started working to establish a more structured and programmatic approach to junior bridge development, similar to its adult teaching programmes. In this context junior bridge refers primarily to bridge for secondary school and college age young people.

As part of this initiative, two individuals have been recruited to lead the development of junior bridge activities and related operational functions, both working 3 days per week.

- **Rob Marshall** – School Programme, Website Development, and Data Management
  - **Mui Wong** – Digital and University Programme
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## **3. Summary of Meeting with Rob Marshall**

Jonathan Wittmann and Ravi Athwal met Rob Marshall on 24<sup>th</sup> February to build a better understanding of Rob's role and his plans for developing junior bridge.

Rob Marshall has been in post for approximately eight months. He is personally involved in the England junior bridge community and currently runs a bridge school club in London. His son is also part of the England Junior Team setup.

### **Key Responsibilities**

Rob's responsibilities include:

- Development of the EBED website
- Validation and cleansing of EBED data

- Maintaining and developing existing Junior Bridge Camps
- Building a structured, programmatic approach to junior bridge initiatives
- Developing future junior programmes and training pathways for the next generation of players.

EBED has defined success in this role as:

- **500 schools across the country actively running at least one bridge table within seven years**
  - **Establishment of systematic processes and procedures for all junior programmes**
  - **Integration of junior teaching into the adult bridge teacher training programme.**
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#### **4. Current State of EBED Junior Programme Development**

EBED does not yet have a fully structured junior programme in place, although this is under development. However, the following resources are currently available or envisaged in the near future:

- A **YouTube training video** demonstrating how to deliver **Mini bridge for beginners**
  - Access to **promotional materials, playing cards, and equipment** required to run a Bridge School Club
  - A **template proposal** to help clubs introduce bridge to schools
  - Access to **online bridge applications** for personal development
  - A **development pathway**, including:
    - Junior drop-in clinics
    - Junior bridge camps
    - A junior competition calendar for players progressing to higher levels
    - Support for the bridge component of the Duke of Edinburgh Award.
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#### **5. Summary**

Based on our discussions with EBED, there is some support available to assist in establishing junior bridge clubs and providing a pathway for young players to progress into long-term bridge participation.

However, implementing a structured junior programme within Kent would require significant local effort to establish:

- A clear operational framework
- Consistent messaging
- Volunteer training
- Safeguarding procedures
- Programme management and governance

In its current state, EBED provides resources and guidance but is some distance from delivering the fully operational junior programme framework that we would wish.

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## 6. Options for the Committee

In order to take this work forward, the Committee is requested to consider the following options for developing junior (youth) bridge in Kent.

### **Option 1 – Maintain the Current Approach**

There would be no co-ordinated county-level programme. Clubs would continue to react to requests for support or introduce their own local, ad hoc initiatives. The county would consider providing additional resources (financial assistance, equipment, etc) if requested.

### **Option 2 – Await EBED Programme Development**

We would wait until EBED formally launches a structured national junior programme before deciding if and how we would implement the programme in Kent. With the resources currently available in EBED, we do not expect this to be available for some time.

### **Option 3 – Establish a Kent Junior Programme**

We would appoint or assign a **Kent Programme Management role (PMO)** to work with EBED and Kent clubs to design and implement a structured junior bridge programme which in due course we would seek to implement across the county. We have set out in the Appendix what a Kent programme might look like. Its development and implementation would be a substantial piece of work.

### **Option 4 – A Hybrid Approach of Options 2 and 3**

Kent would still support EBED's work, for example, by reviewing materials as they are developed and by piloting elements of the approach at a later stage. We would not necessarily need to wait until EBED's work is fully complete; our own programme could begin once a sufficient structure and set of materials are in place, and once we have secured the resources needed to support the initiative.

This hybrid approach, combining elements of options 2 and 3, is the course of action we believe is the most practical and would recommend if the Committee decides to proceed with a junior bridge programme.

Jonathan Wittmann  
Chairman KCBA

Ravi Athwal

## Appendix

### A Possible Vision for a Kent Junior Bridge Programme

Kent's objective would be to act as the **liaison between EBED and Kent bridge clubs** regarding junior bridge initiatives within the region and to provide support where appropriate as set out below

The proposed role for Kent would include:

- Understanding and validating the junior programme template available through EBED, including safeguarding requirements
- Adapting the EBED template for use in Kent, where necessary
- Presenting EBED junior programmes to Kent clubs for consideration and potential rollout
- Organising the recruitment and training of club volunteers interested in delivering **Bridge School Clubs**
- Supporting local clubs in approaching schools and launching bridge activities
- Assisting clubs with safeguarding processes and procedures
- Providing financial support (with EBED) for expenditure related to programme delivery
- Providing feedback to EBED to support ongoing programme development and improvement
- Developing a framework to achieve long-term sustainability of junior bridge in Kent.