

## **Chairman's Report: March 2026 AGM**

This report provides a review of 2025 MHBC activities

2025 has been another busy year, with various venue changes after the temporary closure of New Horizons Hall, and things have not always quite gone to plan. However, we are back now and more settled.

Many members have shown incredible dedication to our club in so many ways. This includes everything from opening up and setting up the room, dealing cards, operating the technology, directing, organising delivering and supporting our training and supervised play, marketing and charity activities. I do not have time to mention everyone; indeed, some don't want to be named individually, but we owe each of them a huge thank you.

Our membership continues to grow, as does the average number of tables per session. As Bridge clubs go, we are in very good health!

### **Beginners, Lessons**

On the training front, we are now running the fourth year and have a pipeline of potential players for a fifth already.

As a spin-off from the classes, Roger set up a "Supervised Play/Improvers" group. This grew quickly under his stewardship; and Graham Logan has added to it with topics-based presentations and practice sessions. Thank you everyone involved in both; we will continue to support and hopefully expand this aspect of the club which we see as key to our future growth

### **Inter-Club Match**

This was a new venture for us. Graham Gibbens organised a match against Oakham at their premises. It was well attended; we sent 8 pairs. The result did go against us, but it was enjoyed by the team, and we plan to repeat this in 2026.

### **Bridge Drive**

We ran another charity Bridge Drive, this year in aid of MacMillan hospice nurses, raising almost £600 for them. Cath Marlow organised, aided and abetted by John Sullivan. On the day, the local Macmillan fundraising committee helped with the teas. Many of our learners/improvers attended and enjoyed the event.

## **Moving on to 2026.**

We are planning a summer social event for members and partners. This will take place at Peter Oppenheimer's where there is plenty of space for such an event. It will involve food and music, and we hope it will be a great success. Publicity for the event will start in the next few weeks, so look out for emails, posts on our web site and other promotional material coming your way.

We are also adding a "Thursday Trophy" competition. This will be similar to the Jean Pringle Trophy with counting sessions being the first Thursday each month from April to February. More details will be on the web site shortly.

Finally, on premises. I reported last year that one of our longer-term goals since we gained charitable status, was to eventually expand into dedicated premises. Our current rate of expansion has brought this into focus rather sooner than we anticipated. We have identified an ideal opportunity at a leased premises in Fountain Court, just off the High Street. We are currently in discussions with the owner to establish whether this really would work for us, financially. It may prove to be impossible, but so far things are looking very positive. It is a ground floor premises, with adjacent public parking, good lighting, and is large enough to accommodate 12 tables. We will be publishing more details about this soon and will present our findings to members before any final decision is made. If you would like to visit the premises Philip has access and has agreed to show people around. Keep your eye on our web site for more details about this in the near future.

Thank you again for your continued support during 2025 and into 2026.