

Milverton Bridge Club

Newsletter No 1

Yes, the rumours you may have heard are true, ***we're finally making it official and forming a real Club.*** But fear not, like Mazda when it upgrades its MX-5, I am determined not to compromise on the character and philosophy of the original Bridge Group which has proved so successful in the past.

Then Why Change?

Approximately six years ago, the membership had dropped so low that it was forced to temporarily close. However since then, by building on our 'Bridge for the Absolute Beginners' course, membership has steadily increased and we now have just over 50 people on our books.

What worked then has had to change, to cope with the 'behind the scenes' work required in managing a larger club and administering Duplicate Bridge.

What is Bridgemate

It is a wireless scoring system used in many bridge clubs to instantly enter, calculate and display game results.

Advantages for players include

- Handsets record results
- Instant Feedback
- Prevents Mistakes
- Helpful Prompts (guiding players through table movements, board numbers and pair orientations)

Advantages to Organisers and Directors

- Rapid and Accurate Scoring
- Less Paperwork
- Easier Management
- Quick Web Publishing

How much will Bridgemate Cost?

Oake Bridge Club have recently purchased Bridgemate III and offered us their existing Bridgemate II system, which comprises in excess of 12 table handsets, the server and a Bridgemate carry case, all for £360. If purchased new, the package listed above retails at over £2,000.

Several of our members, including myself, also play at Oake and can vouch for the quality and reliability of this equipment. It therefore made good business sense to take advantage of this offer.

Prior to purchase I approached the Milverton Trust for a grant to cover this purchase, which would otherwise leave us short to carry out other maintenance issues planned like the refurbishment and/or replacement of tables etc. The grant application was successful so the acquisition of this equipment has not impacted on our finances.

I hope to take receipt of this equipment at the end of this month and will present them to the Club next month.

So how will the change to a Club affect me?

The simple answer is very little, as it is predominately being introduced to ease and regularise the management side of the Club.

Initially, and until the first AGM, the Club will be managed by myself (Chair), Chris Mann (Secretary) and Gary White (Treasurer).

- The transition from Bridge Group to Bridge Club will take effect from 1st October 2026.
- To comply with the Data Protection Regulations the Club needs to have your permission to store and collect your personal data to administer your membership. Hence you will be asked to complete and sign a Membership Application Form.
- From 1st October the following Subscriptions and Fees will apply:
 1. Joining Fee £5
 2. Membership Subscription £5 (Renewable 1st Jan 2028)
 3. Table Money (Member) £3
 4. Table Money (Non-Member) £4

So, technically you will all become non-members on 1st October and have to pay £4 table money until you become a member. However, this is not the intention. So the £3 table money will continue until 14th October, whereupon if you sign up and pay your Joining Fee on or before 14th October this will also count as your annual Membership Subscription for 2027.

Financial Accounts

A copy of our financial accounts for year ending 2025 and our financial position for this year up to 31st August are attached for your information and records.

Any Other Business

It has been rumoured that the Club will be applying to join the English Bridge Union. The Club affiliation Fee would be £32 plus 48p per player for each duplicate bridge session played. Which, assuming 6 tables each week for 48 weeks, would add £585 to our Expenditure, for which I can see little or no benefit.

This is therefore not going to happen, at least for the foreseeable future.

Geoff Elson