

## CHAIRPERSONS ADDRESS 2023

As Chairperson of the Northern Ireland Bridge Union, I would like to welcome you all as representatives of our clubs to our Annual General Meeting. It is important for us all that the clubs are fully involved with the committee through your attendance at this meeting and the representatives your clubs have nominated for the committee.

I would like to thank the outgoing committee particularly the office bearers and subcommittee members for the work and time that they have invested on our behalf for the smooth running of our union as you will hear in their detailed reports.

As chairperson for the past year, I have had the privilege to visit with many of you in your local clubs [listed below] where I have been warmly received and had an opportunity to hear about some of the issues which concern you the members of this union.

A common problem for us all is the recruitment of new members and coaxing members who are content to stay at home and play online to return to our fragile club environment. Helen Hall has recently completed a tutor's course in Dublin and has returned to us with a set of manuals and we hope to develop in the coming months some advice and guidance for tutoring new members for our clubs.

Many people are concerned with the rise of cheating in our online games, and it is a serious issue which we are grappling with. A number of people have been sanctioned by our Ethics Committee and we are working with our Tournament Directors to identify and report suspicious behaviour. TD's and officials will be carrying out random monitoring throughout the year. Any member having suspicions of cheating should refer it to the TD and not participate in gossip or contribute to rumours as false allegations can have catastrophic effects on personal relationships and reputations. Where appropriate the Ethics Committee will gather any evidence and make recommendations for any action.

The union has a couple of requests for your help firstly we require some TD's to assist the running of our online events. The more TD's we have the smaller the burden on each and our incoming Competitions Chair would greatly appreciate any volunteers.

We would also appreciate some assistance in tutoring in our schools and the union can provide some advice and lesson plans for anybody that has an interest.

Can I also ask that you all encourage as many of your members as possible to enter the various NIBU competitions that come up throughout the year. Most of our competitions have had to be cancelled due to a lack of interest and we understand that attending face to face competitions can be expensive with accommodation and travel costs. Many of our competitions this year will be played online on Real Bridge and should be much easier for members to participate in.

Finally, I have five clubs to visit this incoming year and if I have left anyone out, please let me know.

Thankyou.

Brian Mullan  
Chairperson

## **Clubs Visited**

Newry Bridge Club  
City of Derry  
Limavady  
Lisburn City Bridge Club  
Derryvolgie  
Bangor CBC

Warrenpoint Golf Club  
St Josephs  
St Michael's Enniskillen  
Strabane Bridge Club  
Windsor Tennis Club  
Killyleagh Bridge Club  
Kelvin Malone  
Carrickfergus

Clubs I will visit this incoming year include: -

Banbridge  
Devenish Bridge Club  
Teconnaught Bridge Club  
Bann Bridge Club  
Armagh Bridge Club

If you are aware of any active club that I have missed, please let me know.