

The Nottingham Bridge Club

MINUTES OF TRUSTEE MEETING

Saturday 7th March 2026 2pm

Present: Phil Gross (Chair), Paul Goodwin (Treasurer), Marc Gaudart, Sue Hollins, Jonathan Jacobs, Margaret Litchfield (minutes), Gerry McCormack, Stefka Samus, David Treharne

Apologies: Dave Crowch, Amanda Knight, Jean McKee, Andrew Scott

1. Minutes of Meeting 10th January 2026

The minutes were approved. Process agreed that draft minutes would be circulated to Trustees, approved by the Chairman, and posted within 2 weeks on the website as 'draft' until their formal approval at the next Trustee meeting.

2. Matters arising

- a) County Liaison. This item had been listed on a secondary agenda but the trustee who had listed it was not present. Agreed there was nothing to be discussed.
- b) Blue Point Events. No dates yet proposed – suggested dates would be notified to the County Association to check they could be included in the calendar.
- c) Catering Events Diary. Confirmed that the catering group were aware of relevant dates, including the AGM this month, for which numbers of likely attenders was needed.
- d) NGS. It was thought that the County Association might sponsor a request to the EBU to amend the current grading system. Carry forward to a future meeting.
- e) Dishwasher. Thanked Jean for attempting to find someone to service the dishwasher. The problem now seemed to have been resolved by adding salt and running a cleaning cycle. Noted that a full wash cycle was needed, as the quick wash was not working efficiently.
- f) Window cleaning. A window cleaner had been found and would be coming tomorrow.
- g) Gritting for icy surfaces. Phil had bought grit, a bucket and a shovel which were positioned outside the door. Had not yet been needed.

3. Chairman's Report

Phil congratulated the 5 members who had recently passed the Directors Course run at the club by David Dunford. The new directors were: Amanda Knight, Elaine Khan, Paul Goodwin, Paula Foulds and Maciej Lehman, and they had already started shadowing drives.

Thanks were recorded to Dan Zimsek, who had found a roofer and supervised the work on the roof over the bar. The Premises group (Dan, Paul W, Andrew) was working well. It was hoped that after recent roof repairs, redecoration or the bar could start.

Phil reported he had had a rewarding and interesting first year as Chairman, with some discipline issues to deal with.

The AGM was in 2 weeks, and the report for the Charity Commission was nearly complete.

4. Treasurer's Report

Paul reported that the Annual Accounts for 2025 had been completed and accepted by the Independent Examiner, just needed a signature. He thought there should be no disputes when they were presented to the AGM. Receipts had exceeded payments. A question was asked about the recording of payments in 2025 against headers where zero amounts were shown for 2024. Paul explained that in recent years the 'Sundry' header had been used to include expenditure on beverages and events and some fixtures and fittings; for 2025 a more detailed breakdown was provided.

For 2026, we have started the year with around £60k in the bank so a very healthy financial position. However, we anticipate high expenditure this year. In most years the club makes a significant profit on the flats but in 2026 there will be major outgoings: the renewal of the landlord's licence with the council (payable every 5 years) and upgrading the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating to level C. EPC improvement works had already started with replacement windows in one of the flats, others to follow, and quotes are awaited for insulation and heating.

The bar is expected to make only a small profit (around £500 for the year). Most of our income from next year will be from table fees (face to face around £9000, BBO around £2500).

Car park charges will continue £897 per quarter as had been the case for many years. Gerry said that the Council had mentioned possible rises but nothing had been proposed yet. If they do ask for an increase, we will expect them to resurface the car park. Gerry will continue to liaise with the council and had advised them that we have no liability for the upkeep and safety of the car park. It was confirmed that the car park gate was being locked after dark during evening drives.

5. Flats

As mentioned in the Treasurer's report, net income from the flats will be much less this year. New legislation would give tenants more rights and put more responsibilities and restrictions on landlords including rent rises restricted to once per year. Sue had received information from the agents about suggested rent increases. After discussion it was agreed to respond to the agents proposing £25 per flat per month increase in 2026. Our understanding is that the rents

would be still be significantly below the market rate for similar properties in similar areas. It was agreed to advise the agents that when they communicate the rent increases to tenants it should be made clear that the rises are below the recommended rates.

6. Membership

Currently 282 members, and will increase when students in beginners classes join the club in a few months' time.

7. Changes to Constitution

Jonathan had circulated a document explaining the changes proposed to paragraphs 9(1)(a)(v) and 9(5)(c) which clarified the position on student membership. Agreed to take to the AGM.

A document outlining the TD Appeals procedure was received and agreed. This would be sent to David Dunford for final review. The procedure does not need to be agreed by the AGM. Jonathan was thanked for his work on these documents.

8. Player Development

Two constructive meetings had been held, in November and February, and much progress made. All trustees had seen the notes.

Particular attention drawn to:

- Beginners classes (run by Phil) will commence in September
- Improver classes (run by Dave N) will be completed for this year with the same content, and a new format introduced in September with more emphasis on play
- 5 card majors introduction will be run by Andrew on 31st May
- 5 card majors programme will be run by Clare and Ewa over the summer
- Wednesday players continue to be encouraged to attend Tuesday and Thursday drives
- People enquiring about learning bridge are being invited to Monday and Wednesday sessions for a chat
- Andrew may be providing some Mini Bridge over the summer and has offered to advise other members on running Mini Bridge sessions

A longer discussion was held about the proposed Saturday sessions, which Elaine Khan was leading on. She had sent some notes to Paul, and he would share them with others. An informal meeting was planned in town next Thursday between Elaine and Paul, and Gerry offered to come too.

9. Representing the club

It was agreed that players grouping themselves into a team of four could represent Nottingham Bridge Club in the NICKO (National Inter-Club Knockout Competition) and the club will pay the entry money (£96 per team) to the EBU. It was agreed there was no need to have a Club Captain to coordinate teams and it was not necessary for the Trustees to decide on the composition of teams.

This year, one of the three teams entering the NICKO had reached the third round (which meant their match might not be local). Before the away match at Peterborough on 11th February, the team had enquired whether travelling expenses would be paid. The response from the Chairman and Treasurer was that some reimbursement might be made. On the day after the match, travel claims were emailed, and the treasurer replied that as there was no policy it would be discussed by the trustees at their March meeting. Subsequently ex-gratia payments were made to two members who had travelled by car to the match, totalling just over £100.

It was agreed that members entering competitions and travelling to play matches would not be reimbursed travel or other expenses. Therefore there is no need to agree a policy and scale of payments.

10. Suggestions Book

The vents in the bar made it too cold to be comfortable

- Temperature (and complaints) will be monitored

Players on Wednesday evenings are instructed not use certain conventions, which can be frustrating for players who had attended Improver classes

- As previously discussed, Dave N is intending to revise the content of classes. Meanwhile the Wednesday Team could be more explicit on allowed and disallowed conventions, expanding on the Beginners crib sheet to add more commonly used and readily understood conventions.

11. AGM Awards

Trustees discussed and made suggestions for the Harry Lodge and Lucy Shillito awards

12. Other Business

It was explained that along with the official agenda, the Chairman had sent out a second (complementary/ alternative) agenda drawn up by one of the trustees. Unfortunately the trustee was not present so it was unclear what the meaning was of some of the items listed.

a) Coasters/ Beer Mats

Paul and Margaret reported that the current stock of mats was running low and would have to be replaced soon. Paul had tentatively floated the idea of

running a competition for a member to design new ones and win a prize, but there was no support for this. So it was back to the Trustees! Before paying a company to produce them, it was agreed that all trustees would explore whether we could get some for free (e.g. from a friendly pub)

b) Computer

The 'alternative agenda' had an item called 'Computer' with a number of points listed, which appeared to suggest there was one or maybe more problems. Paul thought that part of this related to the dealing machine and asked whether any trustees were aware of problems. The only issue known was a single instance recently where the software had stopped working and had to be reset, but nothing else. It was agreed to enquire with dealers if there were problems.

c) Zero Tolerance Policy

The 'alternative agenda' had an item called 'Zero Tolerance Policy'. Paul thought this might be something to do with the EBU's "Best Behaviour at Bridge" statement, but couldn't see why it was on the agenda. Paul would find the NBC summary of this and place on the notice board and on the website (it had been on the noticeboard and website in the recent past), and Phil will include a reminder in a future newsletter. It was suggested that Chairman's newsletters were saved and visible on the website.

d) Point of Order

A final item on the 'alternative agenda' was called 'Point of Order' and was even more cryptic than the previous items – it wasn't in fact a point of order. Again, Paul thought he had an interpretation of this and explained some background: he had sent out minutes from the last Player Development meeting and a response had been made from one of the attendees querying the accuracy of the minutes and making what Paul thought was a rude remark about two other attendees. This was done as an open reply to everyone including the people he was being rude about. Paul decided to reply privately correcting the member's incorrect recollection of what had been agreed at the meeting and giving the member an opportunity to apologise in writing or in person to the two people. Far from apologising, the member suggested people were being thin-skinned and stated that retraction is needless.

The trustees present acknowledged that they had seen the email from the member, and agreed it was unmistakably rude and that an apology should be expected.

13. Date of next meeting

Sunday 12th April 2026 2pm