

OXFORDSHIRE BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Information for new Management Committee members

Last updated: October 2016

Chairman's welcome message

I would like to welcome you as a new member of the OBA Management Committee, whether as an officer or a team leader or as a club representative. Whilst the former two categories have executive roles to play through one of our six management teams, all can contribute both to policy-making within the main committee itself and to communication both to and from the members of the clubs you belong to or represent. I believe the objectives we have set ourselves for the development of bridge in the county are really worthwhile - I hope you will find a way to make a significant contribution to achieving them. Good luck!

The notes below should help you to understand where we think we should be going and a bit about how we get there. There is also a lot of useful information to be found within the Administration section of our County website www.oxfordshirebridge.co.uk. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch either with me or the Secretary. Otherwise, I look forward to seeing you at our next Management Committee meeting, if not before.

Robert Procter, *October 2016*

The EBU, the County Association, affiliated clubs and individual members

The relationships between the English Bridge Union (EBU), its constituent County Associations, affiliated clubs and individual EBU members are complicated, and not always easy to follow! In summary:

The EBU and the County Association: Within the EBU, the Oxfordshire Bridge Association (OBA) is one of 39 County Associations. Although the County Associations have no financial investment in the EBU, and pay no direct levy to it, they are each entitled to nominate EBU "shareholders" based on the number of individual EBU members within each County: this means that OBA presently has three shareholders. All the shareholders meet twice a year to elect the EBU Board of Directors (who are all volunteers), and to assist in determining policy in the government of the game and general EBU matters, including the running of its finances. Note that, like the County Associations, the EBU is a non-profit making organisation.

The County Associations are also all run by volunteers and although they all have similar overriding objectives, the way in which they are organised and managed varies from county to county.

Affiliated clubs and the County Association: Unlike the Counties, clubs have no direct say in the running of the EBU, but all clubs affiliated to the EBU must also be affiliated to a County Association. This will normally be the one in which they are geographically located, or in rare cases a neighbouring one.

OBA currently has 21 affiliated clubs. Under our constitution, each of these is entitled to elect delegates to the OBA Management Committee, based on the number of individual members within the club. The officers of the OBA are elected by the membership each year at the AGM, but there is no OBA Board as such: instead, the Management Committee as a whole is responsible for

determining policy, within the limits set out by our Constitution. Formal votes are rarely required but, if necessary, all officers, team leaders and elected delegates have one vote per person, provided they are actually present at the meeting where the vote is taken.

Individual EBU members and the County Association: OBA currently has about 1600 registered members. As you probably know, all individual players who are members of an affiliated club are now automatically members of the EBU, and contribute to its finances (and to those of the County, see below) through the “Pay to Play” system. Like clubs, all individual members must also be affiliated to a County Association. However, being a member of an OBA-affiliated club does not automatically mean that an individual is considered by the EBU to be a member of our County, since individuals may choose (for whatever reason) to be affiliated to a different County from the one in which they currently live, and/or the one in which they play most of their bridge. More information on this may be obtained from the Membership Secretary, who can check the membership status of any individual player on request.

Individual members of OBA are invited to attend, and vote at, the County AGM each year. They are also welcome to attend any Management Committee meeting as an observer, and may speak if invited, but may not take part in any formal vote.

Main purposes of the OBA

The County’s Constitution lists the overall objectives for the Association. The first and most important of these is “To promote and assist in the development of duplicate contract bridge in the county of Oxfordshire”. We recognise that this is a joint responsibility of county and affiliated clubs, and needs to cater for the whole county geographically and for players of all ability and experience. Contributions and ideas from club delegates to the Management Committee are particularly welcome in this respect.

The other stated purposes of the Association are:

- To establish and organise competition duplicate bridge in Oxfordshire and to encourage participation in both local and national competitions;
- To license or organise congresses and other competitions within the jurisdiction of the OBA;
- To select county teams to compete in national and inter-county competitions.

Competitions within the County are governed by the [Competition Bylaws](#), which may be found on the County website within the Play Duplicate Bridge section.

The county teams are chosen by a Selection Committee made up of members nominated by affiliated clubs.

The full version of the [Constitution](#) may be found on the County website within the Administration section.

Sources of funding and use of funds

Affiliated clubs pay a small annual subscription to the EBU, but there is no subscription charge for their affiliation to OBA. Individuals pay no annual membership subscription to the EBU and most (with the exception of “dual members” whose primary allegiance is to other counties) pay no subscription to OBA. However, each time a member plays in a club session at an affiliated club, the club must pay the EBU a “pay to play” charge and this includes a small amount which is passed on their county: the EBU figure is currently 36p per play and the OBA County figure (unchanged since the introduction of P2P in 2010) is an additional 6p.

Here's a rough summary of our projected annual finances:

Principle Income in £:

Congress	12,500
Competitions	5,000
P2P income	3,000
Youth	0
Other	500
Total	21,000

Principle Expenditure in £:

Congress	10,000
Competitions	5,000
P2P	0
Youth	1,500
Development fund	3,000
Other	1,000
Total	20,500

Net Profit/loss 500

We have reserves of about £38,000.

More detail and historical information can be found in the [Treasurer's report and accounts](#) which are included with the reports submitted to the AGM each year, and are published on the County website.

Structure and organisation of OBA Management Committee

President: The current President of the OBA is Dr Evan Harris. He is not a member of the Management Committee, but chairs the AGM and presents prizes each year.

Officers: The OBA Management Committee currently has the following officer posts, the holders of which are automatically committee members:
Chairman; Secretary; Treasurer; Chief Tournament Director – organising, Chief Tournament Director - consulting; Tournament Secretary; Membership Secretary; Publicity Officer; Website Officer; Education Officer; Youth Officer; Wessex League Secretary; President's and Chester Cup Secretary; Shareholders (3); Match Secretary.

In addition, the following roles are carried out by individual volunteers who are not automatically members of the committee:

Auditor; County Congress organiser; County Pairs organiser; County Night Co-ordinator; Chair of Selection Committee; Newsletter Editor; English Bridge correspondent; Honours Boards and Trophies organiser.

Management teams: In co-ordination with the officer-level structure described above, the Management Committee has set up teams responsible for carrying out the plan for the development of duplicate bridge in Oxfordshire. These teams and their individual overall aims, approved by the Management Committee, are as follows (please use Ctrl+ click on the highlighted headings to view more detailed objectives and who to contact if you would like to offer comment or become part of a team):

Education Promotion and Youth: To ensure the provision throughout Oxfordshire of bridge education appropriate to all levels from beginner to county standard

To encourage and support individuals and groups to play bridge and minibridge and to help those wishing to progress to duplicate bridge

To encourage and support individuals and groups of all ages to play bridge and minibridge and to help those wishing to progress to duplicate bridge, including assisting any groups who wish to form new affiliated duplicate bridge clubs

Selection and County Team Management: To improve the performance of all the county teams while ensuring that county-level bridge is fully integrated with other bridge activity in the county

Competitions and County Nights: To ensure that county level competitions meet the needs of Oxfordshire's duplicate bridge players throughout Oxfordshire at all levels of experience and ability

Social: To promote playing and learning opportunities appropriate to those who see duplicate bridge primarily as a social rather than competitive experience

Infrastructure: To manage the finances, premises, communication and people needed to realise the aims of the other teams.

Management Teams are given delegated executive authority to act within the objectives set for each team and within budgets approved by the Management Committee.

Team Leaders are considered to be co-opted members of the Management Committee. Other team members are not Management Committee members (unless of course they are already on the committee by virtue of being an officer or club delegate), but are welcome to attend meetings if they wish.

Dates, timing and organisation of meetings

OBA Management Committee meetings are held three times a year, on the second Wednesday of March, third Thursday in July and third Monday in November, starting at 7.30 pm. The venue is [Horspath Village Hall](#), unless unavailable. The Annual General Meeting is held at 7.00 pm on the second Tuesday of June each year, currently at the premises of the Oxford Bridge Club. Light refreshments are available at all meetings.

For each committee meeting, the Secretary prepares an Agenda which is sent out by email to all committee members, and copied to secretaries of affiliated clubs, approximately 10 days before the date of the meeting, together with a compendium of written reports from officers and team leaders (if you are one of these, the Secretary will contact you to request a report about a month before the date of the meeting). As soon as possible after the meeting, the Secretary circulates a list of action points to all committee members as an aide-memoire to those who have undertaken to complete specific tasks. Formal minutes are then prepared and circulated to committee members and club secretaries. All agendas, written reports and formal minutes are published in the Administration area of the County website.

If you have an item you would like to raise for discussion at a committee meeting, please contact the Secretary no later than 14 days before the date of the next meeting so that it can be included in the Agenda. This gives your fellow committee members time to consider the issue and, if appropriate, consult their club committees, so that they can be prepared before attending the meeting.

Finally, if you are unable to attend a scheduled meeting, please send your apologies to the Secretary once the Agenda has been sent out.