

Chair Report – March 2026

While there are many challenges for the OBA, such as growing clubs (both affiliated and unaffiliated), the balance between online and face-to-face competitions, DEI, and developing our juniors, I am pleased to report that we are making progress on these matters, thanks to the work and dedication of committee members. These efforts are described in their respective reports. It is noteworthy that total club attendance has almost returned to pre-COVID levels. While some older clubs have declined or even folded, these are offset by strong growth in relatively new clubs.

I would like explicitly to thank Robert for his service. He is retiring from leading the Publicity, Education, and Social Team. We need to find a successor for this important role. Robert has also created a community newsletter. To make this truly a community publication, it needs contributions from bridge players and clubs across the county.

As ever, the successful operations of the OBA would be impossible without the sterling contribution from Stephen across many areas including the finances, and website maintenance. Thank you Stephen.

I've attended EBU Chairs and Midlands Counties Working Group meetings, when possible, reporting on OBA news in the latter. Some of the ideas discussed there to grow our game are being implemented, but no doubt we could do more. Within the OBA I participate in the Competitions and Congress subgroups meetings, and in e-mail discussions of other sub-groups. For this year only, I am secretary of the newly formed Mercian League face-to-face teams competition.

Malcolm Currie
March 2026