

# OXFORD BRIDGE CLUB



Oxford Bridge Club CIO  
Registered Charity 1155820

## **Minutes of Oxford Bridge Club CIO AGM held on Wednesday 4th September 2019 at 147 Banbury Road, Oxford**

### **1. Welcome**

The Chairman, Pat Lewis, opened the meeting at 6.00 pm and welcomed all to the 6th AGM of the Oxford Bridge Club CIO.

### **2. Apologies**

Apologies from 27 members had been received by the Secretary. The meeting was attended by 38 members.

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

Minutes of the 2018 AGM were circulated with the notice and papers. The minutes were accepted as true records of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

### **4. Chairman's Statement**

Pat Lewis opened by saying that the year had been one of the most dramatic in the life of the club. The club was relocated to Oxford Football Club for eight months followed by a return to the extensively refurbished premises. Limited access for the builders meant there was a budget shortfall but this was made up by generous donations from members in excess of the target of £75,000. The refurbishment project was a real triumph and was accomplished by the hardworking build group of Diana Nettleton, Chris Kerr and Matthew Covill and the support of the Trustee Body. The club will be officially opened by Andrew Robson at midday on 26th October 2019.

The last 15 months have been very busy but the Education programme has flourished. This is due to the commitment and efficiency of the manager and teaching staff. Education makes a huge contribution to, and represents the future of, Oxford Bridge Club. Many of the students who have been through the teaching courses are now playing in regular Club sessions. Membership of the Club is nearly 500 which includes approximately 80 students. As such the club is thriving.

To accommodate increased numbers of players, the Bridge committee have worked tirelessly to update the Bridge movements to assist directors and scorers. All sessions are now hosted and the hosts' names are published on the website. The website has been refreshed and updated to enable everyone to keep in touch with the club. For the second year running OBC CIO has been listed by the EBU as 10th in the country for the number of playing sessions.

There has been an extensive review by the Law and Ethics and Conduct committees of club guidelines which will be touched on later.

The club is totally reliant on volunteers. Pat thanked them for the time and the commitment they gave and said that the club was always happy to receive offers of help. Pat also thanked all of the members, Officers and Trustees for their support, commitment and hard work.

Trustees have been discussing governance of the club and will be reporting to the membership when decisions have been made.

County players now have a weekly playing session, and the Junior Bridge Club will meet at OBC on Sunday afternoons during term time. There is a plan for a regular social Bridge session on Saturday afternoons starting in November.

Eleven members will join the Acol Bridge Club for a holiday weekend in September.

Congratulations to a number of club members and junior members who have achieved very good results at high levels in squads teams and pairs both nationally and internationally. We wish them every success in the future.

The Chairman thanked those Trustees retiring after serving for three years, or who have demanding commitments which prevent them from continuing – Sue Burge, Colin Wels, John Lewis Crosby, Peter Elvins, Kathy Talbot and Nigel Birks. Some will continue to help the club in other areas.

Two long serving Trustees will also be leaving both of whom have served in excess of 10 years. Chris Kerr, Treasurer and Denis Talbot who has been chair of the Conduct Committee. Denis has given great service to his committee and the Trustees throughout his time in office with his down to earth guidance and succinct remarks, and he is thanked very sincerely.

## **5. Annual Report and Accounts**

Chris Kerr (Treasurer) recapped on a momentous year involving the extensive refurbishment of the club premises. The club is in excellent financial health (thanks to members).

Chris stated that he was sad to stand down, but it was time for fresh eyes and new ideas.

### *Statement of Financial Activities*

The club currently had a surplus for the year ended 31 March 2019 of £105,119. The Property Fund has been closed after completion of the refurbishment project, and the funds transferred to the General Fund, which is available for Trustees to use as they see fit (subject to the requirements of the Charities Acts). Any surplus of the Education fund remains only for the use of Education. There are no restricted funds.

The surplus includes money from the following sources:

£100,000	Club members
£10,000	University of Oxford (compensation)
£18,500	Gift Aid on above member donations
£4,000	Gift Aid on past subscription fees

Chris thanked Linda Allen and Richard Sills for helping to process the Gift Aid claims.

### *Balance Sheet*

Chris explained that the March 2019 club reserves were lower than at March 2018 despite the large surplus for the year. This was because the current value of the building after refurbishment was less than the previous valuation plus the cost of the refurbishment, ie the increase in the value of the property was less than the money spent in refurbishing it, so a reduction in the property revaluation reserve had to be made, thereby reducing the total reserves. However, this was entirely as expected but hopefully members agreed that the true increase in value to the club now and in the future was worth far more than the costs incurred.

### *Long term mortgage*

The refurbishment was mainly financed by Charity Bank. The mortgage is £405,000 at an interest rate of 3.75% over the Bank of England base rate, so currently 4.25%. To date, repayments had been interest only but from the September payment they become interest and capital (£2,302.36/month). The final

repayment is due to be made in August 2043, but it was hoped that cash flow would allow a future Treasurer to accelerate repayment of the debt.

#### *Cash Reserves*

There is £76,000 cash in the bank but there is a 2.5% retention fee (about £15k) to pay the builders in December 2019 when all the snagging issues are resolved. Further expenditure of about £9.5k on acoustic panels, protective wall friezes and solar film on the skylight windows has been incurred since the balance sheet date.

Chris thanked Education Manager Viccy Fleming. She is currently managing six teaching courses and there was a £17,000 surplus for Education.

The healthy bank balance allows the club to comfortably meet all its costs but there is also scope to increase the number of playing sessions to further increase revenue.

#### *Money Raised for Charity*

£1,037 was raised for Children in Need

About £1,000 was raised for Autism Care (thanks to Sue Smith)

#### *Communal Fund*

This fund was insolvent as at 31 March 2019 as a substantial sum was spent to remove the pigeons from the front of the building. Subsequent to the balance sheet date, each of the three parties to the fund has agreed to pay an additional £300 service charge.

Chris thanked various members for their help, including John Briggs for his independent examination, Carol Benzie for banking cash, and Celia Lloyd for OBS administration.

He reminded all table money collectors to fully complete the table monies slip sheets to include the (correct) date, name of session and amount of money collected.

Finally, Chris particularly wanted to thank certain members who have helped and supported him during his tenure as Treasurer – Richard Sills, John Fleming, Pat Lewis and Diana Nettleton, and Matthew Covill during the refurbishment.

There were no questions raised on the accounts. John Cooper further thanked Chris.

The Annual Report and Accounts were accepted by the assembled group.

Pat Lewis took the floor again to thank Chris Kerr for his 10-year role as Treasurer. She highlighted the enormous success of the club in that time – the increase in the number of playing sessions, achieving charitable status in 2014 and repayment of the old mortgage. The development of the Bridge School had significantly increased the work of the Treasurer. His careful housekeeping had prepared for the financing of the refurbishment and building works in 2018. Chris was a member of the building group and the stresses and strains were enormous.

His departure from the Trustee body will create a significant void. Chris was thanked sincerely by all the club members for the time and total commitment he had given to the club over many years and for leaving the club in such a positive financial position.

## **6. Report of Independent Examiner**

John Briggs also thanked Chris. He too is standing down after 10 years. He confirmed that Chris has done an excellent job and he is satisfied that the Accounts and Reports are not materially inaccurate. John confirmed that the Accounts have been signed off by him. He was thanked by the Chairman.

## **7. Proposed changes to the Articles of Association**

Martin Illingworth discussed the review into the disciplinary process of the club. Two things are now documented:

1. The appeals process against a Director's decision will take place inside the club
2. The process of how any events will be investigated

To do this an amendment is needed to Schedule 2 of the Articles of Association.

Currently an incident can only be referred to the Conduct Committee as a result of a member complaint. Now, Trustees can refer an incident to the Conduct Committee.

The new amendments were accepted by the assembly.

## **8. Election of Officers according to the Articles of Association**

A number of Trustees are standing down this year. John Cooper gave the names of the nominees and their replacements.

Officers who become ex-officio Trustees:

Chairman	Pat Lewis
Secretary	John Cooper
Chief Tournament Director	Martin Illingworth
Tournament Secretary	Liza Furnival
Conduct Officer	Mary Bennett (taking over from Denis Talbot)
Social Secretary	Sue Smith
Education Secretary	Shirley Rawlings (taking over from Colin Wels)
Membership Secretary	Matt Wilkinson

Treasurer Chris Kerr and Premises Officer Howard Arnes are standing down with no current replacements nominated.

Pat Lewis clarified the situation with regards to electing a new Treasurer. Howard Arnes is leading a group to seek a new Treasurer. Mary Chait will be the bookkeeper and Carol Benzie will control the cash. This is work in progress and the members will be kept informed.

Matthew Covill will run the Premises Committee during 2019 only. Pat Lewis asked for a volunteer to run this committee long term. The Premises Committee and Operations Committee will be combined into the Premises Committee.

Kathy Talbot asked whether Howard Arnes should be a Trustee. Liza Furnival expressed concern that there was no candidate for Treasurer. Pat replied that the accounts were held in the cloud so could be accessed from anywhere and Diana Nettleton was overseeing them. Mary Chait would be doing the book keeping. Chris Kerr confirmed that the cloud software will generate reports easily but of course these relied on the correct input of information.

Diana Nettleton confirmed that it was especially important to have a qualified accountant as the club has charitable status. The Finance team meets monthly and were looking into it. Chris Kerr noted that although the Treasurer was responsible for the finance function, the Trustees are jointly responsible for the charity's finances and without a suitable Treasurer it would be hard to see how they could fulfil that responsibility. External advice could of course be bought in.

Mary-Ann Sheehy asked whether as a last resort the club could pay for a professional accountant and the Chairman confirmed that this might be a possibility.

John Cooper read out the names of nominees for a show of hands. All were approved by the assembly. As stated, there remain two gaps – Premises Committee (which Matthew Covill will run during 2019) and Treasurer.

John Briggs, who is standing down as Independent Examiner, could be replaced by Peter Stevenson though it was noted he is not a member of the Finance committee.

Chris Sheppard asked what the method was to appoint ex-officio Trustees, such as the Treasurer, during the course of the year. Chris Kerr replied that this would be done by co-opting the individual to an officer post, but that only lasted to the following AGM.

#### **9. Election of Trustees according to the constitution**

Directly elected Trustees who had been elected in previous years who were continuing to serve are:

Graham Walcroft (2017)

Julie Anderson (2017)

Lis Long (2018)

John Fleming (2018)

The following are standing down:

John Lewis Crosby (2016)

Kathy Talbot (2016)

Sue Burge (2018)

Peter Elvins (2018)

Nigel Birks (2018)

There were no further nominations and the nominees were duly approved by the assembly and welcomed.

## **10.Competition Winners and award of trophies**

The Chairman presented the trophies to the winners of the various competitions played throughout the year.

<b>Rose Bowl</b>	Championship Teams	Peter Randall, Liza Furnival, Alastair Gidman and Lorna Swadling
<b>Eve Stockwell Bowl</b>	Swiss Teams	Matthew Covill, Nigel Birks, Emily Middleton and Diana Nettleton
<b>Winnie Ling</b>	Mixed Pairs	Nigel Birks & Liza Furnival
<b>Beck Salver</b>	Championship Pairs	Christopher Whelan & Jane Whelan
<b>Thompson Trophy</b>	Individual	Diana Thorne
<b>Morrie Marsh</b>	Novice Pairs	Mena Remedios & Clive Gillam
<b>Meltzer Trophy</b>	Rubber Bridge Knock-Out	Viv Stevenson & Richard Sills
<b>John Simpson Trophy</b>	Men's Pairs	Ian Foote & Herman de Louw
<b>Doreen Simpson Trophy</b>	Ladies' Pairs	Diana Thorne & Brenda Macdonagh
<b>Roger Hughes Trophy</b>	Most Improved Player	Loris Lewis
<b>Monday Morning Ladder</b>	Average of best 21 percentage scores	Mary-Ann Sheehy
<b>Tuesday Morning Ladder</b>	Pair with the highest average percentage score out of their best 17 events	Margie Charnock & Marion Stevenson
<b>Wednesday Gentle Duplicate Ladder</b>	Average of best 21 percentage scores	David Goodall
<b>Wednesday Teams Ladder</b>	Total of best 6 IMP scores out of 10 possible events	Peter Briggs
<b>Lew Braham Trophy</b>	Wednesday Evening Pairs Ladder. Average of best 16 percentage scores.	Peter Briggs
<b>Thursday Gentle Duplicate Ladder</b>	Average of best 21 percentage scores	Jane Matheson
<b>Friday Morning Ladder</b>	Average of best 21 percentage scores	Diane Coe
<b>Friday Teams Ladder</b>	Total of best 6 IMP scores out of 12 possible events.	Martin Illingworth
<b>Sheila Greenwood Trophy</b>	Friday Evening Pairs Ladder. Average of best 15 percentage scores.	Liza Furnival

## **11. Any Other Business**

Sue Burge asked whether we have a skills grid. Pat Lewis agreed that this was important as the club needed a good skills mix when considering governance to allow the Trustees to cover a wider view.

Anne Lloyd asked about the position of tables to allow a better flow of people around them. She suggested putting permanent dots on the floor to show optimal alignment. Kathy Talbot replied that this had been discussed in the Premises Committee. Now that the protective friezes are in place they would address this.

Chris Sheppard (and Denis Talbot) asked whether a door can be put into the fixed window between the main playing room and the courtyard to allow air to circulate. Matthew Covill replied that they would consider this but it would not be a priority until the snagging works had been completed by the builders.

Christopher Whelan presented Pat Lewis with a framed picture of an ace of spades and thanked her for all her hard work for the club. Pat Lewis thanked him and gave notice that she would be retiring as club Chairman in July 2020.

Mary-Ann Sheehy asked whether it was a good idea to trim the number of Trustees and Pat Lewis confirmed that there were plans to do so and it was part of the governance of the club. Discussions are in progress.

## **12. Close of Meeting**

Pat Lewis thanked everyone for attending and formally closed the meeting.