

OXFORD BRIDGE CLUB



Annual General Meeting, 20th July 2022 at 6.00 pm

At 147, Banbury Road

Minutes

Attendees: Julie Anderson (JA), Steven Bliss (SB), Steph Bliss (SJB), Ursula Bowler (UB) Minutes, Joe Brash (JB), Sue Burge (SMB) Chair, Richard Sills (RS) and twenty-six members of the club.

1. Welcome to the OBC CIO AGM

The chair welcomed and thanked the twenty-six members of the club who joined the face-to-face meeting. SMB asked for a brief silence to remember two members: Ian Pearson who died in September 2021 had been a member for 20 years and in his role as treasurer was pivotal in the buying of 147 Banbury Road from St John's College. Jean Alexander who loved golf, bowls and bridge died in February 2022.

2. Apologies

Twenty-three apologies had been received.

3. Minutes of the last AGM 2nd December 2020

The minutes of the last AGM were accepted as accurate, these will be sent to the Chair for signing. The matters arising had all been met. The club has reinstated face-to-face bridge as well as F2F teaching and Learn & Play in the club. Social events have also started in the club.

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman highlighted aspects of her written report which had been circulated to the membership. She thanked the many people who have helped her in her role and have ensured the club has run smoothly. Special thanks were given to SB for his mastery of the finances, streamlining them for future treasurers and SJB for her time as a Directly Elected Trustee and on the Education Committee. Both were demitting office. She particularly wanted to thank UB for invaluable guidance and support throughout her time as chairman and RS for his personal support.

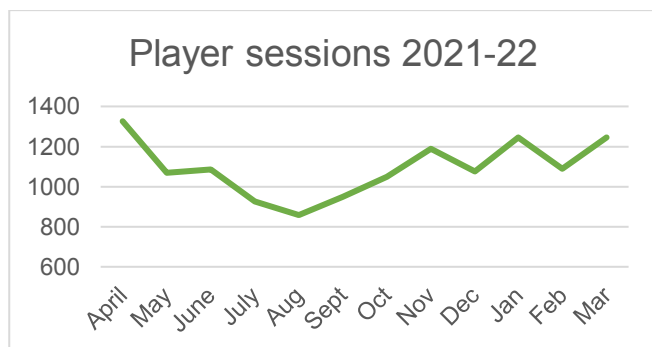
SMB updated the meeting on progress with the Key Objectives in the 3-year strategic plan (2021-2024): providing the best possible environment for learning bridge, strengthening teaching and providing a variety of bridge games (face-to-face as well as on-line) that cater for different standards of player. Much progress had been made but it was crucial that OBC remained financially viable, and the trustees may need to increase the table money to £4 in the autumn. Further income had been raised by hiring out a room each week to the Oxford Chess Club and by the agreement with Bucknell Bridge which would be discussed later in the agenda. She reminded members that the club relied on the support of volunteers and encouraged everyone to contribute their expertise to the running of the club.

SMB congratulated Diana Nettleton who has been selected for the English team, and Charlie Bucknell and Ewa Wieczorek who have been selected to play in the European Youth Team Championships in July 2022 for the under26 team. She also congratulated members who had been promoted through the EBU Masterpoint ranks.

5. Annual Report to the Charity Commission and Accounts for year ended 31st March 2022

The report and accounts had been circulated to the membership. The chairman briefly reviewed the reports of the committees (the full reports can be reviewed on the OBC website).

F2F bridge is steadily increasing.



Education has had a rocky period, but the situation is now improving. Sarah Conway took over as Chairman of the Education committee from July 2022. The chairman thanked Annabel Barnett for taking on the organisation of the Saturday Seminars.

Membership is fairly steady at 465. The club aims to strengthen marketing and is looking for members with expertise in business and marketing. SMB was delighted that no conduct or disciplinary issues have been raised this year and encouraged all members to continue to play in a friendly manner. The Social Committee was reactivated in February 2022 under the chairmanship of SD.

The finances are improving gradually and are summarised here.

Summarised financial results (£)		2021-22	2020-21*	2019-20*
Income:	Bridge	41,516	36,315	66,821
	Education	33,015	22,500	46,135
	Covid grant	0	10,000	0
Expenditure:	Bridge	-7,868	-10,339	-13,627
	Education	-22,012	-19,846	-29,588
	Other (net)	-14,836	-16,515	-36,352
Mortgage interest		-14,831	-16,323	-20,404
Net surplus		14,984	5,792	12,985
* Excluding the 'restricted fund'				

(as the minutes will not be circulated until the next AGM, the summary will also be posted on the website).

SB had negotiated an early payment of £25k to reduce the mortgage and hence the interest payments. The major concern is increasing interest rates. SB thanked Sheila Parry and Paul Mason for their support with the accounts. A member asked SB how much money the club had in the bank. SB responded that OBC had £25k on deposit and a balance between £10k and £15k in the current account. A question was posed about energy costs – OBC is on fixed term prices until July 2023.

6. Report of Independent Examiner

Peter Stevenson was unable to attend the AGM. - SB confirmed that Peter Stevenson was happy with the accounts and how they had been presented. Peter had thanked SB for pulling the accounts together so coherently.

7. Election of Trustees and Officers

The chairman announced that some of the trustees were standing down: SMB (OBC Chairman), UB (OBC Secretary), SB (OBC Treasurer), JA (OBC Premises Officer) and RS (OBC Communications Officer). Nominations received for these posts were: JA (OBC Chairman), Ruth Kim (OBC Secretary), UB (Education Secretary) and RS (OBC Treasurer). In addition, Joe Brash had been nominated as a Directly Elected Trustee.

The membership voted on the election of these individuals and the appointment of the nominated trustees was approved unanimously. The positions of Premises Officer and Communication Officer remain vacant.

The following were nominated for officers of the club: Martin Illingworth (Chief Tournament Director), Matthew Wilkinson (Membership secretary) and Sandra Devaney (Social Secretary). The membership voted and the appointment of the nominated officers was approved unanimously.

8. Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2021-2022

Peter Stevenson has kindly agreed to be the Independent Examiner for 2022-2023. The membership approved this appointment.

9. Articles of Association

Amendments have been made to the Articles of Association. Concessionary Membership is a new category of member to cover the old Student and Junior Member categories and to include those in receipt of a means-tested benefit. The membership approved the amendment. UB informed the membership that the trustees had decided to stop awarding Honorary Life Membership last year. So many people contribute to the club in so many ways that it felt invidious (as well as difficult) to single out one person as the most deserving. There were no objections from the floor.

10. Face to Face vs online bridge

The membership was asked to express their views on the future of bridge in the club - whether to continue with hybrid sessions, stop online or run both.

Many views were expressed:

In favour of retaining online

Serves people with disability or mobility problems

Not restricted to geographical area – players from around the country and from abroad

Easier to chat between boards without disturbing other players

Able to return to the boards and go through them after the event

Parking can be difficult for daytime bridge

In favour of F2F bridge

Year 1 and 2 students need to be encouraged to experience F2F bridge to feel part of the club

Improves communication between members

Students need to transition between classes and playing at the club

Need to return to the club or OBC will fold

RS pointed out that we will need more scorers and directors if we run more F2F sessions.

A member suggested the club should provide a strong incentive to return to the club such as making all competitions F2F or offering a new competition with monetary prizes.

Successful refresher courses are being run F2F for members who have not played since before the lockdown, or would just like a reminder, to encourage them to return to the club.

The Trustees and Bridge Committee will take these views into account when considering the way forward.

11. Bucknell Bridge

The chairman explained why the trustees had reached an agreement with Charlie Bucknell (Bucknell Bridge). This agreement widens and complements our educational offering. Students of Bucknell Bridge will become members of the club and we hope will feed into the Learn and Play sessions and the Gentle Duplicate programme. Bucknell Bridge will cover topics that our bridge school will not cover, and our education team will consult with Bucknell Bridge to avoid duplication of seminars. It is hoped that Bucknell Bridge will bring in younger players as well as offering courses for more advanced players. Bucknell Bridge

will pay a percentage of the income to the OBC. The agreement is in line with the club's charitable purposes. This decision was supported by the membership.

12. Competition winners and award of cups

SMB announced the winners of the competitions for the year, cups were awarded virtually.

Beck Salver	Championship Pairs	Robert Gasser & Martin Illingworth
Rose Bowl	Championship Teams	Liza Furnival, Peter Litchfield, Peter Randall & Diana Thorne
Winnie Ling	Mixed Pairs	Annabel Barnett & Jaak Känd
Morrie Marsh	Novice Pairs	Diana & Stephen Bromley
Meltzer Trophy	Rubber Bridge Knock-out	Howard Arnes & Bridget Watson
John Simpson	Men's Pairs	Amr El-Kashef & Martin Illingworth / John Blakesley & Malcom Orr-Ewing
Doreen Simpson	Ladies Pairs	Mary-Ann Sheehy & Annabel Wade
Eve Stockwell Bowl	Swiss Teams	Not played
Thompson Trophy	Individual	Not played

Roger Hughes Trophy 2021-2022: For the most improved player – Frances Pike, whose NGS increased by 5.4% in the year ending in March 2022. With an honourable mention to Susan Bridge whose NGS increased by 3.4% over the same period

Ladder Winner 2021 – 2022:

SMB announced the winners of the ladders for the year.

Monday morning	Amr El-Kashef & Andy King
Tuesday morning (a pairs ladder)	Linda Allen & Marion Gillie
Wednesday afternoon Gentle Duplicate	Stevie Rudd
Wednesday evening pairs - Lew Braham Trophy	Peter Litchfield
Wednesday evening teams	Martin Illingworth
Thursday evening Gentle Duplicate	Sheila Parry
Friday morning	Amr El-Kashef

13. AOB

A question was raised about the previous practice of electing a OBC representative for the Oxford Bridge Association. UB recalled receiving an email saying this was no longer required but will make further enquires.

There were no other items for discussion.

RS gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the membership to the outgoing chairman, trustees and volunteers.

The meeting closed at 19:56.

Signed: 
Julie Anderson, Chairman OBC

Date: 19.7.2023