

AGM minutes of 12th September 2023

Apologies received: 22

Members Present: 72

Minutes of last meeting.

These were proposed for acceptance by Val Threadgould and seconded by Joan Tong. Agreed.

Matters arising - None

Presidents report

As you are all aware Andy Lewis came to the decision that his position as Club President was untenable and in April handed in his resignation. As a result there will not be a President's Report as such this year. However, as Vice President, I feel it important to recognise the work of the Committee and the various volunteers and give them my heartfelt thanks for all their hard work. The Committee has maintained the building and ensured it is fit for purpose. Heating, lighting and fire alarms are all checked regularly, the building is kept clean and tidy and the playing sessions and competitions are organised. Thank you Wanda, Pam, Paul and Rod for giving up your time to prepare the boards for at least 6 sessions each week. My especial thanks to Mike Llewellyn who keeps our accounts in order, to Roy Brixton who keeps the Website updated and Sue Barraclough who has worked tirelessly as Club Secretary. In 2019 we became aware that the Club roof is in a very poor state of repair and many Committee members have been involved in seeking quotations and/or advice regarding its replacement and/or repair and seeking ways to pay for the work. Sue has worked hard to collate all this information and seek the best way forward. My thanks too to the Directors who turn up each week, arrive early to prepare for the sessions they are directing and do not leave until everything is tidied away, and the building secured.

I have decided that after almost 20 years on the committee, it is time I stepped down and my best wishes go to those who are about to be elected to continue the good work of, not only caring for the building, but promoting and encouraging others to play the beautiful game! Bridge that is, not football!

Treasurer's Report.

See separate sheet

Jackie Walker queried whether money held in current account should be moved to a deposit account paying interest. ML agreed to this

Approval of the minutes was proposed by S Knox and seconded by Wanda Kotowska, Agreed by the majority of attendees.

Secretary's Report

1. Membership numbers stood at 143 at year end with new members from classes and also some old members returning.
2. Roof update – some holdups have occurred since last year with a proposed raised metal roof held up for planning consent requirements and costs associated with progressing these, inc architects plans at a cost of £3000. Finally a couple of months ago a halt was called so expenditure was not made as it became apparent that a raised roof was very likely to not get approval. Many thanks to Ian Hutchinson for all the hard work he put into this.

We reverted then to a like for like replacement and I went forward to get 3 comparable quotes. These have all come in at a cost of between £50 -65K. Yvonne Aubrey then alerted us to a possibility of obtaining a council grant. I contacted the Community Grants Office and learnt from them that we were eligible to apply for 2 different grants totalling £50K – A Community grant and also a Sustainability Grant. It has taken me a few weeks to gather together the information and documents required to complete the submissions which have now been sent, although we will not know if we have been successful until mid Oct. I would like to thank Wanda for help putting together the various safeguarding and Health and Safety policies required for this.

If however we are unsuccessful we will have to revert to the plan made last year of borrowing monies from the club members who offered to loans it to us should it be necessary to do so.

3. Tues issues – I would now like to address the issues that have arisen around Tues afternoon sessions. Earlier this year the committee began to look at attendance of ALL sessions held and queried how we could encourage some of our older members back to playing in the club following Covid.

An afternoon session was seen as a possible way forward and in an attempt to trial this it was decided on **a temporary basis** for a period until the AGM to offer master points (see minutes March 2023 25/23d quote “All of the 47 regular attendees at this session have all already accrued master points, 33 regularly also play in an evening, 14 are ranked as Master or above and 27 are ranked at District Master or above. It was proposed that for a trial period up to the AGM that this should occur at a Tues session and then be discussed further at the AGM by the whole membership, together with the monitoring and viability of all other current sessions. This was agreed by a majority vote of the committee.”

This was reaffirmed at an ad hoc meeting held on the 7th April by request of the then President when the majority of the committee again voted in favour at which point the President stood up submitted his immediate resignation and left the room.

By this point we had also received a petition from Jen Selby plus a letter giving an opposite view point from another club member, neither of which could be tabled or discussed, so their receipt was just acknowledged.

I would now like to state for the record, that I do not believe the issue of master points to members is the true reason for the unrest and in reality very few attendees ceased their attendance whilst it was in place, and individuals can all specify to the EBU whether they wish to be awarded master points or not. My view is that it is all about “Control” of who attends the session as some members are not seen as “desirable”.

I would re-iterate here that this view is unacceptable and that all members of the club are free to attend **any** session run by the club.

Much has been made of a) any one can attend without a partner on a Tuesday – the club runs a Whats App group for the purpose of allowing members to ask for a partner and it therefore shouldn't be too difficult to arrange this in the same way other members do for other sessions.

b) Notes can be used. These are allowable on a Thursday teaching/Improvers session but I cannot see why they should be allowed on a Tuesday afternoon. Bridge is a memory game and the best way to learn and improve is to play, make mistakes and discuss these with your partner at the end of the session so you can avoid doing the same the next time you play.

Aggressive behaviour is still occurring towards some committee members and any discord that has occurred has emanated from Tues attendees, and so much as they may not like it this has to stop. I see the Secretary's role as being there to ensure that the view of all members is taken into account and not what is being propagated by some that if we shout loud and long enough we will get our way and impose our view on the silent majority.

Every member applied to join an EBU affiliated duplicate bridge club with a long history of participating locally, countywide and Nationally in EBU bridge events/competitions.

Annually fees are paid to retain this membership and the constitution of the club is in place to ensure it is run in accordance with EBU rules.

You will need to decide individually whether you wish to do this, as Membership subs will be due following the AGM, so if you renew the assumption will be made that you accept the playing of EBU rules Duplicate Bridge as we are not a "Social Bridge Club".

Proposals received -

1. I wish to propose that the Tuesday afternoon sessions stay as they are at the present time i.e. a "social event" with no master points awarded.
Proposed by Jennifer Selby and seconded by Brian Camm.
2. This club re-affirms its affiliation to the Lincolnshire Contract Bridge Association (LCBA) and the English Bridge Union (EBU) and members agree to comply with the EBU by-laws and regulations for all duplicate and other contract bridge sessions held by the club including the upload to the EBU of results for sessions as normal Pay-to-Play sessions except for one weekly session which will be uploaded as a teaching/supervised play session.
Proposed by Roy Brixton and seconded by Brigid Hughes.

At this juncture an unscheduled address was made by Stuart Knox a written copy of what was said is included in these minutes

BU Code	EVENT	TOTAL PLAYERS	NO OF EVENTS	AVERAGE NO PLAYERS PER EVENT
10	Monday Pairs	978	37	26.43
10	Tuesday Pairs Master Points	224	7	32.00
10	Wednesday Stratified Pairs	612	35	17.49
10	Friday Stratified Pairs	583	36	16.19
10	Sunday Master Pairs 2	59	3	19.67
	TOTALS	2456	118	20.81
11	Tuesday PM Club	1046	27	38.74
10	Tuesday Pairs Master Points	224	7	32.00
11	Thursday Improvers	954	33	28.91
11	FridayPM Club	770	34	22.65
	TOTALS	2994	101	29.64
11	Tuesday PM Club	1046	27	38.74
11	Thursday Improvers	954	33	28.91
11	FridayPM Club	770	34	22.65
	TOTALS	2770	94	29.47

As far as I could tell Thursday evenings have been entered as Code 11

As a member of the Scunthorpe Club for decades, and as one of its four trustees, I believe it is important that I share my thoughts on the critical matter at hand—the two proposals that have been put forth regarding the future of social bridge within our club.

I trust that each one of you has had the opportunity to review these proposals, but permit me to provide a brief overview:

Firstly, we have Proposal One, a straightforward request for the continuity of our current arrangement concerning social bridge.

Secondly, Proposal Two presents a more intricate scenario. It comprises two distinct parts: 2A and 2B. Part 2A calls for our reaffirmation of affiliation with both the EBU (English Bridge Union) and the Lincs Contract Bridge Association, along with the agreement of our members to upload results to the EBU for all our duplicate bridge sessions. On the other hand, Part 2B stipulates that these uploads should be restricted to our regular club sessions, which grant masterpoints and NGS (National Grading Scheme) ratings, with the sole exception being one weekly session, to be uploaded as either Social or Supervised.

The bifurcated nature of Proposal Two has raised questions and a sense of suspicion within me. It's a bit like a golf club presenting two proposals—one stating that lady golfers can enter the lounge bar, and the other proposing that all members must adhere to the current rules of golf, and that the prohibition of lady members from entering the lounge bar should continue. Consequently, as we approach the impending vote, it is crucial to emphasize that BOTH proposals inherently encompass 2A. To vote against Proposal 2 should NOT be misconstrued as a vote against 2A. This point must be conveyed with absolute clarity.

Now, setting aside the nuances, allow me to delve into the more technical aspects of our beloved game. When one engages in bridge at an EBU-affiliated club, a significant requirement is the recording of most duplicate sessions with the EBU. This process serves as a source of revenue for the EBU, contributing approximately £0.42 per session, with a

smaller portion (is it 8p?) allocated to the Lincolnshire County Association. Anonymity is an option should one wish for it – but you will still have to pay!

In return for our affiliation, the EBU and County offer us a treasure trove of benefits. These include magazines, scoring software, director training, teaching assistance, masterpoints and national grades, and keeping folk up to date with the latest laws and regulations, as well as other invaluable assets.

The classification of our events—whether they fall under Code 10 or Code 11—is determined by specific codes employed during event uploads:

- Code 10 events signify "Normal club sessions charged at the standard subscription price for the date it was played, plus any county charges." The EBU duly rewards deserving players of these events with masterpoints and gradings.
- Code 11 events, in contrast, denote "'Social or supervised sessions.' Sessions for which a full rate is charged (as they do not qualify as a 'novice' session), but the session should not be included in the NGS, and no Master Points should be awarded (e.g. some players receive guidance). The sessions do qualify for magazine points." The EBU refrains from issuing masterpoints or calculating NGS ratings for Code 11 events, which offers a notable advantage: experienced players can engage with their less-experienced counterparts without any adverse impact on their NGS rating. NGS ratings are particularly crucial for those who aspire to participate in certain restricted EBU events.

I would like to highlight a statement from Jonathan Lillycrop, the EBU's Club Liaison Officer and EBU Score Officer, who has stated that "A club is welcome to run as many Code 11 sessions as they want to."

Having elucidated the technical backdrop, let us direct our attention to Proposal One and, in particular, Part 2B of Proposal Two. The endorsement of Proposal 2A must be a foregone conclusion.

Now, let us turn our gaze towards the data. I have painstakingly analyzed every event played from the inception of this year until the end of August. Each event has been meticulously categorized into the appropriate code.

Among these events, we find:

- A total of 118 Code 10 events, which awarded masterpoints and generated NGS ratings. These events managed to attract 2456 players, with an average of 20.81 players per event.
- In contrast, we have 94 Code 11 events, which lacked masterpoints and NGS ratings but succeeded in drawing 2770 players, with an average of 29.47 players per event.
- Over 58% of our players this year played in Code 11 events.

The data unequivocally conveys a message: a substantial majority of our club members (58.6%) have played in Code 11 sessions. This inclination likely stems from the fact that Code 11 sessions offer a friendlier, more sociable, and less regulated environment.

I must admit that I personally find myself more aligned to play in the Code 10 events, appreciating the structure and rigor inherent in them. It is important to acknowledge that while many club members share this perspective, it is not the prevailing sentiment.

Therefore, I am inclined to participate mainly in Code 10 events. Fortunately, we have a surplus of these events at the Club—25% more, to be precise—ensuring that I would have no difficulty finding one that suits my preferences.

However, it is incumbent upon us to recognize that a substantial number of members do not share my inclination. They are drawn to a different, more sociable style of play. They harbour

no desire to be 'rated' into various levels of 'Bridge Masters.' Their objective is not merely to win, but to engage in a more convivial and relaxed gaming experience. It is a game that I, personally, may not be too keen on, but it is their Club as well.

Indeed, the EBU has acknowledged this dichotomy and has actively sought to promote 'Bridge-lite' types of environments, recognizing that these sessions may serve as an enticing gateway for players who aspire to delve deeper into the world of Code 10 bridge.

So, the question arises: should the Club throw its weight behind Proposal Two (2B) - or not 2B (Sorry), potentially leading to the cessation of a vast majority of our social sessions? To this question, I provide a resounding NO. Why, you might ask? It is because it seems that nearly 59% of our paying and playing members wish for these social sessions to continue. That is the crux of the matter. We must consider the diverse desires and preferences of all our members, and we must strive for an equitable balance between different types of bridge sessions.

In conclusion, I implore each and every one of you to ponder not only your own inclinations but also the aspirations of your fellow members. Let us embrace diversity within our club, acknowledging that there is ample room for both competitive and sociable bridge. By supporting Proposal One we can ensure that our club remains a place where every member feels welcome and fulfilled, irrespective of their chosen style of play.

Various opinions were then stated by the attendees and as a result proposal 2 was withdrawn by Roy Brixton. Proposal 1 was carried by a majority of attendees supporting it.

Event Trophy Winners 2022-2023

Championship Pairs Margaret McLeod & David Raddish **Vic Llewellyn Trophy** Roy Brixton, Malcolm Broughton, Jane Brown & Nicholas Holmes (**Championship Teams**) **Autumn Pairs** Shirley Terry & Valerie Croissant **Championship Pivot Teams** Roy Brixton, Malcolm Broughton, Jane Brown, Nicholas Holmes & Ian Hutchison **George Marshall Trophy** Mike Llewellyn, Megan Williams, Andrew Lewis & Louise Lewis (**Autumn Teams**) **R J Mitchell Trophy** Roy Brixton, Malcolm Broughton, Jane Brown & Brigid Hughes (**Autumn Pivot Teams**) **Mixed Pairs** Alan Davies & Brigid Hughes **Shirley Wimbles Trophy** Chris Taylor & John Clark (Handicap Pairs) **Individual Championship** Margaret McLeod **Poutney Teams** Roy Brixton, Nicholas Holmes, Jane Brown, Malcolm Broughton & Ken Thomas **Peter Cooke Trophy** John Walker & Bill Barker (Categorized Pairs) **Freeman Trophy** Peter Singleton, Bob Atkin, Patricia Herring & Jackie Walker (Random Seeded Teams)

Masterpoint Trophy Winners & Runners Up 2022-2023

Overall MP Malcolm Broughton **John Brears Trophy** Malcolm Broughton Runner Up Roy Brixton Runner Up Roy Brixton **Monday All** Malcolm Broughton **Monday A** Malcolm Broughton Runner Up Roy Brixton Runner Up Jane Brown **Monday B** Peter Singleton Monday C Neil Strutt Runner Up Roy Stewart Runner Up None **Wednesday All** Roy Brixton **Wednesday A** Bob Atkin Runner Up Megan Williams Runner Up Jackie Walker **Wednesday B** Shirley Terry **Wednesday C** Irene Norman Runner Up Peter Singleton Runners Up None **Friday All** Mike Llewellyn **Friday A** Malcolm Broughton Runner Up Roy Brixton Runner Up Jane Brown **Friday B** Peter Singleton **Friday C** Tony Jubber Runner Up Shirley Terry Runner Up None.

Election of Officers:

After votes counted and verified the following candidates were successful

President: Val Threadgould.

Vice President: Dave Couling.

Committee: (7 vacancies)

Yvonne Aubrey.

Penny Couling.

Glynn Elwick.

Wanda Kotowska.

Irene Norman.

Jennifer Selby.

Rod Williams.