

Somerset Contract Bridge Association
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Sunday 3rd May 2025 At Cossington Village Hall

1. Apologies for Absence

Davina Lord,

Simon Brooke,

Mike and Liz Tracy,

2. Approval of AGM Minutes 2025 Proposed by John Cockram and seconded by Sally Stuttard

3. Matters arising

None

4. Chairman's Report

Sally Stuttard firstly thanked the Committee who have worked very hard to promote bridge in Somerset. There have been successes and some not successful. The 9 high events are popular but more players are required to enter county events, both face-to-face and online.

Sally thanked Sheree who had kindly agreed to stay on for another year, which should give time for a suitable person to take over. Sally will also remain as chair for one more year.

John Cockram was also thanked for sorting out the bridge calendar and carrying tables and equipment to various venues as and when needed.

Everybody plays their part but we need members to play theirs too as without participation we don't have any bridge. With the increase in mobile devices and AI it is even more important that we continue to be a sociable race and carry on meeting each other playing bridge.

The West of England Congress was well attended and hopefully it will be the same this year. A new venue has been secured being The Canalside in Bridgwater.

Thanks were extended to both Frank Coltman and Colin Simcox in making the congress such a successful event in 2025.

The County league is popular with the clubs and runs smoothly thanks to Bob Warrender who has been running this for the last 20+ years.

The Andrew Robson event at Street was a great success with 100 players attending and we are delighted to know he is coming back again next year.

The Coda cup raised £1600 which was presented to Bridgwater Carnival who were very appreciative.

Finally, Sally thanked Kathy for all the teas made and transported to venues, whatever the weather.

5. Tournament Director's Report 2025/26

John Cockram reiterated that the 9 high events held at local clubs were a success and the County had the capacity to run even more. He raised the issue of attracting more players to County events and felt club committees (chairs) could do more to promote events. [Susan] has just been elected to chair at Street and stated that she would be very happy to promote events and become more involved. Andy suggested that the belief that County events were somehow out of the majority's league was still prevalent, e.g. that the director would be called at the slightest infraction and participants would be humiliated. A lot of work had been put in to changing the atmosphere. It was agreed that SCBA did have a communication problem and a discussion was raised as to how members were notified of events and whether the database currently held by Somerset County Bridge is fit for purpose.

David Lambert suggested that a County-wide WhatsApp group could be designed.

John finished by saying that a comprehensive programme was currently being drafted to be approved by the committee and would be published soon.

6. SCBA Financial

For the year ended 31 March, the country finished with a surplus of £2100. The Robson day earned the county £2090 and without this the result would have been break-even.

It is very encouraging to report that the Congress which moved to the Webbington showed a surplus of £750 after the trauma of the previous year. This year the event will be held in Bridgwater and we will do well to match last autumn's outcome.

County competitions continue to be poorly attended with income across all events only raising £4400 but running costs were only £80 above this. No Fear events across three venues away from Bridgwater were well attended and we made a conscious effort to pass all net proceeds to the clubs that participated. I would think we will continue to pursue this approach.

Interest earned from our two bonds continues to generate £1500 towards county costs and that is an arrangement that will continue.

Our trophies which were originally worth £1420 are to be written down over 5 years and I have prudently written down on other assets. We may well invest in replacement equipment in the next couple of years as their useful lives draw to a close.

Finally the balance sheet continues to show a healthy position with £35,000 in bonds and over £7000 with Lloyds bank. The instant access account holds £6668 and earned a pitiful £38 in interest in the year and for that privilege, charges us £50 for managing our account.

Richard Feetenby

The accounts were proposed to be accepted by Michael Wigmore and seconded by Steve Fletcher

7. Election of Officers and other Executive Committee members for 2026/27

David Lambert was nominated by John Cockram to join the committee and seconded by John Gould and Steve Fletcher.

The remainder of the committee were all re-elected en bloc:-

Sally Stuttard (Chair)

Richard Feetenby (Treasurer)

Michael Wigmore

Sheree Pavey (Secretary)

John Cockram (Tournament Director)

Simon Brooke

Andy Ridgers

Colin Simcox

Annie Holder

Alan Evans

Proposed by John Gould and seconded by Steve Fletcher

The meeting closed at 1.45pm.-