

STRATFORD UPON AVON BRIDGE CLUB

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2022

Club reopened

After closing our club on 16th March 2020 due to the pandemic lockdown, we reopened on 2nd August 2021. We were fortunate that we had willing Tournament Directors to run multiple sessions. We ran almost the same number of face-to-face sessions as we had prior to the pandemic. In addition we continued with 2 online sessions. It became clear that not all the evening sessions were viable. Tuesday and Wednesday evening sessions were suspended.

Number of attendees gradually increased from about a third of the pre-pandemic levels to about three quarters. Now that we have moved to 'living with Covid', I hope many more will return to the club and enjoy the social and mental aspects of the game we all love.

Finances

Our prudent management of finances has meant that we have been able to ride out the period of closure and still have a healthy bank balance. However, this year we have made a loss in excess of £10,000. This is due to lower attendance and higher costs. We had to make the difficult decision to raise table monies by £1 (\$1 online) from 1st June 2022. This is the first increase since 2012 and it should reduce the impact of financial pressures in the future.

The club introduced a contactless payment system in August 2020 and after some initial teething problems, the system is working well and members have fully embraced it.

50th anniversary celebration

On 23rd October 2021, 100 members and guests celebrated our bridge club's 50th anniversary at the Crowne Plaza. We all certainly deserved a celebration. It was good to see the great feedback received from the attendees.

Master point promotions

Even though we have only been back to face-to-face bridge for less than a year, several members have already achieved master point promotions. In order to earn sufficient points you have to consistently finish in the top third of players. Congratulations to all.

Management Team and Board

After 8 years of dedicated service as Treasurer, Alison Rigg stepped down from the Management Team in May 2022. I thank her for her significant contribution, particularly with regards to our finances. We are fortunate to have three great additions to our Management Team – Paul Debling, Sue Debling and Clive Hood. We are now seeking to fill the Social Team Leader vacancy. This is your club and sharing the work makes the tasks less stressful and more enjoyable for all. We would accept trying out a role for a trial period if someone wanted to see what is involved.

Due to some long-standing Tournament Directors standing down, we currently have only four TDs. Fortunately we have five active qualified teachers. It has been a real struggle to run all the sessions the members want, as well as running beginners' and improvers' courses.

We are delighted that Sue and Paul Debling qualified as TDs in June, but we could do with some more. Please volunteer - training and mentoring will be provided.

I would like to thank all the Board and Team Leaders for their hard work during the year, and the Tournament Directors and Teachers, without whom we could not operate, and last but not least all the helpers and assistants who do all the vital jobs in the background that keep the club running smoothly.

Alan Patel
Chairman
19 July 2022