



Marketing

Player Recruitment, Membership and Communication



EBU Marketing Ambitions (draft)

Primary ambition:

Increase the numbers of players who play the game of bridge in England

Secondary ambitions:

Ensure the EBU is a respected brand;

Increase the numbers who play bridge under the auspices of the EBU;

Promote the game of bridge in England by ensuring its benefits understood;

Support EBU volunteers at Club and County level to deliver this Marketing Strategy.



How to support the Primary ambition

To increase the numbers of players who play the game of bridge in England, the EBU considers that:

1. A country-wide drive to get new players and new teachers is required
2. This should be based on collaboration between the EBU, Counties and Clubs

The responses to the County Survey showed that most of you agree.

We must achieve this within our financial constraints.



Historic Player Statistics

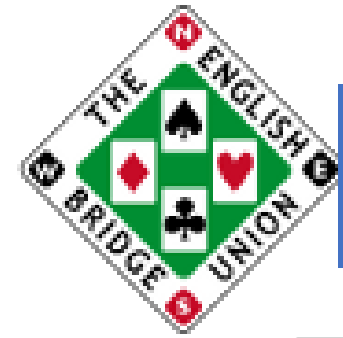
- 1970's
 - tournament players numbered c80,000
 - EBU Membership was 10,000 but membership was optional
 - If Warminster was typical, only a small fraction of players were EBU Members
- 2010 to 2019 player stats remained stable but that masks underlying trends
.....

Prior to UM (Pay to Play), members of a club chose whether to join the EBU or not. In the Warminster club, there were about 8 - 10 members out of a membership of 60 or so.

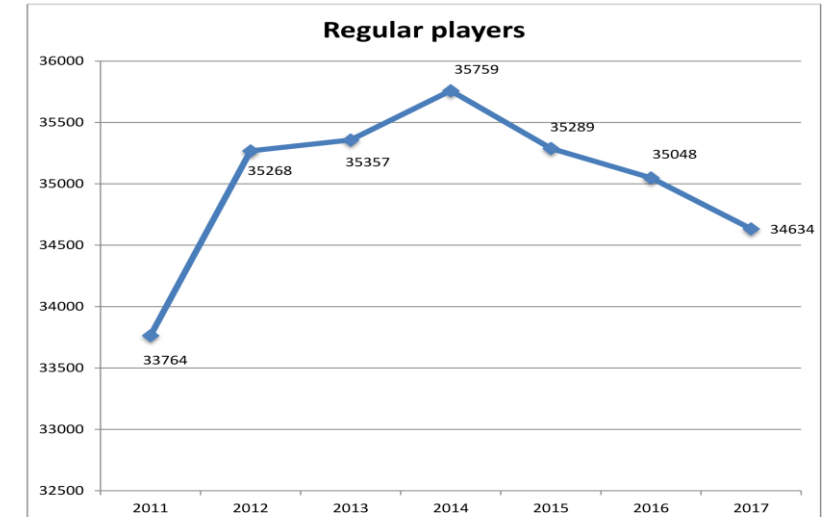
Year Month	Total Sessions	Max Unique Players
April 2010	132,3144	34,778
April 2011	138,3721	35,292
April 2012	139,2054	35,788
April 2013	141,0797	36,076
April 2014	139,7647	35,716
April 2015	139,0519	35,645
April 2016	137,8618	35,284
April 2017	137,6330	35,221
April 2018	137,3731	35,117
April 2019	140,7406	35,477
April 2020	93,9971	34,691

English Bridge Union: Bringing Bridge to Everyone

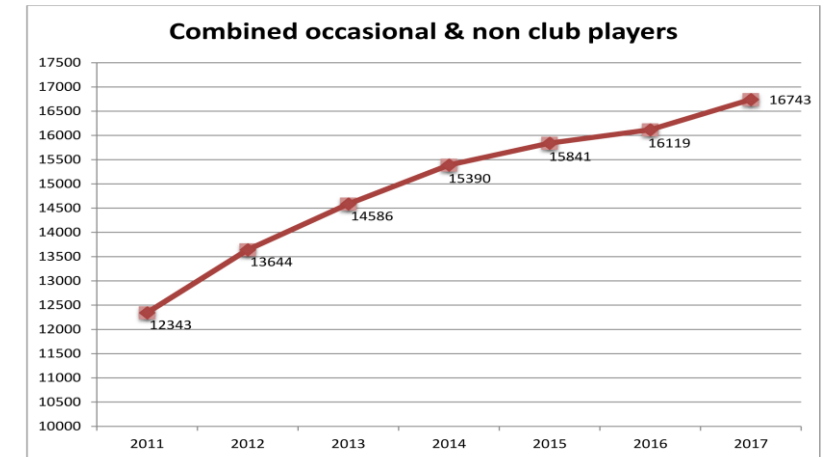
Note: Recent EBU data taken at slightly different times – there are slight variations



Recent Trends In Membership



B:



Membership grew marginally from 2011 to 2014 then plateaued.

However:

- 'Non-playing' and occasional members grew absolutely and proportionally.
- Active members declined.

This table shows a combination of members in the UM1 & UM0 (when applicable) categories
UM1 – 2011-14: Members who played fewer than 12 Club Sessions in the Financial Year
2015-17: Members who played between 1 and 11 (inclusive) Club Sessions in the Financial Year
UM0 – 2015-17 only: Members who have not played any Club Sessions in the Financial Year

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Note: Recent EBU data taken at slightly different times – there are slight variations



Statistics during the pandemic

- April 2019 vs April 2021

Year Month	Total Sessions	Max Unique Players
April 2019	178,701	36,358
April 2021	146,680	20,701
April 2019 vs 2021	<u>82%</u>	<u>57%</u>



The Potential Audience





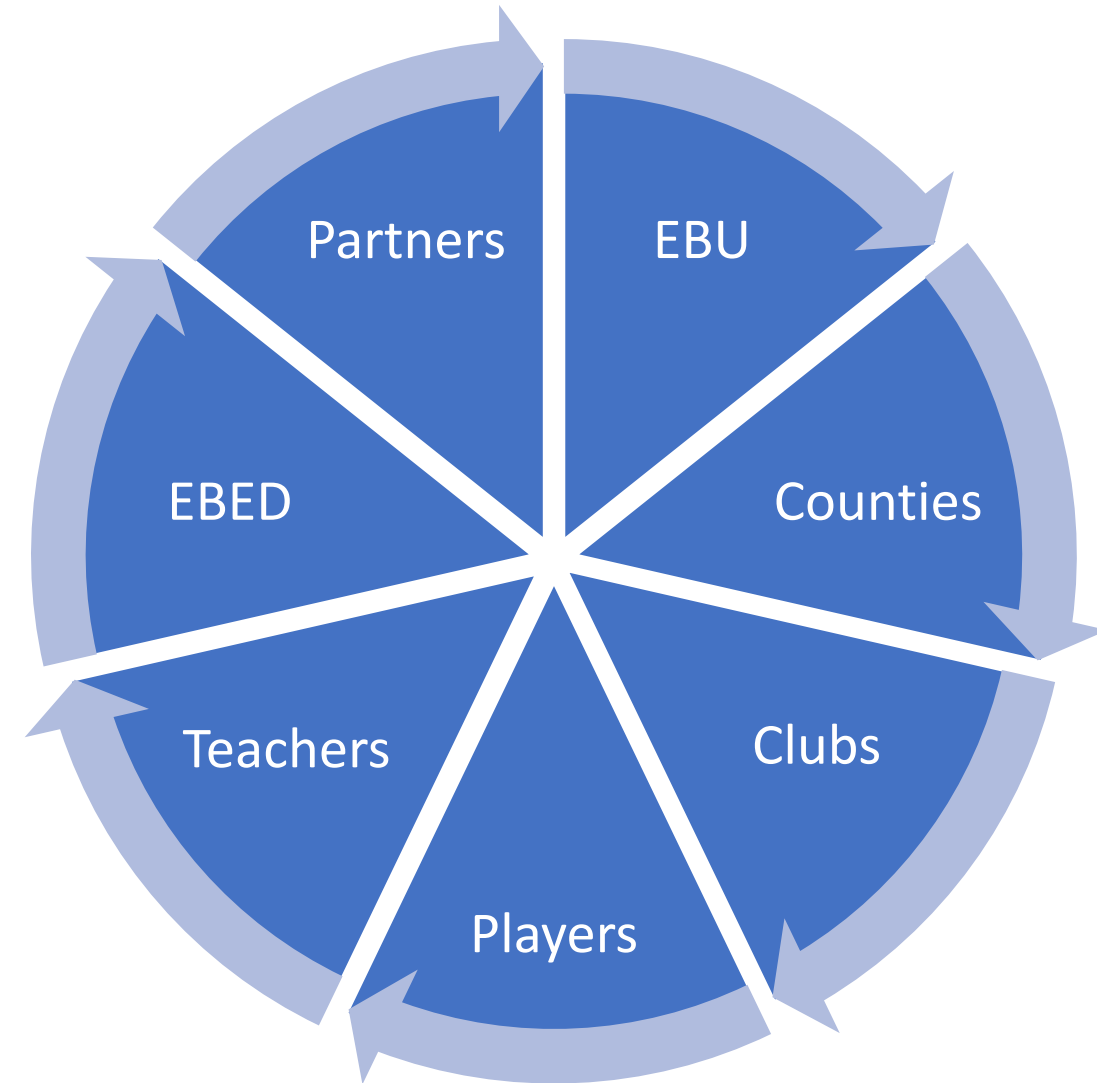
Challenges, threats and opportunities

Finding and retaining more players:

1. Lack of funds
2. Teaching throughput - faster ways to teach
 - Online teaching?
 - Yorkshire initiative?
 - More teachers
 - Other?
3. Making the game (more) accessible
 - 'Just Play' - Easy ways to play immediately that online bridge can provide;
 - Online – coffee lounge etc.
 - Clubs
 - Competitions
4. Accurate information
5. New, non-EBU, opportunities

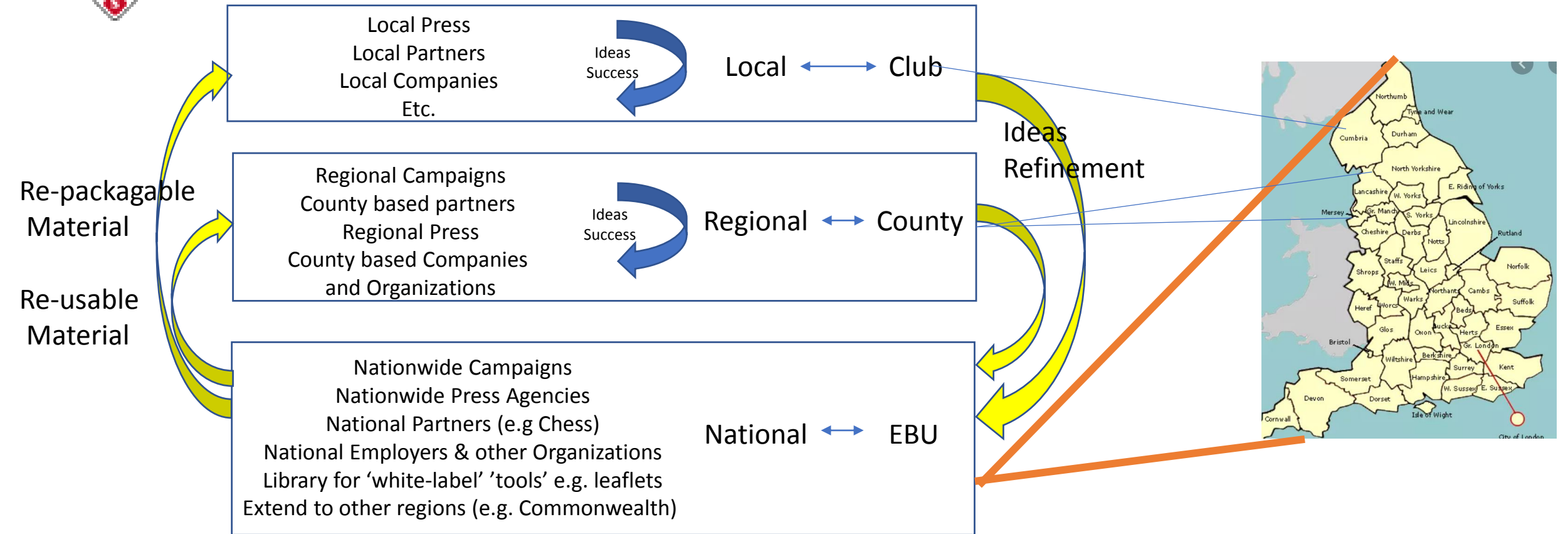
More Volunteers:

1. How to increase volunteer base
2. How to best harness the talent of our loyal members





The Approach

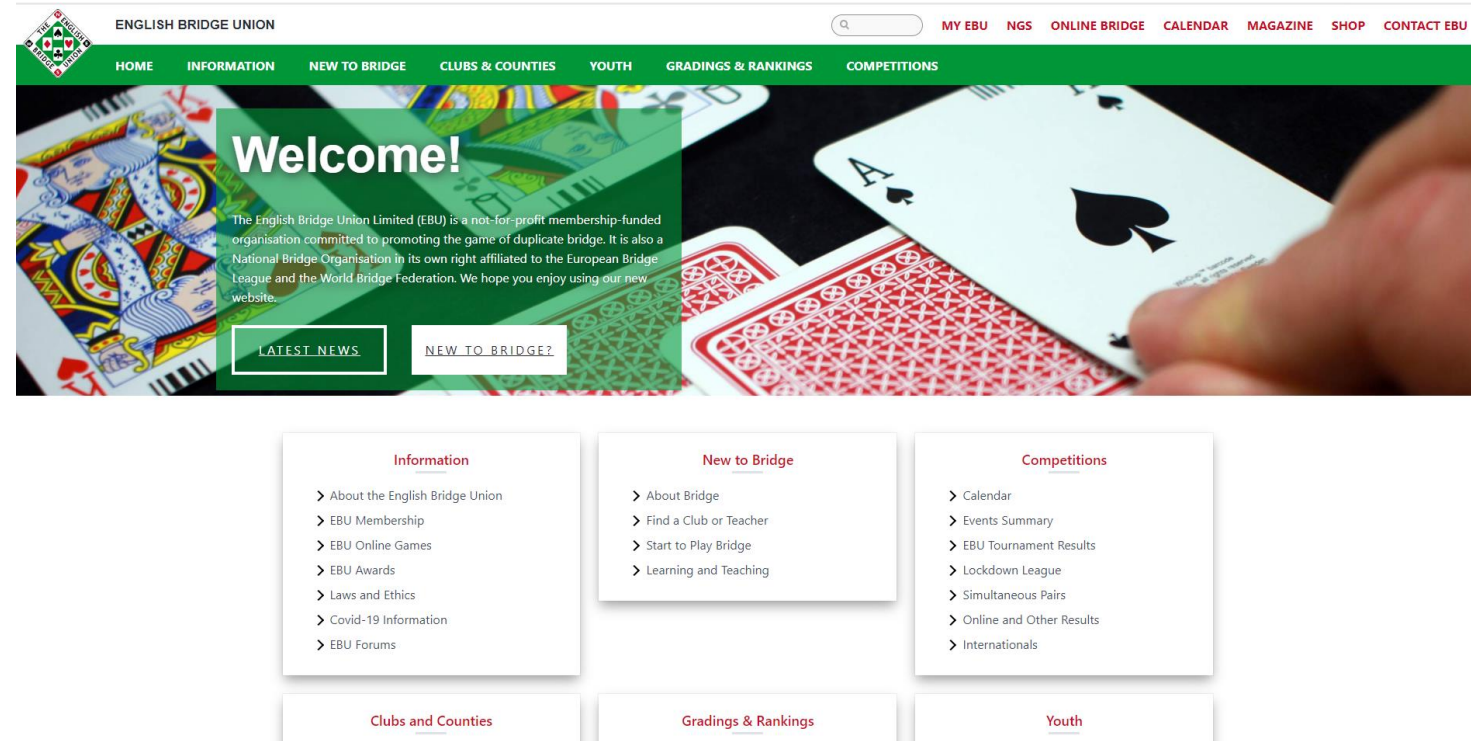


Collaborative, Re-usable, Joined-up – Communication will be important

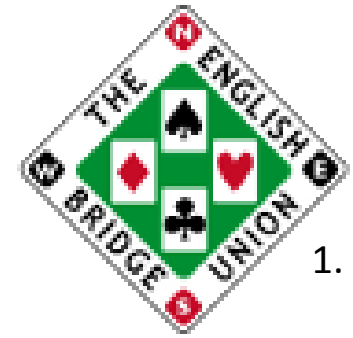


What we already provide

1. NGS
2. MasterPoints
3. Competitions
4. Regulation
5. Teaching (through EBED and others)
6. Telephone and Email Support
7. Comprehensive Web Site with tools (with plans for enhancement)
8. MyEBU
 1. Members
 2. Clubs
 3. Counties
9. Magazine



Gayle Webb is creating an audit of tools; she (an experienced bridge administrator) was surprised by the richness of what is already available



Ideas In development

1. Press
 - EBU maintains library of articles that can be 'localised' and bridge columns that can be reused
 - EBU creates relationships with national press agencies to publish bridge columns and articles
 - Counties or Clubs provide information to localise articles
 - Counties engage with local press – use bridge columns and articles
2. Other Publicity
 - EBU maintains 'white label' leaflets
 - Counties and Clubs provide local information
 - Clubs and Counties distribute locally
3. Focused contacts e.g. Retirees, The Services, Work-based, other card players, Schools and more
 - EBU contacts Nationwide
 - Clubs and Counties contacts locally
4. Attracting Non-affiliated Clubs
 - EBU creates a (hopefully) compelling case to join
 - Used locally by Counties
5. Wider than England
 - Consider Commonwealth – white label or EBU
6. Clubs and Counties
 - EBU builds on and extends its existing toolkits
 - Ensures all know of their existence
 - Refine according to needs

Collaborative, targeted, reusable

English Bridge Union – To bring bridge to everyone



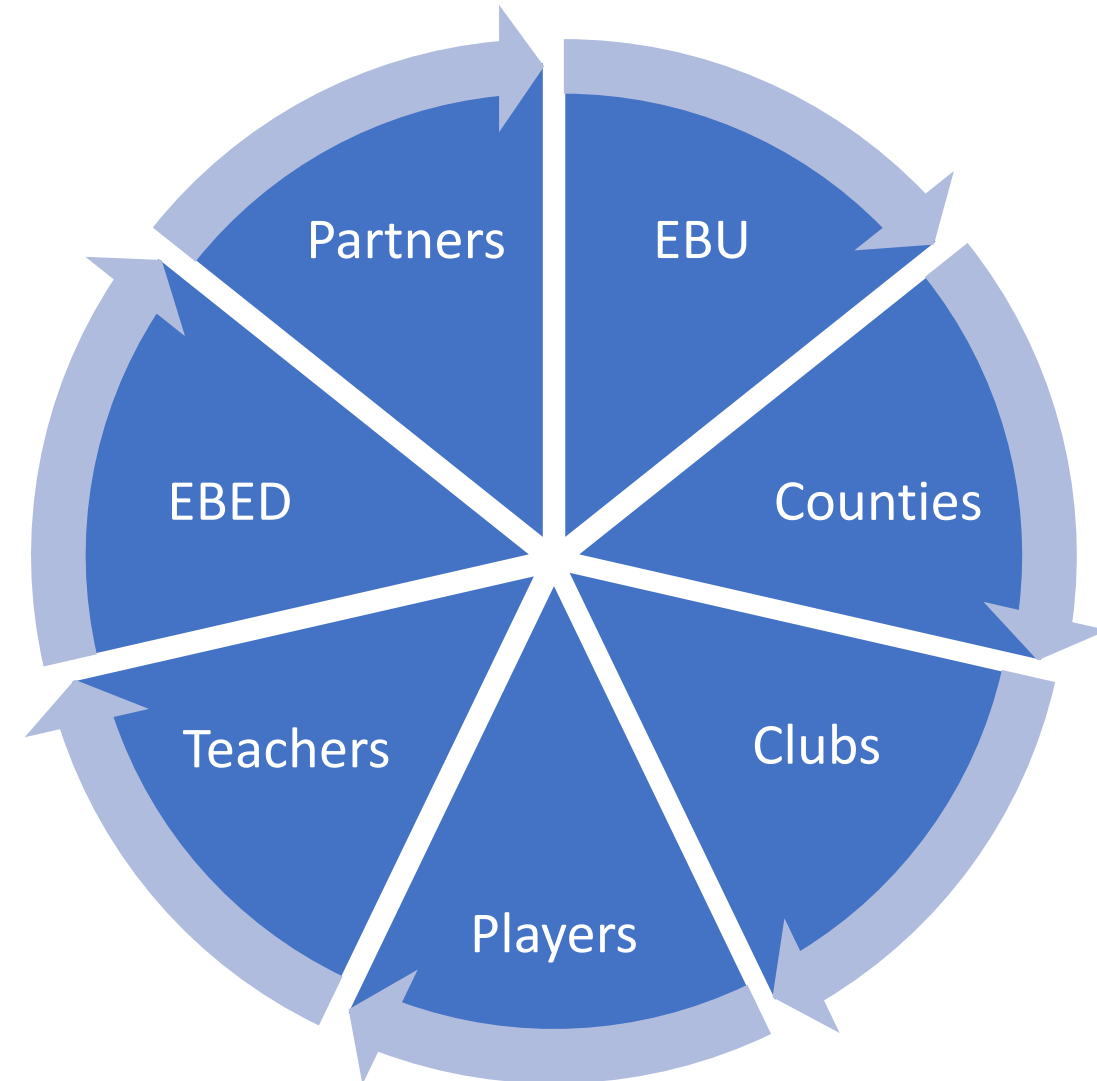
Communication & Collaboration

“Internal” Communication & Collaboration (is and) will be critical to success

- Gayle Webb (Club Liaison) and Patrick Shields (County Liaison) are working with clubs and counties to find the best ways to communicate effectively
- Working group is established
- Expect more focused communication
- ... more to follow when the group has progressed ideas

“External” Communication & Collaboration will increase our success

- Teaching Partners
- Bridge Partners (Other NBOs etc.)
- Technology Partners
- Other Partners





Future

Possibly the most exciting time and biggest opportunity for Bridge

It's down to us to take the moment

The future is now!





We have a lot to do!

Please contact us with your ideas, your news and your constructive criticism.

Your feedback and patience very much appreciated.



Player Recruitment, Membership & Communications

New Team:

Gayle Webb (Club Liaison)

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Cath Fox (Marketing/Technology)

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Kay Preddy

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Assisted by:

Ron Millet – long serving board member with on-going responsibility for Player Development

We are keen to work with and learn from Members, Clubs and Counties.