

Minutes of Warrington Bridge Club Committee Meeting Sat 14th March 2026, 0930hrs, on Zoom

1. Apologies

Janine Curwell, Roger Hesp, Helen Hesp

2. Minutes of previous Committee meeting, held 17th January 2026 (and also of brief AGM pre meeting held on 28th February 2026)

The minutes of these previous meetings were accepted. There were no matters arising not on today's agenda.

3. 2026 AGM- learning points for next year

The meeting was very brief, and covered the matters we require to under our constitution. It would have been better if more members had attended, but in general the membership were happy with how things are being run.

A list of the new committee and contact details will be put on the Club notice board. **ACTION Jim**

4. On-Line Bridge

- a. How to increase attendance- spread the net more widely. We agreed to make approaches to other clubs to join forces, to increase playing numbers. **ACTION Jim** Ian Douglas will ask at Croft **ACTION Ian** Carolyn suggested we approach Manchester Bridge Club, who play on line on Monday and Friday afternoons, using INTOBRIDGE. Ted Cadman, who used to play there, might be a useful person to ask.
- b. Friday evening costs: this is a concern, as we are losing money every session, with the TD fee being paid to Adam Wiseberg, when we have fewer than 5 tables. However, we agreed we want to keep our on-line sessions going.

5. Finances

1. Update/ comment: Janet said that finances are OK and she has no particular concerns.
2. Choice of charity for 2026: we are keen that our charity donations should be local, in aid of the people of Warrington. We also agreed to make up our donation for each event to match the table money, to a maximum of £250, plus any individual donations. We have already paid £250 to Alford Hall from our first charity event of 2026, which was acknowledged and gratefully received. For the remaining 5, we agreed that 4 would be in support of Warrington Food Bank, and Mike would write to them to let them know. **ACTION Mike.** Janet has the contact details. The final one will be in aid of the Alford Hall Christmas party for children.
3. Auditor: Carolyn has kindly stepped in to the role, when the previous auditor, Brian Drinkwater, had to withdraw for family health reasons.
4. Membership: we continue to attract new members, so we are growing slowly but steadily. Our list is currently 133 (of whom 25 play on-line only), after the usual January shake-out of people who have stopped attending. Our low point was 59 in 2018.
5. Playing fees: we are OK with keeping playing fees unchanged for the remainder of 2026. The good attendance on Thursday afternoons helps. However, it is possible that our costs will soon rise quite steeply; Alford Hall are due to revise their room hire charges in April. We need to be aware of the possibility of having to raise fees in 2027.

6. Expenditure items

- a. We agreed last time to purchase additional Bridgemates. Mike has procured 3, so our total is now 18, enough to cover the biggest session of 16 tables, even if one or two fail for any reason.
- b. Longer term strategy: we will probably change over to using tablets, rather than moving on to Bridgemate 3, but there is no urgency to act. We can observe how various systems develop over the next two or three years.
- c. Next year, 2027, is our 50th year (the Club started in 1977). We will think about how to mark this with some special event(s), and will buy a new set of mugs.

7. Publicity

- a. Local GP surgeries/ Primary Care facilities: no progress. We will leave on the agenda as a standing item.
- b. Essential Guide: Ian: our entry in the What's on section is still being included.
- c. EBU on-line webinars: volunteer to represent the Club at the next one on Tuesday 24th March 10am (Jim is unavailable that day): no-one available, but we can watch a video recording of the webinar at a later date.

8. Prize Awards/ Improvers night/spring social, Monday 23rd March

- a. Trophies: these need to be retrieved for engraving. Jim will email those who hold them. **ACTION Jim**
Carolyn volunteered to go and collect any as necessary.
- b. Prizes for competitions: Jim tabled a list of 2025 prize winners. The Committee agreed that Jim should purchase the prize vouchers and 1-off trophies, as last year. **ACTION Jim**
- c. Food/drink/ accessories (tablecloths, serviettes): all in hand. Janine has ordered the food, Mike the drinks and glasses.
- d. Notifying people that it's on: Jim will email members on Tuesday 17th. **ACTION Jim**
- e. Hosting: Malcolm agreed to do this.
- f. Photographer: Ian (and Suzie) will do this. **ACTION Ian**

9. Operations

- a. Rota/cover for Mondays when Jim and Mike are both away. Jim will provide Mike (and Ian) with a list of dates when he is planned to be away for the rest of 2026. **ACTION Jim (complete)**
- b. Dealing machine when Roger is away: Roger is bringing in the dealing machine next Monday (16th) before going away for about 4 weeks. We have enough new sets dealt to cover that period, including two of the teaching sets, temporarily used for random deals.
- c. Club Strategy: we had a discussion on some ideas to take the Club forward. We still need a draft strategy update. Action was on Mike to update the previous document. **ACTION Mike.**
- d. SIM pairs: we don't have a SIM pairs event, now we have opted out of Children in Need. Jim will provide a list of possible dates to Keith Perry (normal Monday, not Charity/Improvers night or Bank Holidays or other competitions) to see if we can pick one that works. **ACTION Jim (complete)**
- e. Advanced lessons (or rather, material that can't be fitted in to the Intermediate course): there has been some interest shown, but we abandoned doing them in place of Thursday afternoon relaxed duplicates, because these have become popular. We will look to putting some on in summer months; some lessons are already on the website, here [Warrington Bridge Club, Warrington](#), on the following topics:

[Advanced Series No1 Competing with a two suited hand](#)
[Advanced Series No2 Declarer play- establishing long suits](#)
[Advanced Series No3 Inverted minors and trying for 3NT](#)
[Advanced Series No4 Sacrificing](#)
[Advanced Series No5 Suit elimination and throw-in](#)
[Advanced Series No6a Jacoby 2NT](#)
[Advanced series No7 - Multi-Landy defence to 1NT](#)

Jim will suggest some dates, and see how much support there might be. **ACTION Jim**

- f. Getting people on the Monday TD rota (eg Hilary, Jim, Mike, Malcolm Strange): Mike will check if Malcolm Strange is willing to do this. **ACTION Mike.**

Jim will propose a rota of dates for Hilary, Jim, Mike (and Malcolm Strange if willing) to carry out the Monday TD role, initially with a current established TD also there. **ACTION Jim**

There is assistance in TD decision making in the event of an irregularity at the table: Jim has already written a crib sheet (it's on the website, here: [Crib sheet most common infractions.pdf](#)). There is also an easy-to-use website that TD could use at the time, with a smartphone: [Bridge TD](#) (click the link!).

It was noted that both Ian and Malcolm are able to carry out the TD role on Thursdays, and have experience of doing so.

10. Succession/ Resilience /Resource planning (Standing agenda item)

a. Additional committee members- we will keep an out for likely people to approach.

We do have a shortage of expertise on competitions, on how to run events other than duplicate pairs (eg multiple teams). We should ask Keith or David to be “Competitions Consultant” for the Committee.

We might want to run a multiple teams event with Croft (see 12b below)

b. Venue: we are very happy with Alford Hall, but should consider contingency should this become unavailable to us in the future. The Olive Tree in Penketh is a possibility. Standing item.

11. Education/Teaching

a. Training for bridge teaching (standing item) Jim and Ian will continue to keep a look out for suitable training (venue, timing). Standing item.

b. TD training: M&CBA are proposing to repeat the Paul Mathews course some of us attended (jointly with Antrobus) on 27/4/24.

12. Future events

a. Mini-bridge sessions: the idea is to make members familiar with using mini-bridge as a teaching/learning tool, so that they might use it with eg grandchildren to introduce them to bridge. We will plan to do this one afternoon next summer at Alford Hall. **ACTION JIM to set a date.** Mike also suggested doing it at the Stockton Heath festival. To be followed up. **ACTION Mike**

b. Inter-club evenings: possibly a summer activity, or a normal Monday. We have a meeting arranged with Croft President Tom Hulmes arranged for lunchtime of Thursday 19th, to discuss options. Jim, Mike, and Ian Douglas to attend.

c. Café bridge: some clubs have tried this and found it very successful. Jim had previously circulated links to material which explains it and how it works. We agreed to shelve the idea, until at least some of us had participated in one.

13. AOB

No items.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Saturday 9th May, 0930 hrs, on Zoom.