

Minutes of Warrington Bridge Club Committee Meeting

Sat 19th September 2026, 0930hrs, on Zoom

1. Apologies

Malcolm, Roger, Helen, Janet

2. **Minutes of previous Committee meeting**, held 18th July 2026. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted. There were no matters arising not on today's agenda.

3. On-Line Bridge

- a. Tuesday evening sessions: Antrobus have informed us that they are struggling to provide a TD. There are various options, such as
 - i. Insisting that Antrobus do provide one on occasions, even if only when WBC cannot provide one. Jim is in discussion with Simon Barber at ABC.
 - ii. Increase the charge to say £3, and have a paid TD (this would need agreement of Antrobus BC)
 - iii. Find additional person at WBC willing to do TD on occasions, such as Dave Tilley, Hilary wood, Ted Cadman, Keith Perry, A.N .Other. Jim will follow up, though might not be a quick fix.In the meantime Jim will continue to be TD whenever available.
- b. Friday evening costs: this remains a slight concern, as we are losing money when we have fewer than 5 tables, with the TD fee being paid to Adam Wiseberg. No action required, apart from continuing to try to build numbers.
- c. Building on-line numbers: this remains a priority, via County. Jim is pursuing this.

4. Finances

- a. Update: no issues to report.
- b. Membership update: Our list is currently 142 (of whom 24 play on-line only). Since Covid (June 2020) our net gain is 95 (members added, less those who have died, left, lapsed, etc)
- c. How to deal with the Q2 invoice already sent to Gordon Amos: waived, as is the normal practice for a deceased member.
- d. We discussed increasing annual subscriptions or playing fees. We agreed to leave playing fees unchanged for 2027, subject to any significant change of circumstances that might arise. However, with the increase in Alford Hall membership fees taking £7.50 out of our annual subscription of £10, we felt that an increase for 2027 to £15 is justified. At £15 it would still be very low as Club subscriptions go. We agreed to decide at our next meeting
- e. Chasing up late payers is no longer the job of the Treasurer. Janet should send out the initial invoices, and after a suitable elapsed time, report any non-payers to the secretary. Other committee members will then chase up as appropriate. We will also attempt to persuade those paying by cash or cheque to adopt our system of payment by bank transfer, but will still reluctantly accept those methods of payment. Our application process already makes it clear that payment by bank transfer is expected.

5. Expenditure items

- a. Bridgemates: we might eventually change over to using tablets, or BriAn, rather than moving on to Bridgemate 3, but there is no urgency to act. There is an on-line demo of BriAn on Tuesday 22nd at 10am. Jim will attend. The intent is to become familiar with running sessions using BriAn, so we can roll it out if we want. **ACTION Jim**

- b. Next year, 2027, is our 50th year (the Club started in 1977). We discussed options to mark the occasion.
 - i. New mugs: there are generally available in batches of 36, so we will buy 72, ceramic rather than porcelain, dishwasher safe. (We have about 48 of the existing mugs). We discussed some designs. Ian will look into costing up of the favourites. **ACTION Ian**
 - ii. Upgrade our trophies **ACTION Jim** to investigate.
 - iii. Mark up our Alford Hall sign with a 50 year sticker.
 - iv. Hold a one-off 50 year anniversary handicap competition, with trophies to keep. We agreed to hold this on Monday 7 June 2027, in conjunction with a charity/improvers night. We will have a cake made, and a break for tea/ coffee and cake.
 - v. We will also consider running a 50th Jubilee event one Thursday afternoon.
 - vi. Carolyn suggested we could procure some special sets of playing cards and /or pens, to give out as prizes (playing cards) , or as gifts (a pen) for every member. We will look into the cost.

6. Publicity

- a. Local GP surgeries/ Primary Care facilities: no progress. Keep on the agenda as a standing item.
- b. Essential Guide: Ian reported that our entry in the What's On section is still being included.
- c. EBU on-line webinars: these are held monthly on a Tuesday morning, on topics related to clubs/grass roots bridge. Video recordings of the sessions are available on the EBU website. The next one is Tuesday 6th October, 10am. Jim will attend.

7. Operations

- a. Rota/cover for Mondays when Jim and Mike are both away: the two Mondays when Jim is away, for the remainder of 2026, are covered. Mike, Roger and Helen are available on Monday 28th September (Jordan Vase) and on 9th November (Charity/Improvers night).
- b. Dealing machine when Roger is away: this is working OK. Roger has it by default, but passes it to Jim when he's going to be away.
- c. Club Strategy: we had a discussion on some ideas to take the Club forward. Our existing strategy has now largely been implemented, so we are looking to update it with direction for the future. **ACTION Mike-** carried over from last time.
- d. SIM pairs: we will not pursue a SIM pairs event for 2026- too much hassle as it requires separate payments to ECATS and to the charity, and too much of the money gets raked off for admin.
- e. Charities: for the remainder of 2026, we have two events. 9th November will be for Alford Hall Children's Christmas Party, and 14 December for the Warrington Food Bank. For 2027, we agreed to split (ie alternate) between the Warrington Food Bank and the St Joseph's Family Centre (the latter as suggested by Yvonne Potter). We could support Alford with a donation, in addition to those, eg for their children's Christmas party.
- f. Review of summer season: very successful, with excellent turnout for the morning relaxed duplicates and beginner tables. The Thursday afternoon sessions (extra lessons, Teams of Four, Minibridge demo) were well supported, and we will take that forward to summer 2027.
- g. Monday TD rota: now issued up to end November. For 2027, we will operate a rota with 7 people: DB, KP, PJ, MD, MS, JS, and HW. Thursday afternoons relaxed duplicates are already adequately covered, with Ian Douglas, Malcolm Roberts, and Jim Steele are all accustomed to doing that.
- h. Jim has, after the meeting, issued a draft 2027 calendar for consideration by the Committee.

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

- a. Additional committee members- we will continue to 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 will seek advice as required from Keith or David.
- b. Venue: we are very happy with Alford Hall, but should consider contingency should this become unavailable to us in the future. Prospects at Alford look OK, but we need a contingency plan should things suddenly change.

9. 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. Mike commented that he felt the standard of our teaching was already pretty good, in the light of many years of attending lectures and regularly attending on Thursday mornings, and that the class members are generally positive about it.
- b. TD training: M&CBA have now run two repeats, in different locations, of the Paul Mathews course some of us attended (jointly with Antrobus) on 27/4/24. Our priority at present is not additional TD training, but more about getting those who have been trained into a TD rota and gaining experience in practice. (see item 7g). However, the Paul Mathews training session only covers common infractions, such as lead out of turn, revoke, etc, none of which occur in on-line sessions. There is a need for more expert TD training for our “newer” TD’s, so we will encourage attendance at a longer, more formal, course.

10. Future events

- a. Schools: There is a possibility of an event in next year’s school holidays (Easter, Summer?) arranged by Sam Wilcock. She has DBS Certification. If she can arrange it, we will be very pleased to support it. The target age range is top primary school, ie year 6.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Saturday 28th November, 0930 hrs, on Zoom.