

Minutes of Warrington Bridge Club Committee Meeting

Sat 9th May 2026, 0930hrs, on Zoom

1. Apologies

None. All present.

2. Minutes of previous Committee meeting, held 14th March 2026. The minutes of these previous meetings were accepted. There were no matters arising not on today's agenda.

3. On-Line Bridge

- a. How to increase attendance- Jim has worked with County, who are very supportive of a county-wide on-line initiative, working with bridge clubs in Merseyside and Cheshire. A flyer has been produced (copy attached) as a tool for inviting participation. Jim has trawled through information on-line to produce a list of bridge clubs. (copy attached). That already totals 48, both EBU affiliated and unaffiliated, much more than on the M&CBA website, and even that might have missed some. Some of those already run on-line sessions, but they are mostly small sessions, so there could be room for clubbing together. Jim will continue to make approaches to all these clubs. **ACTION Jim**
- 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, and to continue with Adam as a paid TD. Recently Adam called on someone else to run the session when he was away, without letting us know, and without giving us the opportunity to provide our own TD. Jim has requested that Adam asks us first, next time.

5. Finances

- a. Update/ comment: Janet said that finances are OK and there are no concerns. The hassle of chasing up late payers remains, and it took a while to get the Q1 payments all received.
- b. Membership update: steady at 133 (of whom 24 play on-line only). The next influx is expected in September, when the new classes start. We should gain approx. 12 from current u3a Improvers.
- c. Playing fees: we do not want to increase playing fees at present. We will keep under review, pending more information from Alford Hall. (see item 9b)

6. Expenditure items

- a. 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. Jim asked Ian if Croft might be thinking of moving from manual scoring with travellers to a tablet-based system. We might also suggest a trial at Antrobus with smartphones/BriAn at some time in the future, if they might be susceptible to change, or even try it ourselves.
- b. Next year, 2027, is our 50th year (the Club started in 1977). We discussed options to mark the occasion. We might have some special events, and buy a new batch of mugs, and possibly pens.

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: these are held monthly on a Tuesday morning, on topics related to clubs/grass roots bridge. Jim attends when available. Video recordings of the sessions are available on the EBU website. Recent topics include scoring systems such as tablets, where clubs who using them share their experiences.

8. Operations

- a. Rota/cover for Mondays when Jim and Mike are both away. Jim will provide Mike (and Ian) with an updated 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: this is working OK. Roger can pass the machine to Jim if he's going to be away for any extended period. **ACTION Roger**
- c. Club Strategy: we had a discussion on some ideas to take the Club forward. We still need a draft strategy update. Action remains on Mike to update the previous document, but this time we have a draft M&CBA strategy to take into account. **ACTION Mike.**
- d. SIM pairs: we don't have a SIM pairs event, now we have opted out of Children in Need. Jim has discussed possible alternatives with Keith, but these all have to link to a charity event. We agreed that the attraction of having a SIM pairs event, of interest to only a few members, was outweighed by the rake-off of the contributions we raise going to ECATS, and the extra admin. We will not pursue a SIM pairs event for 2026.
- e. Advanced lessons/ workshops over the summer: we have Thursday afternoons free from 2nd July to 3rd September inclusive. We agreed that Jim would propose two dates and topics, and email members to see if there is interest. Having discussed with Keith, we agreed that focus on card play rather than extra bidding systems was preferable. **ACTION Jim**
- f. Monday TD rota: we have agreed that Mike Dennis, Malcolm Strange and Jim Steele will be added into the rota. Jim has proposed a rota of dates for the coming weeks, up to end August ([attached](#)). For two of these six (PJ and MD), a separate person is required to operate the laptop and do the scoring. It was noted that both Ian Douglas, Malcolm Roberts, and Jim Steele are all accustomed to carrying out the TD role on a Thursday afternoon, including doing the scoring, and this already works well on an ad hoc basis.

9. 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 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. There is a new regime at Alford Hall, Jess having left on 1st May. The management arrangements are being led by Trustee Mrs Sam Wilcock, whom Mike, Ian and Jim all met on Thursday. There is to be a new part time manager (Mark) whom we have not yet met. Jim will send Sam contact details for the officers of the Club. **ACTION Jim (complete)**. We will need to wait to see if any significant changes are requested to our room hire charges.

10. 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 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 8f)

11. 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, and include in an email to members to gauge interest. We also agreed to set up a publicity stall, weather permitting, at the Stockton Heath festival on Saturday 4th July, from circa 11am to 3pm. Malcolm Roberts said he can provide a gazebo. We will need about 8 garden chairs, and two bridge tables, one for playing and one for display of flyers/promotional materials. **ACTION Mike/Malcolm/Jim**
- b. We had previously discussed an inter-club teams evening with Croft, and though their committee were supportive, the membership were not, so we have had to shelve the idea. Instead, we propose a teams-of-4 afternoon charity event in the summer, say on Thursday afternoon 9th July. Jim will include this in his email to members, to see if there is interest /support for such an event. **ACTION Jim**

12. AOB

We briefly discussed how to increase transfer from learning/relaxed duplicate to Monday evenings. We have quite a good success rate, based on charity nights and individual support and encouragement, eg from Brenda, but we recognised we need to continue.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Saturday 18th July, 0930 hrs, on Zoom. We know some people will not be available, but that's inevitable in the summer.