

**Minutes of Warrington Bridge Club Committee Meeting**  
**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022, 930am, on Zoom**

Present: Jim Steele (chair), Mike Dennis (secretary), Janet Jagan (Treasurer), David Burrows, Brigitte Massey, Janine Curwell

**Note: post-meeting updates also included**

**1 Apologies:** Malcolm Roberts, David Tilley

**2 Minutes of previous meeting** held 3rd September 2022: accepted as a true record.  
There were no matters arising not on today's agenda.

**3 BWS: On-line activities**

Jim shared the current version of the rolling spreadsheet which tallies up attendances, costs, and income in our on-line sessions, to update the Committee. We remain in profit each month, though some sessions lose a small amount of money for Warrington. Friday evenings are the most popular for our members.

We agreed that the BWS operation remains a valuable part of our activities, and we want to continue.

Jim commented that we had not had a BWS Organizer's meeting since 28<sup>th</sup> March, and things had drifted rather, with Adam Wiseberg doing most of the work as TD. Jim had spoken to Linda Banks at Brierfield, and we agreed that we should try to arrange a meeting, preferably before Christmas.

**ACTION Jim (to speak to DT)**

**4 F2F Activities/ Alford Hall**

a. We received an unexpected email from the manager late Thursday last, referring to some issues with use of the kitchen -Jim and Mike will arrange to meet with Jess ASAP to try to get to the bottom of what these problems might be. **ACTION Jim, Mike**

**Note: on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November, Mike and Jim met with Jess to discuss; the outcome of the discussion is included in Appendix 1 below.**

We are still interested as a Club in financially supporting some updating of the room and facilities, but would need to be confident of our long term position at Alford Hall.

b. Setting up on Monday evenings: most of this is still being done by Jim, Hilary, and Mike. We need more resilience in case of unexpected events, illness etc (as happened last Monday 7th). We agreed we needed to change from the present ad hoc system to a member's rota, starting with committee members. We will prepare a short aide memoire of what is required. **ACTION Jim**

**Note: after the meeting, this has been drawn up. See Appendix 2 below.**

We also need a TD and scorer (ie scoring using the laptop) rota. **ACTION Mike**

c. Club night relaxed duplicate session: the purpose is to introduce newer players to Club sessions and our more experienced members. It will be held on Monday 28/11/22. We will play fewer boards, at a more relaxed pace. All our New Players will be invited to attend (in pairs). We will aim to get an odd number of full tables, to get a straightforward Mitchell movement, and have experienced players N/S to operate the Bridgemates. We agreed a normal start time, but to have a break around halfway through. We also agreed to provide mince pies and mulled wine. We will check that the proposed arrangements are satisfactory with Alford Hall. **ACTION Mike**

d. Children in Need Charity SIM Pairs: these were held successfully on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November (F2F) and Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November (BWS on-line on RealBridge). The Committee agreed that all session fees would be donated gross to Children in Need, and the Club would pay the session costs. On that basis we raised £255 and will pay this amount direct to Ecats, plus any more donations we receive.

e. The first joint gentle duplicate of the teaching season (Sept to June) will be held on Thursday morning 8/12/22. This is a joint session with the u3a Improvers class and our Intermediates class, and the format was very successful last season. Further dates to be arranged in conjunction with Malcolm Roberts.

- f. Club social: we agreed a proposed date of Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January. The formal will be drinks and nibbles, and presentation of prizes, followed by a regular duplicate pairs playing session. Janine and Mike will lead on the arrangements, and ensure Alford Hall are kept informed of what we propose.  
**ACTION Janine, Mike**
- g. Thursday mornings: class numbers are holding up well, with usually 5 tables. Jim gave notice of absence of himself and Hilary for several weeks sometime in the period March to June 2023 (dates yet to be confirmed), so we need to cover the Thursday lessons during the period he is away.
- h. Thursday afternoon sessions (open to all comers, whether members or not): we agreed to continue an extra “advanced” lesson on the first Thursday of the month, and to try more duplicate sessions on the other Thursdays. We played a duplicate last Thursday afternoon (10<sup>th</sup>) which went down well. We can play it by ear on the day depending on how many tables we get, and even canvas those there to see what arrangement they would prefer.
- i. Christmas period dates: on Thursdays 22 Dec and 29 Dec, the Olive Tree at Penketh will be unavailable, so we will run an open session for all at Alford Hall, (including the u3a classes) on those mornings, with no afternoon session. Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> Dec and Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January will be as normal. Monday evenings: we will not have a F2F session at Alford Hall on 26<sup>th</sup> December or 2<sup>nd</sup> January, and resume our Monday evening sessions on 9<sup>th</sup> January. Mike will inform Alford Hall of these Christmas period arrangements. **ACTION Mike**
- j. AGM: we agreed to hold it online again on a Saturday morning, date TBC, eg late February. The usual formalities need to be covered, especially election of club officials.

## 5 Membership update.

- a. Jim reported that our membership continues to grow. We have 19 new members in 2022 to date, comprising 14 New Players, 2 Full members, and 3 on-line members. Our total membership is now 127, a healthy increase from our low point of just under 60 in 2019. The 127 comprise 50 New Players (many of whom will be transferred to Full Membership on 1<sup>st</sup> January), 54 Full Members, and 23 On-line Members.
- c. Our activity rate remains very encouraging, with over 70% active during September/ October.
- d. Publicity: our main vehicle for club information is the website.  
The poster campaign has not been an evident success, though the costs were very small. We noted that the Club address is not stated on the poster- we would consider adding that if we decide to do another run.  
We also noted that our Club details are now correct in the Local Groups section of the freebie Essential Guide booklet, which is issued every two months and goes through letterboxes throughout the Warrington area. We have also arranged for it to be included in all editions, not just the one for Stockton Heath & Appleton as before.

## 6 Finances

- a. The treasurer gave an update about the club financial position, which is healthy, and no urgent changes are needed. We are able to cover our increased rent of £90 per week, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022.  
JJ had to leave the meeting at this point owing to another commitment.
- b. Future expenditure:
  - We agreed to purchase new tablecloths. **ACTION Mike (now done- ordered by Mike)**
  - We will purchase a new notice board, as the one we have is falling apart. **ACTION Jim (now done, ordered by Jim)**
  - We will fund the refreshments at the Monday evening event on 28<sup>th</sup> November, and the social in January.
  - We will fund competition prizes to be awarded at the social in January.
  - We will consider offering funding to Alford to improve the room (eg curtains) but will need assurances from Alford about our tenure.

## 7 Club Competitions

- a. Monday evening F2F Pairs and Friday evening On-line Pairs: as already mentioned in previous minutes, we are recording scratch pairs and handicap pairs competitions on Monday evenings and Friday evenings, as cumulative for all 2022. We were happy with the automated handicap system, which simply uses players' actual results on a rolling 12-month basis, an option available automatically within Bridgewebs.
- b. We expect to repeat these competitions for 2023.
- c. Repeat of previous minute: Malcolm suggested we might have a couple of trophies to hand out each week for the NS and EW winners of our proposed Thursday afternoon Relaxed Duplicate. The trophies would change hands each week to the winning pairs. This would require results available on the day, ie use of Bridgemates. This would be a good idea anyway, as it would eliminate the extra work of manual scoring from paper travelers every session. Accordingly, we agreed to introduce Bridgemates training in our joint Gentle Duplicate sessions on Thursday mornings, and/or Thursday afternoon sessions, as soon as we felt it was appropriate.

## 8 Education /Teaching (in absence of Malcolm Roberts)

- a. We have a healthy attendance at our Thursday morning Intermediate class. However, we need more members support for Thursday morning sessions, and agreed we would keep pressing members on Monday evenings, and pass a sheet round for people to put their name down. We also need more members involved in lesson delivery. It is obviously not for everyone, but it is vital for the future of the Club. We will aim to have a list of people prepared to lead a lesson delivery (Mike Dennis, Keith Perry, Malcolm Roberts), and have everyone up to speed with the set up (screen, laptop, projector), location of files, prepared boards, etc, by March of next year. **ACTION Jim**
- b. Support for teaching classes: Martin Cookson will continue to assist Andrew Young with the Beginners; Malcolm Roberts and David Simmers will run the Improvers, and Brigitte will assist at the Olive Tree as required, across the two classes.
- c. We discussed whether to continue with the advanced lessons, on the first Thursday afternoon of the month. Though we were unclear about the real demand, we will continue in the meantime.

## 9 AOB

No items to discuss

## 10 Date of next meeting (on Zoom)

Proposed Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 0930. Committee members are asked to put it in their diaries, and to notify the Secretary if they cannot attend on that date.

## Appendix 1

### Notes of discussion between Mike, Jim, and Jess (Alford Hall manager) on 17<sup>th</sup> November

- Kitchen issues - WBC to provide own consumables: tea cloths, dishwasher tablets, etc.
- We to brief WBC members to pass any comments to Committee members, NOT direct to Alford staff. Direct comments have generated some friction.
- Xmas closing dates – agreed as Committee minutes. Website calendar now updated accordingly.
- Venue maintenance and updating: we made it clear we are interested in a long term use and in cooperating in any updating of the bridge room (Festival Suite).
- Alford Hall membership fee 2023: the annual fee (due 1/4/23) not yet been set. However, we will charge WBC members £5 in January and make a block payment to Alford prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April. The Club will absorb any uplift in Alford Hall membership fees.
- Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November: Alford Hall will supply red wine and glasses. Mulled wine arrangements are up to us.

## Appendix 2

### Monday Evening set up at Alford Hall

Aim to arrive at the Club by about 630pm, to give enough time to get everything done. Take a 2-pint container of milk (There's a Tesco Express right next door)

Open up external door to the Bridge Room (aka Festival Suite). If locked, you will need to use main entrance and go through and open from inside.

Unlock storeroom. It's a generic key like this.  
They have a spare behind the bar, if you don't have one.



Unlock the two padlocks, on the wheely box (code **4567**) and the metal store cupboard (code **6543**). Once the numbers are lined up, you need to press the button on the end of the padlock to open it.

Put out tables (6 might suffice, sometimes 7) and chairs.

Put the cloths on the tables. They're in a plastic box in the metal store cupboard.

Wheel out the wheely box. **Note: it is heavy, and the storeroom floor is uneven, so this might need two people.**

Open up the wheely box and plug the yellow power cable into the mains.

Boot up the laptop. Select Club Sessions. The password is **7nts**. Note: the mouse is wireless, battery powered, and has an on/off switch underneath.

Put out bidding boxes. Preferred are our own ones, in the drawer in the wheely box. (There are others in the store cupboard, belonging to u3a, which are the fold away type).

Bring out the Club notice board and set it up near the entrance door.

Set out the refreshments in the kitchen – tea, coffee, biscuits, sugar, milk. The tea, coffee, biscuits etc are in a basket, normally in the wheely box.

Take the plastic box of clean mugs from the storeroom and set it out in the kitchen. Take the cardboard box for dirty mugs awaiting washing up, and put that out in the kitchen too.

### **Putting away after the session**

Rinse out used mugs and put them in the cardboard box for mugs awaiting washing up. If time available, wash them up in the sink (the dishwasher is currently broken) and put them back in the large clear plastic box of clean mugs. We have tea towels and rubber gloves in our blue plastic basket which also has the tea, coffee, etc. Return both mug boxes (large plastic box for clean mugs, and cardboard box for dirties) to the storeroom.

Clear up and put the tea, coffee, biscuits and sugar back in the blue plastic basket and put it back in the wheely box.

Ensure the kitchen is left clean and tidy.

As there's a u3a bridge session on Tuesday mornings, you can **leave out** the bridge tables, chairs, and tablecloths – we share these with u3a.

Put our bidding boxes away in the drawer in the wheely box.

Return the plastic box of unused tablecloths into the metal store cupboard and lock it.

Put the notice board away in the storeroom.

Once the scorer has finished with the laptop and powered it down, pack away the power cable, ensure everything is back in the wheely box (Bridgemates, boards, bidding boxes, refreshments, etc) and close it up, including the removable back panel.

Wheel the wheely box into the storeroom and secure with the security cable and padlock. **Note: the storeroom floor is uneven, so it will be easier with two people.**

Close and lock the storeroom.

Switch off all lights before leaving. Make sure the ladies' toilet light is switched off (and that there is no one still in there!) Make sure the 3 wall fan heaters are all switched off – two radiators with switches at skirting board level, and the high level one over the doorway out to the kitchen.

When leaving, push the external door of the bridge room tight shut, to ensure the lock catches and the room is secure.