

Minutes of Warrington Bridge Club Committee Meeting

Sat 13th September 2025, 0930hrs, on Zoom

1. **Apologies**
Janet Jagan
2. **Minutes of previous Committee meeting**, held 7th June 2025.
The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted. There were no matters arising not on today's agenda.
3. **On-Line Bridge**
 - a. **Friday evenings:**
 - i. Since Stretford withdrew, at end March 2025, the Friday on-line session has been run by WBC alone. This means we are funding the TD cost ourselves, rather than sharing it, and we need more than 5 tables or the session will run at a loss. The numbers have usually been 5 or fewer in recent months. The Committee was content to continue, as we are not too worried by a small loss, and our purpose is to provide bridge playing opportunities to our members. We will however try to encourage more attendance. **ACTION All**
 - ii. Fees for Adam Wiseberg as TD are being paid quarterly- no issue.
 - b. **Tuesday evenings, joint with Antrobus:**
 - i. This is still struggling for numbers, but we have got some Improvers who are interested in playing. We resolved to keep supporting it and to encourage more players to join. It is important that the session does not run on too late, say finishing at the latest by 930, and usually by 910 or 915pm.
4. **Finances**
 - a. Janet had sent round a summary of income and expenditure for January to July. This showed a loss of around £1,000 over the period. The Committee was content with this position, as we had decided at the last AGM to operate at break even or small loss, so as not to build our reserves further. Reduction in subscription fees, retaining playing fees as existing levels, matching table money to our chosen local charity, and absorbing increasing costs (particularly room hire, our biggest cost item), have contributed to this. We clarified that matching table money on charity nights does not include any donations, though we did undertake to match a donation made on Monday 8th September, and have honoured that.
 - b. Choice of charity for 2026: we had already decided to continue supporting Walton Lea in 2025. It is a small local charity and our contribution makes a real difference. In considering which charity to support for 2026, we have had one suggestion from a member, Julie Evans, ie the Rape and Sexual Violence Support Centre, Cheshire and Merseyside (www.rapecentre.org.uk). Jim was asked to find more information, eg how the money is used, how we would pay. **ACTION Jim**
Mike made another suggestion, Active Hope (www.activehope.org). We also have the option of continuing with Walton Lea for a further year. We will consider next time.
 - c. **Billing:** Now quarterly. There were no reports of any issues about doing it this way. The next billing will be for Q3 (July/August/September) to be done in early October. **ACTION Jim/Carolyn**
 - d. **Auditor:** Brian Drinkwater is happy to do this for the present year, ie 2025, but we will need to find a new auditor for 2026 onwards. We already have some suggested names of qualified people, to follow up. **ACTION Jim/Janet**
 - e. **Membership:** we continue to attract new members. Our list is currently 140.

5. Expenditure items

- a. Two additional sets of 32 Jannersten boards with boxes have now been procured, and the financing by Croft Bridge Club sorted out.
- b. We have recently had an issue with the Bridgemate system not working. If it turns out to be the Bridgemate server which needs to be replaced, it will cost us £264 including VAT. However, the root of the problem is as yet unclear. Jim has reset the system and run a dummy session, and it worked OK, but we will need to see if the problem reappears. In the meantime Jim will provide pair number sheets, so that we can use manual travellers if we need to, while we sort it out. **ACTION Jim**

6. Publicity

- a. **Local GP surgeries/ Primary Care facilities (repeated from last time):** Mike will continue to see if there is mileage in following this up, separately from what u3a are doing. **ACTION Mike.**
- b. **Posters for new lessons:** these have been put up in Warrington Golf Club, and Walton Gardens café.
- c. **Essential Guide:** Ian confirmed that this is still working OK. The most recent edition (Sep/Oct 2025) entry looks good, covering both u3a bridge and WBC.
- d. **Advertorial (local press):** Jim did this, as agreed, following our Prize Awards evening. We had no feedback on whether this was published, or ignored. We agreed to drop this now, as local printed press is unlikely to be useful.
- e. **Photo opportunity with Walton Lea:** To be followed up. We agreed we would invite a representative to the club, on a Monday or a Thursday, for presentation of cheque. **ACTION Mike**
- f. **EBU webinars:** the EBU is now running monthly on-line sessions for bridge clubs to discuss their ideas for growing the game. Around 50 to 60 people typically attend, from clubs all over the country. Jim has attended the last two on behalf of WBC, and commented about our experiences at WBC. Our success with Charity/Improvers sessions went down particularly well. All this helps raise the profile of our club. The next webinar is Tuesday 7th October, 10am. The topic will be the role of teamwork & volunteering in bridge clubs. Jim will circulate joining details with Committee members, so that anyone who wants to attend can do so. **ACTION Jim**
- g. **Bridge for Pleasure :** Nicky Bainbridge publishes a monthly newsletter, which contains lots of data on how bridge clubs are doing in England, with articles about what some clubs are doing- as an ideas sharing platform. The recent edition has a feature on Warrington Bridge Club, and has been circulated to Committee members.

7. Operations

- a. **Hosting for Charity/Improvers nights:** Malcom Roberts has volunteered to be host, and will sort out a stand-in if he is unavailable.
- b. **Rota/cover for Mondays** when Jim and Mike are both away. This is an ongoing problem. The main issue is opening up the store cupboard, unlocking the wheely box padlock, and moving the wheely box into the bridge room. Setting everything out after that is reasonably straightforward, and most members will help. If there is no milk, someone can go next door and buy it- it only takes a couple of minutes. Physically moving the wheely box is the biggest issue, and either requires an able bodied man, or two people. We also need whoever is doing it to be there by 640 at the latest, preferably 630. Jim will email members to ask for volunteers for a rota, with two people each time. **ACTION Jim**
- c. **Club Strategy:** this is posted on the website, but is out of date, having been written in 2019. We should consider updating it. **ACTION Mike/Jim**
- d. **Mentoring people towards playing on Mondays:** Brenda has been very successful with this initiative, and the Committee commended her approach. We would like to keep working with it to extend further, on the principle that if a new player is partnered by someone they know, and who has some experience of the more “serious bridge” sessions, they are more likely to feel comfortable. Malcolm Roberts said he would be happy to participate on occasions. We have some names of Improvers who might be interested.

- e. **Children in Need SIM pairs:** this is in our calendar for 10th November. We had previously agreed not to continue with this, because of the hassle of paying, the rake-off by the organisers ECATS, and our contribution making little difference and being completely anonymous. We agreed to replace the 10th November with our own Charity/ Improvers evening. However, there is some interest in SIM pairs; Jim will discuss with Keith what options we have. **ACTION Jim**
- f. **Christmas Social:** confirmed for 15th December. Similar format to last year.

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

- a. Dealing machine: we have started with Roger Hesp doing this, with Keith covering over the summer. It is working well. There are some details to be sorted out with the boards for Croft BC.
- b. Website: Ian is the agreed deputy for Jim, already being the Bridgewebs webmaster for Birchwood & Croft. Jim and Ian will arrange a time to go over the WBC website pages, so that Ian is in a position to update the website if and when required. **ACTION Jim, Ian**
- c. Secretarial: Jim will be working with Carolyn to get her familiar with some of the secretarial duties, and share data bases. **ONGOING ACTION Jim/ Carolyn**
- d. Competitions secretary: this requires specialist expertise. We will discuss with Keith to see what help he can give us. **ACTION Mike**
- e. Teaching: Ted Cadman has now started helping with the beginners class, and came along on Thursday 11th. John Marshall is already heavily involved with assisting Andrew Young with the beginners, so the team continues to grow, which is a very good thing.
- f. Venue: we are happy with Alford Hall, and things are working OK. They have some current staffing problems with sickness absences, but they are managing.
- g. Approaching additional people for the Committee: with David Burrows standing down, we have a vacancy. We have some names in mind for who we might approach.
- h. Additional resource for running Thursday afternoon sessions/ operating the computer etc: Mike Pigott has volunteered and already started picking this up. We agreed to help with getting him fully up to speed asap.

9. Education/Teaching

- a. **Attendance at new classes:** Thursday 11 September was the start date. Despite some people who will attend being unavailable on week 1, we had 11 in Beginners, 15 in the Improvers class, and 20 attended the Intermediate class.
- b. Training for bridge teaching (standing item) Jim and Ian will continue to keep a look out for suitable training (venue, timing) **ACTION Jim/Ian**
- d. **TD training:** Adam Wiseberg has offered to run a course, over 4 dates. We have yet to sort out suitable dates. There are some people who already do directing, eg at Antrobus or online, or who have done it before: Hilary, Jim, Mike, and Malcolm Strange. Some people at Croft might also want to join in. Ian confirmed they would have up to three. **ACTION Mike** to arrange with AW.

10. County (M&CBA)

Mark Madely, the County chairman, is inviting Clubs to nominate someone to attend meetings, on-line, up to 4 times per year. We agreed that Jim would be the WBC nominee. Unfortunately the first meeting was 10am on Thursday 11th, so everyone was engaged in classes, so we could not provide a representative from Warrington.

11. AOB

No items

12. Date of Next Meeting: Saturday 22nd November, 0930 hrs, on Zoom (Provisional).