

Wells City Bridge Club (WCBC)

Minutes of AGM 27th April 2023

The Annual General Meeting of the WCBC was held on 27 April 2023 at St Thomas Church Hall at 6.15 pm with 33 members in attendance.

1. Charlie Sutton (Chairman) opened the meeting, welcoming everyone, and thanking them for attending.
2. Apologies were offered from Rosie Shaljean, Mary Loakes, Norman Eve, Mary Neilson, Paul Hole, Valerie Jackson, Ann Drew, Keith Beasley, John Hole, Joanna Pinching and Andrew Bond.
3. Charlie proposed that the minutes of the 2022 SGM be approved as an accurate record. Seconded by Dick Crane. The motion was approved unanimously.
3. **Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising.
4. **Election of Officers:** Present officers are Chairperson: Charlie Sutton; Treasurer: Janette Norris; Secretary and Website: Carol Baron; Other committee members Rosie Shaljean, Lyndsay Hewitt and Keith Beasley.

Chairman said that whilst the present officers are all happy to continue for another year more volunteers were invited. Keith Beasley has agreed to be Deputy Chairman. The motion to adopt the current officers was proposed by Carol Hamblin and seconded by Mike Baron and approved unanimously.

5. **Chairman's Report:**

I think this year has been one of consolidation and us beginning to develop the club. Last year remember we had to decide whether to 'go it alone' after the original Wells BC folded through lack of numbers. After a shaky start where we were getting 4-5 tables and not quite breaking even we have improved now to anything between 6-8 tables on most evenings which, despite the inevitable increase in hall costs, mean we do now break even. We have had a number of new members join us who I hope have settled in and are enjoying their bridge with us. We've also had some guests come for an evening's play whilst on holiday in the area which is very encouraging. Completely running ourselves is not noticeably any different on a club evening to previously, but there has been an awful lot of behind the scenes running to make sure the club functions. I know you all think this is down to me, but believe me it isn't. When I wasn't here for a few weeks due to family/holiday/illness the club still kept going. There will be a longer period in May/June/July when I'm not here, due to a holiday and a hip operation, so hopefully it will keep going then as well! However, the hard work the club needs is done by Carol B looking after the membership and the website, by Janette keeping the finances in order and Roy for auditing them, and by Rosie who has taken on what I did about finding partners which really does help keep our numbers up on an evening. There are also of course Dick and John who direct many evenings and Janette, Sheena, Johnny, and Mike Foster who take on the thankless task of scoring. Again our thanks to Roy for advice when the system seems to not cooperate. Extra thanks to Mike F who has agreed to look after the scoring system when it needs updates etc. John and Lindsay painlessly make sure your money is collected each week and we mustn't forget Carol H and Loucie who have made sure there are always refreshments available but more about them later! So, a really big thank you to all those who enable the club to run. As you can see a lot of people work to make sure the club functions well but please don't be complacent we really do need more people to step up and direct (it's not difficult and people are very forgiving!) and to score, and again it's not as difficult as you might imagine. Please do not be a person who just turns up, plays, and goes home - see what you can do to make this club even better. As I said at the start it's been a year of consolidation, but we haven't always got our act together! We didn't join in with the EBU charity evening nor did we have our own as we usually do in the Autumn. I'm hopeful we can reinstate that this coming Autumn. Also, the County League competition crept up on us and we didn't get a team entered in time this year. I really do think we should try and enter next year for this, but it will need a co-ordinator to get things going and a team entered before the summer for the first games in Sept/Oct. We did however get ourselves together, (and this shows the sort of club we are), to have a very successful social bridge evening in Jan with some lovely refreshments. Thank you to Rosie, Yvonne, and Paul for organising

those. Last June, when we would normally have had a summer social evening, was too soon to think about being sociable and mixing, we'd only just got past playing in masks by then! I do hope however we will be able to have our summer social bridge evening this year but, as I indicated earlier, I won't be able to organise it. I think however it is really important for any club not to rely on any one particular person to make things happen so I hope we do have a summer social evening and that someone else can step forward and organise it. So, in conclusion, we could have done some things better this year but overall I think we should be pleased (proud) with ourselves that the club is up and running and I think successful.

6. Treasurer's Report and Statement:

Copies of the end of year balance sheet have been distributed at the start of the meeting, and I will outline the most significant figures. Sheena Langham set up the accounts spreadsheet and I have continued its use (under her tuition in the early days). Thank you to Roy Rowe for auditing the accounts.

Year end balance was £4499.52 showing an excess of income over expenditure of £338, This balance had been accrued by both the Tuesday and Thursday clubs.

Income for the year 2022/23 was £3145.50 with expenditure for both clubs being £2718.25. There are liabilities of £351.30, giving the final balance of £4499.52.

The current year did not start in a typical way – for example low numbers of players, no refreshment expenses and no competition expenses. The yearly average number of table has been 5.1 which just covers the cost of room hire, EBU weekly fees, insurance, refreshments and social evening. Going forward we might expect possible expenses for pre-dealt hands as well as computer or tablet upgrades or replacements. With a profit of £338 the level of subscription of £5 and table money of £3 seems to be at the correct level to avoid using the club reserves.

Thank you to John Hewett, Rosie Shaljean and Carol Hamblin for collecting the table money each week and to Roy Rowe for auditing the accounts.

Questions were invited from the floor. Don asked whether there was a possibility that hall hire costs might increase. Charlie was able to say that hopefully not yet.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Richard Holmes and seconded by John Marriott.

Charlie presented Roy with a bottle of wine to say thank you for his help and support with both the accounts and with the computer problems experienced recently.

7. Other Business:

7a) County League:

Charlie said that although we hadn't managed to play in the County League this year, it was important to try to play in the future. The previous venue of Hullavington had been one of the reasons that members were not keen to play but now it was possible to play online (through RealBridge). This is a call for volunteers to coordinate a team. Please speak with Charlie for more information. Richard Holmes commented that, as someone who has been involved in the County League in the past, he felt strongly that we are capable of sending at least teams into the competition.

Action: Volunteer required.

7b) Teaching at the Club:

Dick Crane offered a vote of thanks to Charlie for everything he does for the Club. Under his Chairmanship standards have improved. Dick, however feels it would be useful to offer lessons for members who wish to continue to improve. Charlie said it might be possible to have a teaching session either on a Wednesday or possibly Thursday before our duplicate session starts. There would be a cost incurred on a Wednesday but there might not be on a Thursday. There

followed a general discussion. Roy Rowe, who teaches bridge at West Harptree, but is unable to help with teaching, kindly offered the loan of Power Point slides and advice on how to run a class before normal play. Yvonne commented that what is needed is teaching at the improver level, and that there are very good online lessons available. The consensus seemed to be that although no final decision was made, lessons would be well received probably on a Thursday before our evening session starts. Dick will start a list of members who would be interested in lessons.
Action: Dick Crane.

7c) Online Bridge:

There has been a request for the club to run an online bridge session. Charlie asked for comments and interest from the floor. It was suggested that there are other online sessions which members of our club could play in. Yvonne pointed out that in order to have a session such as had during lockdown it was necessary to have a minimum of 5 tables, needing 20 people to play regularly. A show of hands for interest was called for and only 2 people showed interest, plus the member requesting. The decision was that sadly it would not be viable as there is not enough interest.

8. Any Other Business:

Glen Crocker spoke on behalf of himself and Angela saying that, as new members during the year how wonderfully welcome they had been made to feel and how much they enjoyed their club evenings. Charlie responded with thanks commenting that this was the way we wanted the club to be, that we are aware that we need to improve on speed of play, but we must continue to be as friendly as possible.

9. Presentation of Annual Awards: Before beginning the presentation of the WCBC awards Charlie congratulated Denise Denis and Rosie Cutbill who have won the annual competition for the David Hancock award at the Coxley Bridge Club. Well done to them.

WCBC Shield: Charlie Sutton and Mary Loakes

The WCBC shield for the pair having the highest percentage for 2022-2023 was made by Carol B. Many Congratulations to Charlie and Mary

50% Award: Rosie Cutbill and Keith Beasley

We were unable to run the annual handicap competition this year so it was decided to make an award to the pair having a percentage closest to, but not exceeding 50%. Presented by Charlie with congratulations.

Simon Loveday Award: Carol Hamblin and Loucie Smithson

The recipients of the Simon Loveday award this year were chosen not only because each week they make sure that club members are well catered for with tea, coffee and biscuits, but also, as a pair, they have one of the highest attendance records of the year. They have also improved their results with their % scores improving greatly over the course of the year. Sheena Loveday presented certificates and vouchers for afternoon tea to Carol and Loucie. Sheena said how very pleased she was sure Simon would be to see the club continuing in such a successful manner. . Thank you and congratulations to Carol and Loucie.

The meeting closed at 7.10 following a vote of thanks to the Committee and all volunteers made by Yvonne.

CB

29/4/23