

# WORCESTERSHIRE CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

## MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 8th JUNE 2026

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Simon Smith, Stewart Fishburne, Maurice Curtis, Paul Slater, Marian Wilcox, Sarah Wenden, John Sansom, Jane Morton & Richard Arrowsmith.

### 2. Minutes of the 2025 AGM

These had been on the website for the previous year.

### 3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

### 4. Chairman's remarks

Richard said that he had only received 2 responses to his appeal, which was disappointing as it was sent to all Members with the AGM Notice. He then went through the 10 areas he had identified together with objectives and the Committee Member responsible. His statement to the AGM is attached as an Appendix to these Minutes. He emphasised that the main issue is a lack of effective publicity and promotion. The Meeting accepted his commitment to make things happen. Helen Cameron offered to help with promotion and would be willing to join the Committee. He was asked about BridgeCast and said that he was negotiating a discount with Andrew Robson but the details still need to be agreed.

### 5. Presentation of Accounts

Chris presented the accounts, which show a small surplus of £44 compared to a surplus of £594 the previous year. Within those figures the Malvern Congress shows a surplus of £2,543 compared to a surplus of £1,843 the previous year. The interest on our base rate tracker account with United Trust Bank was £2,634 compared to £3,092 the previous year.

He also wanted to highlight :-

- Training and courses include EBED subs and 3 sets of TD training courses (£288 each)
- Promotion and Advertising includes advertising boards and the Bridge in Cafés initiative.
- Depreciation of £640 is the first year (of five) for the duplimating machine purchased last year.

Finally, Chris said that he would like to thank Stewart as the Independent Examiner.

He was asked how we planned to use our substantial funds and confirmed that it would be used to promote bridge in the County.

The accounts were accepted by general consent.

### 6. County Nights

The following motion had been received.

The County Night Sub-Committee require the County to provide support to it by:

- Having an established member of the WCBA Committee on this sub-committee, and
- Inviting the sub-committee to a County committee meeting at least once per year when County Monday bridge is to be discussed.

It had already been agreed that Chris Taylor would join the County Night Sub-Committee and he will arrange to have a meeting with the rest of the Sub-Committee. Also they would be welcome to attend a Committee Meeting when County Night bridge was being discussed.

## **7. Appointment of officers and committee**

Richard Jephcott will continue as Chairman, Chris Taylor will continue as Treasurer and Paul Hammond will continue as Secretary. Nicola Downes has resigned from the Committee. Yvette Waide & Louise Wilson are standing down in rotation but both of them are seeking re-election. That still leaves one vacancy on the Committee and Helen Cameron was proposed to fill that vacancy.

## **8. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Stewart Fishburne was happy to continue being our Independent Examiner.

## **9. Any other business**

Keith Collins announced that it was Bromsgrove Bridge Club's Diamond Jubilee this year and they would be holding a Jubilee Night to which they would invite pairs from all the local Clubs to attend. There was a brief discussion as to whether they would be able to award Masterpoints at higher rate for this special event and it was agreed that this would be investigated.

Eddy reported out that it was Droitwich Bridge Club's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year but that they were not planning any special events.

Mike Vetch said that Yvette had done much of the work relating to training this year.

Dick asked about the Charity Rubber Bridge competition and whether it could be resurrected. Martin confirmed that event had been stopped due to a lack of entries. It was pointed out that this may have been caused by insufficient promotion and could possibly be restarted with the right publicity.

Nick said that we needed more entries in the Leagues this requires better publicity. The best source of new teams is if our teachers can encourage their students to enter the League when they are ready. In the past we have had a Beginners Division but recently new teams have played in the No Fear Division.

## **10. Presentation of Trophies**

The trophy for the Championship Teams was presented to Mike Willoughby, Chris & Joyce Taylor (Stewart Fishburne was not present).

The Phillipps Pairs trophy was presented to Nick Forward & Steve Allerston.



## Chairman's Statement to WCBA 2026 AGM

Further to the very limited response to my appeal, I have decided that the time has come to be definitive in what I expect from Committee members during my 2<sup>nd</sup> year as Chairman.

Worcestershire is blessed with numerous clubs, both affiliated and non-affiliated to the EBU, all of which offer to their members opportunities to learn and play bridge and are self-sufficient.

Therefore, the reason for the WCBA to exist is if we offer more than the clubs can achieve on their own.

Our offering for 2026/2027 combined with the Committee members responsible for delivery is;

<p><b>1. Monday County Days</b> consisting of 2 Monday evenings, 1 Monday afternoon and 1 online event per month. We expect players that have ambitions to play County Bridge to regularly support these events.</p>	<p><b>Chris</b> to lead supported by Sub-Committee</p>
<p><b>2. County Leagues.</b> This is an opportunity for teams throughout the County to take part in and learn all about Teams Bridge. (Incl. No Fear League).</p>	<p><b>New Committee member</b> needed supported by Nick Forward</p>
<p><b>3. Training.</b> The clubs with oversight from Mike Vetch are doing a good job on teaching to beginners. We will introduce an improver program based upon Andrew Robson's BridgeCast.</p>	<p><b>Yvette</b> to lead supported by Mike Vetch, Steve Allerston and Richard Greenwood and all WCBA teachers.</p>
<p><b>4. Café Bridge, Bridge in Cafes and other Charity events</b> with the main purpose to increase the exposure of bridge to the community.</p>	<p><b>Jonathan</b> to lead</p>
<p><b>5. A school's</b> package consisting of bridge clubs in at least 2 schools, links to EBED events and the Thursday afternoon children's on-line platform. In this way we can do our bit to ensure the long-term future of the game.</p>	<p><b>Richard</b> to lead supported by helpers yet to be identified.</p>
<p><b>6. County Bridge</b> and other opportunities to represent Worcestershire at all levels.</p>	<p><b>Mike</b> to lead supported by Selection Sub-Committee and Louise.</p>
<p><b>7. The Malvern Congress</b>, our flag ship event of the year. <b>Plus, other key events incl. Closed Teams and Pairs.</b></p>	<p><b>Martin</b> to lead supported by Sub-Committee</p>
<p><b>8. A package for Non-affiliated Clubs</b> whereby they pay nothing for two years allowing them to see the benefits of being part of the EBU for free. Or any other methodology of involving these Clubs.</p>	<p><b>Eddy</b> to lead</p>
<p><b>9. Pathways.</b> Having taught beginners they need a pathway into club bridge.</p>	<p><b>Louise</b> to lead supported by Yvette.</p>
<p><b>10. Control.</b> All the above controlled financially, administratively and marketed / promoted to the wider community.</p>	<p><b>Chris, Paul and New Committee Member.</b></p>