

# A briefing paper on the Benefits and Drawbacks of Affiliation to the EBU (English Bridge Union)

At the March WBC AGM, members asked for a clear explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of affiliating to the English Bridge Union (EBU). This paper summarises both sides of the case to help members make an informed decision.

A short member survey has been circulated with this document, which includes a question on affiliation.

The Committee will consider affiliation only if: a) a majority of current members support affiliation in principle, and b) the additional administrative requirements are manageable.

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## 1 Benefits of Affiliation

### 1.1 Benefits to the Club

Affiliation offers several practical and financial advantages:

- Access to discounts
  - Reduced fees for director and teacher training (including a free teacher training place every two years),
  - Lower prices for equipment and supplies such as cards, travellers and scorecards.
  - reduced cost public liability insurance.
- Improved visibility and modern systems
  - Affiliated clubs are listed in the EBU club directory, helping new players find them.
  - Affiliated clubs have free access to the EBUScore Pairs scoring software, which replaces the unsupported PairsScorer program currently in use by the club.
- Eligibility for competitions and events
  - Access to various national competitions, such as the National Interclub Knockout (teams) competition and Simultaneous Pairs events (4 per year).
  - Automatic membership of GCBA (Gloucestershire County Bridge Association) providing:
    - access to interclub (teams) competitions available at County level
    - advice on rulings, laws, ethics and technology
    - support for disciplinary or technical issues

### 1.2 Benefits to Individual Members

If the club affiliates, all members will benefit from

- Participation in the National Grading scheme and the opportunity to gain Masterpoints.
- A quarterly *English Bridge* magazine and an EBU diary.
- Eligibility to enter EBU and GCBA competitions.
- Eligibility to represent Gloucestershire at county level.

## 1.3 Benefit to the wider bridge community.

Affiliation contributes to the development and sustainability of bridge more broadly:

- The EBU is a non-profit organisation supported by volunteers and a small professional staff.
- Member contributions support events at County and International level, including helping to fund presence in international competitions.
- Member contributions help the EBU's youth development program (GCBA are currently undertaking a program to try and get bridge taught in schools in some way, and are seeking help from clubs with schools in the area.)
- The EBU partner charity, English Bridge Education and Development (EBED) provides teacher and director training courses and helps to revise laws, regulations and ethics and the framework for running duplicate bridge.

## 2 The Drawbacks of Affiliation

### 2.1 Additional Financial Cost

- There is a £32 annual fee, payable by affiliated clubs (the first year may be free).
- Members of affiliated clubs pay a "universal membership" charge on top of the club table fee each time they play (currently 48pence to EBU and 1p to GCBA). This would therefore increase table fees by 50pence per person for all club sessions (online and in person)

### 2.2 Additional Administration

- Affiliated clubs are required to submit session results and manage membership data in one with EBU procedures.
- There would additional administration required to collect the Universal Membership Charge and make payments to the EBU/GCBA.
- A named individual would need to be identified to act as the Clubs EBU Liaison Officer

### 2.3 Reduced Flexibility

- Affiliated clubs are expected to follow EBU regulations, permitted bedding systems and competition rules. (Although most club-level play is unaffected, some areas of local discretion may be reduced).

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