

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting

### The York Bridge Club

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 6.30pm

Phil Godfrey, A Trustee of the Company & Charity, welcomed all attendees at the meeting. He explained that Sally Gregory was feeling unwell and had asked him to chair the meeting on her behalf. Phil explained there would be 2 meetings – firstly, for the Charity & Company and secondly, for the Bridge Club.

Apologies were received from Sally Gregory, Piers & Mary Percival, Wilma Van Gelder, Anne Bednarski, Stuart Kay, Michael Sturge, Margaret Cowe, Stuart Coggrave, Dene Pickles, Norman & Frances Smith, Linda Kitchen, David Robinson, Jenny Prosser, David Waxman, Bryan Boulter, Gill Thornton & Tom Cohen.

#### Minutes of previous AGM

It was agreed that the issued minutes were a true record of the meeting which had taken place on 6th July 2023.

#### Trustees Report

Phil presented a summary of the Trustees Report which is included on page 4 of the Financial Statements for Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, as follows: -

*2023/4 has proved to be a successful year for the club. Our decision to stop running all online bridge and teaching has continued to prove effective. Membership numbers are continuing to grow and have now surpassed 300 with our successful integrated teaching pathway and provision of mentoring support proving a success at bringing new and returning learners into the club playing sessions.*

*Whilst there have been substantial financial pressures on expenses, and in particular, the costs of utilities such as electricity, the restructuring of the outstanding loans has meant that we have been able to control these costs to remain within budgets. In the current year, we have completed the further restructuring of £20,000 of long-term loans replacing interest bearing loans with interest free loans and we have repaid a further sum of £36,737 leaving outstanding loans (as at 30th April) of £52,763.*

*The Trustees have agreed a slight revision to the reserves and loan repayment policies to ensure the timely repayment of the remaining loans and the provision of a longer-term maintenance fund for future capital spends. Whilst our policy continues*

*to make allowance for repayment of outstanding loans over the next 8 years, we anticipate earlier repayment provided current successes are maintained.*

*To meet our charitable aims, we have continued to build on links with the local community and Councillors and have hosted events at the Acomb Explore as well as our own drop-in open days. This has been further supported by the social events at the club that have encouraged members and visitors. We expect to continue to build on these foundations in the coming year taking bridge to communities in the areas that have not previously had the opportunity to partake with the aim of increasing social interactions and reducing isolation.*

*Within the bridge community, we continue to widen our scope both in running external events (seminars and external competitions) and in sharing our knowledge and experiences with other clubs in the area. We have recently agreed a three-way tie up with local clubs to jointly promote, for the benefit of all players in the area and beyond, the visit of a national bridge teacher. This is in direct support of our teaching charitable aims.*

*Our teachers have provided a wide breadth of learning opportunities and have actively encouraged the integration of newer, less experienced players into our bridge community. We hope to build our learners pathway further to ensure a good foundation for maintaining and building the club membership, introducing new players to the game and looking to make bridge accessible for all: a foundation of our charitable remit. This aim is similarly reflected in our ambition to widen youth participation in the game with its known benefits to strategic and mental agility. Our youth academy has achieved some good successes this year and our approach to teaching for this younger age group is achieving recognition from our county youth liaison.*

*In the coming year, we anticipate one or more of our Trustees retiring from their role as part of natural turnover. In preparation for this, we have commenced the process to recruit suitable replacements. We expect new Trustee(s) to be in place before the retirement of any existing Trustees, with a suitable handover period to aid the smooth transition. To those Trustee(s) who intend stepping down, I would like to express my sincere thanks. 5 I would also like to thank all those people who have freely given their time to help with so many of the supporting activities and work that is required to keep our club running (there are far too many to name individually but you are all very much appreciated). As always, the success of our club depends on its members, both in supporting, playing, and learning with the club but also in promoting and sharing your experiences with others, encouraging them to come and try.*

*In the coming year, we are looking to refresh the vision and ambition of the charity to achieve more and to build on our successes to date. There is much that we should be proud of having achieved this year and much more that we hope to achieve in the coming one. We will continue to build on the exciting opportunities our new club allows.*

## Financial Report and Adoption of Accounts

Phil asked Phil Ashton to explain the key messages contained in the Accounts, which are as follows: -

- The Independent Examiner has given the accounts a clean bill of health.
- The Bridge Club is in a healthy financial position.
- The Charity continues to generate cash which should enable the Trustees to repay member loans in advance of the agreed terms.
- A successful year has enabled the Trustees to repay £36,737 of loans which were taken out to fund our new premises.

Phil invited questions on the figures contained in the accounts. There was 1 question querying why teaching income is not shown as part of the club's income. Philip explained teaching income was recorded as part of table money. He agreed there should be separate disclosure which will be acted upon from 2004/25.

Phil asked the members and they unanimously agreed to adopt the Financial Report and Accounts.

## Appointment of Independent Examiner

Michael Sturge has carried out this role over many years, Phil thanked him for his excellent advice over this time. Michael has indicated he is willing to continue in this role for the next financial year. His offer was unanimously agreed by the members at the meeting.

## Closing Remarks

Phil read out a statement on behalf of Stuart Kay, Trustee of the Charity, who had already given his apologies for missing the meeting. It contained the following narrative: -

*Martin Bayne has indicated his intention to step back from his Trustee role once the Trustee recruitment process is complete. Stuart proposed that Martin should become an Honorary Member of the bridge club in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the club.*

*Martin became a Trustee in July 2018 and shortly thereafter took the lead in seeking alternative premises for the club. He was involved in sourcing and the building of our current premises from start to finish. He was involved in negotiating the terms of the agreement with Acomb Sports Club. He identified and worked with the architect to design the fine building we have today, built on the foundations of green energy and efficiency. During the build itself, Martin could often be found on site, liaising with the architect and builders. Martin's contribution was exceptional. Without his drive and enthusiasm, it is possible the new premises may never have been built.*

The proposal was unanimously approved by the meeting, so the honorary status of Martin comes into immediate effect.

Phil explained that the formal business of the Company AGM had been completed.

Before commencing the Club AGM, he explained there would be a presentation of the Nora Penn Youth Award and some EBED Youth Awards to the young bridge players who have been attending the Club's Youth Academy.

Rowena White led the presentation and explained that the Youth Academy met on Sunday afternoons and attendees were between the ages of 6 and 16. She explained there was a structured programme of learning. During the year there has been a significant improvement in the standard of play.

The young people attending the Youth Academy have already received the following awards: -

Jasmine Taylor	EBED Gold Award
Gregory Tipton	EBED Silver Award
Levente Ungar	EBED Silver Award
Bertie Mittra	EBED Bronze Award
Bethany Mittra	EBED Bronze Award
Josie Mittra	EBED Bronze Award
Rudie Mittra	EBED Bronze Award
Sephie Glass	EBED Minibridge Award
Josh Dixon	EBED Minibridge Award

Three of the above players were in attendance at the AGM and were presented with their certificates of achievement – Jasmine Taylor (Gold Award), Gregory Tipton (Silver Award) and Josh Dixon (Minibridge Award). Each received a round of applause.

Phil then went on to remind people of Nora Penn who passed away around 2 years ago and is fondly remembered by many of our members Her legacy to the bridge club was to provide funding for an annual award to recognise the most outstanding Youth bridge player.

This year the award has been won by Gregory Tipton and the runner up was Levente Ungar. Gregory was presented with the Nora Penn award and received a round of applause for his achievement.

## Club AGM

Phil invited Robin Loft to commence the club AGM with the presentation of his club chairman's report for 2023/24. The report read as follows: -

*As your chair I give thanks to people who have helped achieve our committee objectives. We have made positive moves forward over the last year. The Committee promises made to you a year ago were to*

- 1. Train more TDs*
- 2. Have an extra playing session*
- 3. Publish Club Committee minutes*
- 4. 4 major Social Events*
- 5. Ensure dietary needs are upheld*
- 6. Social Event hosts*

*All have now been fulfilled and I wish to congratulate the outgoing Committee in achieving them.*

*Other than your Club Committee, there are several other groups of people I wish to commend to you. In my view they are often unsung heroes and heroines who diligently work away behind the scenes making it possible for us all to play bridge in a seamlessly enjoyable manner. Our membership, minutes, and competition secretaries, our finance team, the people who bring in biscuits, tea, coffee, and milk. Those who clear the pots, load the dishwashers; those who deal the cards, TD and score our games, and those who teach newcomers the art of bridge. **All** these volunteers enable this Club to survive whilst others are fighting to survive. They **All**, each and every one of them, deserve our sincere thanks.*

*There is one person behind The York Bridge Club which, over this last year, we have come to recognise as its driving force, Sally Gregory. I have to say without her influence and knowledge, many of the benefits we enjoy would simply not be. Your Club Committee wishes to present you with a hand-crafted casket which we know will benefit from daily use (Phil accepted the gift on Sally's behalf).*

*This leads me onto my most important message to you, our members. In standing as club chair for **one** further year (and assuming re-election) I have a personal plea.*

*For the club to continue to thrive and develop we need significantly more participation, help and support from volunteers. To paraphrase a well-known ex US President, "It is not what your Club can do for you. Rather, what you should do for your Club". There are many ways in which you can contribute, and I recognise people will have varying amounts of time - again to quote a familiar slogan – "Every Little Helps".*

*If you feel you can give small amounts of time to our Club - in any way at all - please come and speak to me, or any of the committee, or drop an email to the club address.*

*Our new Committee will publish new pledges to you after we canvas your wishes.  
We are a bottom-up Club. So, speak to a Club Committee member of those thoughts  
and suggestions you wish to make – We Listen!*

#### Election of Club Committee

Phil read out nominations for the new Club Committee, each of which had a proposer and seconder. Nominations were as follows: -

Chairman – Robin Loft

Minutes Secretary – Bryan Boulter

Committee members: -

Judy Baines

Andrew Merrison

Lynda Baker

Ruth Mattingley-Turner

Mike Barnard

Rose Townsend

Frances Smith

Jonathan Sanders

The meeting unanimously agreed that all the above nominations be accepted.

#### Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting was closed at 7.10pm.