

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Minutes for the GCBA committee meeting held at Cheltenham Bridge Club on Thursday 15th June 2023

In attendance were Ian Sidgwick (President), Andrew Bull (Secretary), Ben Ritacca (Treasurer), Alan Stanfield, Paul Denning, Roger Williams, Richard Butland, Patrick Shields and Peter Waggett (REC chair). Apologies were received from Jan Bailey.

Boosting bridge in Gloucestershire

1. Youth Bridge

- a) Jan had e-mailed a report on Youth bridge: the first Saturday afternoon session will be taking place the following weekend, with hopefully 3 tables, with the intention being to continue with Saturday sessions in term time and Wednesdays in the holidays.
- b) The Youth bridge volunteers have also arranged a taster day at Woodmancote School on Wednesday 21st, and will be running taster sessions at a freshers' fair at Denmark Road. They hope to organise more taster sessions at other schools next term.
- c) Ian had discussed with Jan the Youth Bridge weekend being held in Northampton in September, which they noted would cost about £200 each. It was agreed that we should allot up to £1000 to support children who wished to participate (including providing transport).
- d) We also agreed to donate £400 to help fund English players taking part in the Junior World Championships.

2. Cooperative clusters

- a) Ian, Alan and Patrick had met up in Stroud with a group of local club representatives, and now have a list of all the clubs within about 7 miles of Stroud. The teaching there is currently the traditional slow-paced style - it was proposed that we could support them trying a quick-start approach
- b) Ian is in the process of arranging a similar meeting for reps in the north of the county and South Worcestershire (Eckington, Tewkesbury, Twyning and Bredon).
- c) Newent had just held a 50th anniversary evening, and had invited Ian and Jonathan Lillycrop, the EBU Club Liaison Officer. There is no teaching in the area, but we have hopes that another cluster could be formed with local clubs in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. This could also help to create sessions for novice players.
- d) U3A have been trying to build up regional contacts for bridge, and some of these have looked into linking up with other local clubs

3. Publicity

- a) We had tried advertising on Facebook the opportunity to learn/play bridge, but this had had no response.
- b) Cheltenham BC have produced some posters to put up in local sports clubs. Richard will put one up in the tennis club; it was suggested that golf clubs would also be good targets for publicity.
- c) No-one has yet offered to be the GCBA Publicity officer - it was felt that we might need to go and ask people directly if they would be interested.

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4. Key Performance Indicators

- a) It would be helpful if we had some measure of how successful we were being. Suggested measures included the number of bridge club members/playing sessions; the number of new members; the average NGS grade. It was also suggested that we should carry out another survey of the GCBA members (as we previously did in August 2020).

GCBA presence

5. Ian encouraged the committee to visit more of the clubs in the county to increase awareness of the GCBA.
6. There had been a request from a club for help purchasing a set of Bridgemates. It was suggested that we could invite the club (which currently has low activity) to come up with an action plan to increase the amount of bridge played there. We could also suggest that they allow other clubs to share the Bridgemates.

Congresses

7. Few people have signed up for the Cheltenham Congress so far. It was suggested that we check whether the Congress team is producing fliers for the event that we can help to distribute.
8. It was confirmed that the organisers have usually been willing to team up pairs who wish to enter the team event but don't have another pair to enter with.

Shareholder

9. Paul volunteered to take over from Ian as shareholder.

REC report

10. Peter reported that we now have teams for the Midland Bowl and the Presidents Cup. It was agreed that we should charge the players £10 per head, subsidising them for the rest of the fee.