

Minutes of Warrington Bridge Club Committee Meeting
Sat 29th March 2025, 0930hrs, on Zoom

1. Apologies

Janine Curwell, Brenda Newton, David Burrows

2. Minutes of previous Committee meeting, held 11th January 2025.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted. There were no matters arising not on today's agenda.

3. On-Line Bridge

- a. **BWS:** Stretford Bridge Club have a new Committee. With few players at Stretford playing in BWS sessions, they have decided, not surprisingly, to cease operating it, as of end March 2025. We have had discussions, prior to our Committee meeting with their new Treasurer Pete Blindell, and with the regular TD Adam Wiseberg, about the way forward, so that we fully understand our options. We decided as follows
 - i. Continue the Friday evening RealBridge, but as a Warrington Bridge Club session
 - ii. Do a tally up of what we owe Stretford up to end March '25 (**Action Jim**), and settle up (**Action Janet**)
 - iii. Obtain the contact details of the 8 or 9 people who play in the Friday session that we do not charge, and invite them to join WBC.
 - iv. Check on any outstanding charges from these 8 or 9 people (**ACTION Jim**), and bill the relevant people.
 - v. Continue with the present TD arrangement with Adam, and let him know. Adam has offered to post the results on the WBC website, and send them to the EBU. We will take him up on that offer. Jim however will continue to set up the links and post them on the WBC website. We will contact Adam to let him know what we have decided. **ACTION Jim**
- b. **Antrobus:** this RealBridge session runs jointly (Antrobus/Warrington) on Tuesday evenings. We want to keep supporting it and to encourage more players to join. We felt that differentiating between Tuesdays and Fridays, with Tuesdays being a shorter session, would help. We will discuss with Antrobus if we can agree to say a max of 21 boards. **ACTION Jim**
- c. **Publicity for on-line bridge:** we will try to attract more players to both Tuesday and Friday on-line sessions. Jim and Mike had had a conversation with County chair Mark Madeley about initiatives to get various clubs to join forces to run joint sessions, and therefore with more tables.

4. Finances

- a. **Overview:** Janet said that our finances are sound, but with rising costs we should not be reducing playing fees at this time. We agreed that if our funds grow in 2025, and we have more than £15k in reserves at the end of the year, we will revisit this decision.
- b. **Room hire:** Alford are struggling financially, especially with rising energy bills. Our room hire is our biggest cost, at £4,600/year, and we might expect this to increase further. We have yet to hear from Alford how much increase they will be asking for.
- c. **Choice of charity:** we decided to continue supporting Walton Lea in 2025. It is a small local charity and our contribution makes a real difference. As already agreed, we will be matching the table money to double up the contribution.
- d. **Children in Need Charity SIM Pairs:** we were unhappy with the amount ECATS are taking of what we raise, and the process, and the fact that it's a huge charity and our contribution makes little difference and is completely anonymous. We agreed not to participate this year. However, the SIM pairs format is valued by some members, and we should seek to use other SIM pairs opportunities.
- e. **Billing:** Now quarterly. We are about to prepare the first quarterly bills. **ACTION Jim/Carolyn.**
- f. **Auditor:** Brian Drinkwater is happy to do this for one more year, ie 2025, but we will need to find a new auditor for 2026 onwards. We will approach possible people, and discussed some names.

5. Expenditure items

- a. **Completed items:** New laptop, signage outside Alford Hall, Tennis club banner (now terminated, but we have the banner as our property, as recently used at our prize giving evening), bridge tables, side tables: these have all been bought and paid for. We discussed getting more side tables but felt we had enough for now, for most sessions.
- b. **More table cloths:** buy another 6 to match our green ones. **ACTION Mike**
- c. **More Bridgemates:** buy another three, to cater for the occasional large session. **ACTION Mike.**
- d. **More sets of Jannersten boards with boxes:** now Roger has just started with the dealing machine, and is away quite a bit, it could help to have some more sets. Also for a very large session, such as we had at our Spring social, we could use say 3 sets of identical boards and a web Mitchell movement, as suggested by David Burrows. We would know in advance when this was likely to happen, so could have three identical sets ready, but it would need the sets of boards available to be dealt. Storage: u3a are already putting an extra steel cabinet in the store room, for their bridge equipment, so we could share that for additional secure storage of sets of boards, rather than keep them at someone's house. We will consider this next meeting. The cost per complete set (32 boards, labels, metal box, cards) is about £160, so £480 for three more sets.
- e. **Trophies:** we agreed to upgrade our trophies, particularly the two round glass dishes (very cheap and unattractive) and the Monday handicap pairs glass obelisk, which has recently unfortunately been broken. **ACTION Jim**
- f. **Bidding Boxes:** we need to check what we have, and purchase enough bidding cards to replace the worn and tatty ones, and make them all complete. **ACTION Jim**
- g. **Training for teachers:** this is a standing item. We will wait until we find a suitable course (venue, timing) for Ian, Jim and any others who are interested (eg Malcolm). The Club will fund the cost.

6. Publicity

- a. **Local GP surgeries/ Primary Care facilities:** As reported last time, Andrew Young had already been going down this route for u3a, and had got to the stage of developing an A5 leaflet for "social prescribing" to be left with surgeries to give out. There is work to do to get the take-up to work. Mike said he would continue to see if there is mileage in following this up. **ACTION Mike.**
- b. **Essential Guide:** Ian confirmed that he is keeping on top of this, so that we are included in their What's On pages. We have had the occasional enquiry via this source, so it's worth doing. **ACTION Ian**
- c. **Advertorial (local press):** It is now the time to do this, now we have our competition results to report. Jim will draft some copy. **ACTION Jim**
- d. **Photo opportunity with Walton Lea:** (large cardboard cheque?) To be followed up. **ACTION Mike**

7. Operations

- a. **Hosting:** we need a clear nomination for who will be the host, and not play if we have an odd number of people turn up. Both Malcolm Roberts and Carolyn said they are happy doing that, but neither is available on our next Charity/Improvers night on 12 May. **ACTION Jim/Mike**
- b. **Rota/cover for Mondays** when Jim and Mike are both away. Jim will provide Mike with dates when he is going to be away over the next two months. **ACTION Jim**
- c. **Thursday afternoon attendance:** this is OK, but we could do with more. We will announce at Monday evening sessions. **ACTION Mike**
- d. **TD's:** We know we need to increase our pool of TD's. Adam Wiseberg has offered to run a session. There are some people who already do directing, eg at Antrobus or online, or who have done it before: Hilary, Jim, Mike, and Malcolm Strange. Some people at Croft might also want to join in. Ian suggested it could be 3 or 4. **ACTION Mike** to arrange with AW. We need to get these people doing TD from time to time whilst there is experienced support there available.

8. Succession/ Resilience planning (Standing agenda item)

- a. Dealing machine: We have just started with Roger Hesp doing this, to give Keith a break.
- b. Website (action from last time) : Ian is already a Bridgewebs webmaster for Birchwood & Croft. Jim and Ian will arrange a time to go over the WBC website pages, so that Ian is in a position to update the website if and when required. **ACTION Jim, Ian**
- c. Secretarial: Jim will be working with Carolyn to get her familiar with some of the secretarial duties, and share data bases. **ACTION Jim/ Carolyn**
- d. Social: though Janine can't attend much, Mike reported that she is happy to continue.
- e. Competitions secretary: this requires specialist expertise, and David Burrows is the only person we have with the knowledge and experience. We need to consider how to address this, as David wishes to stand down.

9. AOB

- a. **Sharing resources (boards) with Croft:** the Committee agreed that this would be a good idea, as Ian could manage taking and returning the boards. They could use sets previously played at WBC. In principle, we want to foster closer relations with other clubs, as this can help everyone.
- b. **Disciplinary:** the Chairman mentioned an item for information, concerning an incident that took place the previous evening, which will be dealt with under section 9 of the constitution.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Provisionally agreed for Saturday 7th June 2025, 930am, on Zoom.