

Bagworth Whistlestop Bridge

3rd Annual Report June 2020/21



Chairman's Welcome

Well, here we are again, physically apart but still connected. The last year has brought many new challenges and difficulties to our lives but, for the most part, I believe that we have risen to those challenges and managed to achieve much during the last 12 months. As I write, we still do not have a date to restart face to face bridge but we are full of optimism that the time will soon come when we can once again see all your lovely faces. Shelagh has continued to produce her brilliant newsletters which have kept us all informed and in the loop during the last 15/16 months, so when the time comes you will be ready to join us.

Despite doing an in-depth risk assessment in June last year, by November it had become apparent that we would not be meeting for some considerable time. However, with the help of our on-line bridge sessions, I believe that we have managed to make the time productive and often very enjoyable, if a little different. Many people have said to me that they don't know what they would have done without the bridge and many of us have come to grips with previously unknown technology, myself included (although some would say I have not so much come to grips with it but rather that I have struggled to some sort of truce with the equipment)

Since our virtual AGM last year we have worked to keep in touch with you all and to facilitate playing on-line bridge both individually and as a virtual club and outlined in the review of the year. Ashby Bridge club very kindly agreed to allow us to use their Bridge Base On-line platform. We also extend our thanks to Bob Stokes who freely gave us much needed technical support. Shelagh has valiantly directed the BBO sessions from the outset, a significant contribution since the technology is complicated and the director cannot play in the session. I am currently getting myself up to speed with directing some of these sessions to give Shelagh a well-deserved break. We are also indebted to

Margaret and Steve Fieldhouse who have acted as hosts on the Thursday duplicate, to avoid the use of the dreaded robots. We had much fun attending the RealBridge taster sessions and met bridge players from all over the world with various interesting background noises! Regarding the RealBridge session on Wednesday evenings, I would like to offer our very grateful thanks to Simon Learoyd of Market Bosworth Bridge Club for his invaluable contribution to the setting up of the alliance with our group. We will no doubt consider the option of continuing an on-line session after we resume our 'face to face' session. If nothing else, this pandemic has produced innovation and cooperation and indeed new friendships.

There will be many points to consider before we finally meet at the community centre again. The centre itself will have its own rules and restrictions which we will have to follow and, of course, we will be considering all aspects of your safety as we are made aware of the government guidelines after June. As part of this process we are currently investigating the use of screens and a cashless payment system. We will keep you informed of the progress but feel free to give us your ideas as well.

I would like to thank you all for your support over these many challenging months. I would like to thank especially our hard-working committee members Shelagh, John and Roger and also their supporters and I look forward to actually seeing you all in the 'not too distant' future. We are very sad to have lost Gosia from the committee following the move of John and herself to Derby during the year but hopefully they will join us occasionally when we re-open again. They will be welcome even without the cakes!

Review of the Year

Our Bridge : We have had no face to face games of bridge this year but we started online play informally with Bridgebase online (BBO) soon after the beginning of lockdown with a series of casual games and succeeded in persuading 60% of our members play to online. The committee spent some time with members checking out their views on online bridge and supporting them in their efforts but it is not everyone's wish. We began with duplicate bridge online with BBO through Ashby Bridge Club at the end of October and we are grateful to Ashby for this opportunity. Shelagh, Carol and Averil have also supported Ashby by either directing or as hosts since July 2020. We have had 24 sessions up to end of April on BBO drawing an income of approximately £1.00 for each player per session since then. We usually get 6-7 tables. Members from Market Bosworth, Hinckley and Ashby have joined us. We are most grateful for all this support.

After months of research to find a way of playing duplicate bridge for a non English Bridge Union clubs to find a way to play, RealBridge came into the arena. The committee had many trial sessions playing with our members on RealBridge to check on members interest. It was after this that we formed an alliance with Market Bosworth to offer a duplicate facility on a Wednesday evening open to all our members and sharing responsibility for its organisation. By the end of April, we had 7 sessions on RealBridge with numbers fluctuating between 7

and 11 tables. Again, some income is gained from this of approximately 50p per person per session.

The 70%+ average – yes, we still have it and have had some great scores with the weird deals that BBO comes up with. Some partnerships coped with amazing success to gain average scores of over 70%. They get a mention in dispatches on the website but unfortunately we cannot give them the free week as we do in face to face bridge as we still have the outgoing payment to BBO and Real Bridge....but congratulations to them.

Committee : Your committee of five : Carol, John, Shelagh, Roger and Gosia have met twice during the year for virtual meetings via zoom and the minutes are in the members area of the web site under documents. A ‘Whats App’ group was formed by them for exchange of ideas and subsequent actions agreed both through the meetings and Whats App discussions. Zoom meetings have been held with organisers at the Community Centre and three of the committee have undertaken director training for RealBridge. Shelagh and Carol have also done the training for BBO directing via Ashby.

Four of the committee members, Carol, John, Shelagh and Roger have agreed to continue in their current role but sadly Gosia has left us late in 2020 following their move to Derby. This leaves space on the committee for another member. Nominations have been received so please vote.



Members : We believe that we shall still have 40 members of the club based on previous years subscriptions but given that no charge has been made in this ‘Covid’ year we are hoping that we shall still have 40. Our online sessions have been made viable with support from other club’s players and we are most appreciative of them. The Committee agreed to waive the subscription fee for 2020-21 for all, given that there has been no face to face playing expenditure but recommend that the membership subscription for 2021-22 be retained at £10.00. We ask you to vote.



Whilst all birthdays are important we have some special ones with a zero during the year..Betty, Janet, Dorothy, Margaret and Josie. We try to remember all your birthdays if we know about them so keep the committee informed. None of us like to miss out on a celebration. We have had one member as far as we know with Covid but now recovered

Venue : The committee have maintained links with the Bagworth Community Centre where possible but it has remained closed for most of the year. We have had zoom meetings and been promised the use of the rear hall on our return to face bridge. Storage we are told will continue to be a problem and we have moved all items other than the tables from the centre. We anticipate that there will be way marked routes inside the centre

on our return and signage for covid compliance. We believe that all of our members will have been vaccinated twice before we start playing face to face bridge but think that members will feel safer if we wear masks on return. We may well have to limit our refreshment facilities but players can bring their own!

Equipment : There has not been much wear and tear on equipment in fact the cards are still in the boards! We have been successful in our grant application for the purchase of a dealing machine and so we are looking forward to bringing that into use on our return. We do have to hold a celebratory and promotional event for this with appropriate Councillors and press releases. We have a provisional date for this **Thursday pm August 5th** so keep it free. It will probably include food etc, some bridge, a dealing machine demo and a 'Play it again Sam ' tour of the website so fun and frolics.

We plan to purchase some additional boards and their labels prior to the start of our inhouse duplicate sessions. This will make the organisation of the dealing machine more effective and reduce the risk of infection transfer via cards

Financial Report Year to 31stMay 2021

<u>Income</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2019/ 2020</u>	<u>2020/2021</u>
B/Fwd	£481.69	£ 481.69	£1,086.10
Subscriptions		£ 400.00	
Table monies - see sheet		£1,565.00	£ 848.06
Raffle		£ 637.00	
Teaching		£ 140.00	
Donation T. Capewell		£ 500.00	
Council Grant			£ 1,336.54
Total	£ 481.69	£ 3,723.69	£3,270.70

Expenditure

Rent for room	£ 615.00	
Insurance/EBTU subscription	£ 102.68	£ 45.00
Flowers – MF		£ 22.00
Flowers – JB		£ 14.00
Tea/coffe /Bisc etc	£ 32.48	
Computer	£ 429.99	
Bridge Tablets	£ 721.92	
Bridge Tablet covers	£ 71.35	
Bidding boxes	£ 30.30	
Table Numbers 1 – 15 red	£ 9.60	
Table	£ 111.59	
Playing cards	£ 36.00	
Boards	£ 69.90	
Bridge Webs	£ 42.00	£ 42.00
Annual Party	£ 83.87	
Raffle prizes	£ 59.01	
90 th Birthday Flowers		£ 21.90
90 th trophy		£ 36.00
Duplimate Dealing Machine 1 st install		£ 1,336.54
Duplimate Dealing Machine 2 nd install		£ 1,336.54
Duplimate (cards, boards,labels)		£ 115.94
	_____	_____
Total	£ 2,637.62	£ 2,912.02

Closing figure for year ending June 1st 2020 – May 31st 2021 = £358.68

This figure is correct with HSBC bank account going forward to 1st June 2021 – 31st May2022

Assets as of the 31 May 2021

7No Gopak Tables

1No. Plastic Table

8No. Table cloths

2No. set of Boards (64 Blue & Red)

8No. Bridge Tablets

1No. Computer

1No Duplimate MK 5 Dealing Machine

Miscellaneous items include

Table Numbers

Playing Cards

Screen pens for Tablets



Treasurers Comments

2020/21 financially has been a challenging year with no play at our regular venue. Thankfully due to play on online bridge via BBO and RealBridge, the club has had some income as shown in the financial statement.

Membership fees have been waived during 20/21 due to corona virus as agreed by the committee but we will seek to collect the usual annual subscription fee of £10 after our AGM where your approval via a vote is required. This will help in the purchase of additional

boards and cards for the dealing machine.



The club had been able to afford the planned purchase of the dealing machine costing £2673.08 with the aid of the 50% support grant from Hinckley and Bosworth. This has reduced our current bank holding and so our primary financial objective for 2021/2 is to build a more secure financial base.

We have maintained our bridgewebs licence fee throughout the year as we have used this to update the website and to deal with the scoring for on line bridge. However, we have deferred the licences for bridgewebs and our insurance until we can start 'face to face' bridge. Whilst we have not done any formal teaching, we have maintained the teacher

licence fee (EBUTA) as this gives us access to EBU score and to teaching resources. Our recommendation is to keep our table fees as they are for 2021/2 along with the raffle fees but to combine this as one fee of £3.00 to make collection easier. We ask you to vote on this

at the AGM. 

Given that we have all had to get used to cashless payment systems in this Covid year and on line players have been used to either prepayment on RealBridge (cheque or online bank payment) or purchasing BBO dollars via credit card, we are recommending an extension of this cashless system following our return to face to face bridge. This can be done via a prepayment on line or cheque purchasing a given number of weeks to suit personal circumstance eg 5 weeks = £15; 10 weeks = £30. We can easily monitor this through your attendance and remind you of your next payment. We can still do a voucher system as approved last year if this is required. And we won't turn you away if your account is not in credit...we will always take cash if need be!!! We need you to vote on this for the A

Comments from Auditor

To be confirmed at AGM



Bagworth Whistlestop Bridge Group

Mission




Our mission is to share and spread the game of bridge to local people for their enjoyment, health and well being in a friendly, safe and comfortable environment

Principles / Aims

- ☐ To establish a local bridge group playing duplicate bridge for members' health and well-being and their enjoyment.
- ☐ To create a setting for social but challenging bridge and with a friendly and convivial atmosphere.
- ☐ To work alongside and with other clubs for their enhancement and not to their detriment to broaden the range of bridge playing opportunities available.
- ☐ To build resources to enable an excellent as well as a self-sufficient playing environment
- ☐ To promote the group to other clubs and the wider bridge playing and non-bridge playing community.
- ☐ To draw in grants to build resources for the club.

Planning Proposals for 2020-21.

1. To raise standards within the club by delivering the planned Improvers Course and develop a Beginners Bridge Course.

2. To improve play through the use of a dealing machine.
3. To maintain the sociable atmosphere within the group with events, for example, Christmas Parties. 
4. To develop some internal club competitions, for example, a knockout.
5. To expand club expertise in setting up a club session
6. To maintain our club communication systems and continue to profile the club across the area.
7. To start regular meetings again as soon as possible when safe
8. To develop and spread online bridge play within and outside the club
9. To develop some interclub social events

How did we do? Planning and Performance Review against 2020-21 targets.

Well, the answer is probably not that well but given the circumstance, we hope you will understand! Firstly, we did seek approval from you to postpone the planned improvers programme and postponed this until the commencement of 'face to face' bridge. It was not possible to deliver this online as some people who had signed up are not online players. It was also not possible to publicise and attract members to a new 'beginners' programme.

Our dealing machine is on its way but we haven't been able to use this yet as a vehicle for raising standards. However, we do believe that standards of play have been improved by playing online and supporting people to do so. By volume alone, standards must have improved as many members are playing each day!! We hope we maintained a friendly atmosphere via our emails and newsletters and general contact. We have had lots of virtual sociable games and matches / internal competitions over cocktails, coffee, afternoon tea and a full breakfast menu.

We have been active in pursuing our external networks with other clubs which has resulted in our BBO facility through Ashby and RealBridge with Market Bosworth. This has brought in members to play with us online from these clubs, as well as the former Hinckley club and the County. We hope that some will start to join us as we play in Bagworth once more. In the meantime, we feel we can celebrate our success in spreading online bridge both within and outside the club.

Planning Proposals for 2021-22

1. To recommence 'face to face' bridge as soon as it is safe and legal to do so.
2. To maximise the confidence of players returning to play 'face to face' bridge by adherence to general covid secure principles and those of the Community Centre by updating our risk assessment and consulting with members.
3. To build a more secure financial base to ensure adequate funds for equipment replacement by maintaining and extending current participation levels.

4. To use and demonstrate the use of the new dealing machine and hold a celebratory event to mark the grant from Hinckley and Bosworth.
5. To deliver the planning improvers programme.
6. To deliver a 'beginners' bridge programme using a combination of online and face to face learning.
7. To maintain the friendly and sociable atmosphere in the club by holding social events eg Christmas party, celebratory return to bridge party
8. Research the viability of an online session of bridge as well as our regular Thursday face to face session and if feasible implement.