

Bagworth Whistlestop Bridge Group

Bagworth Community Centre

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First Annual Report 2019

Annual General Meeting : Thursday June 20th 2019 12.30PM

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1. For Our Members

Welcome to this our First Annual Report which outlines our activities, priorities and progress throughout the year. Whilst we have chosen to adopt a report in a written format to save time at our Annual General Meeting, it is always open to comment, suggestion and question. To this end, we shall specifically ask you about your views at the Annual General Meeting. Above all, we aim to be a listening and responsive club seeking direction and views from all members.

2. Our Plans and Priorities in 2018-9

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

3. Our Progress and Development 2018-9

3.1 To establish a local bridge group

It was with some trepidation that Carol and Shelagh approached the Bagworth Community Centre in April 2018 to explore the possibility of a new bridge group and the availability of rooms at the newly refurbished Bagworth Community Centre. With few groups operating at the centre other than for children during the day time and concessionary rates available for hire by local people, it seemed an opportunity not to be missed. We were welcomed with open arms, although with no other financial support than preferential local hire rates and with the promise of storage for equipment. The latter has not materialised and we continue to pester for additional storage but this has so far not yielded results.

Our inaugural meeting was chaotic to say the least although with 7 tables of bridge in a relatively small space so it certainly became a social group as people squeezed from one table to another and tried to have tea and coffee in the break as well! We have got over panicking about whether we can cover the cost of room hire by asking if people are coming each week and our playing numbers are usually six tables each week. If we get to seven, it is likely we shall have to use the hall.

We have 38 fully paid up members and two further who joined later in the financial year where the reduced membership was not charged. So we do believe that we have succeeded in our first objective. Our membership has stabilised and whilst not entirely local we do usually bring in a 'table full' from the surrounding towns and villages and the club has a good reputation in the Community Centre and in the village.

3.2 To establish a friendly and convivial atmosphere for a social bridge session.

Everyone who comes to play in Bagworth remarks on the excellent facilities in the centre and we try to arrange things so that all can benefit. Sandwiches and coffee regularly arrive at the bridge table made by the Whistlestop café and whilst we do not now have a set break time coffee and tea are available without charge. This enables us to play a more challenging number of boards, usually 18. We send birthday greetings to members via an 'ecard'. If you haven't had one may be you didn't give us the date. We have no interest in the year, by the way as we all know we get younger playing bridge! We always try to introduce new members to the group and give them group information which includes an emergency phone number. Judging by the chat each week and the number of players who go on bridge holidays together, we have probably succeeded in creating a friendly atmosphere and we try to sort any issues with individuals rather than make blanket announcements. We know that bridge can get us all a bit over the top at times!!

3.4 To work with other bridge Clubs

Before stating the bridge group we advised all the neighbouring bridge clubs of our plans for the new group and with only one exception we were wished success and help offered by way of loan of equipment, poster display, their expertise and their club announcement to their members. We arranged a day on which there were generally no bridge sessions to avoid any clash. The Leicester contract bridge Association were pleased to welcome us as a non-affiliated group and listed us on the first page of their web site. We would like to thank those clubs and individuals who loaned us equipment to start us off, without them it would have been difficult.

3.5 To build resources to make the group self sufficient

We begged and borrowed and were donated initially but we now have all the key resources in place for a bridge group - six good tables with bidding boxes, clothes, cards, travellers and more recently some new boards. We are pleased as we are still afloat financially and this has been largely due to your efforts in attendance and keeping up the table money but also because of the decision taken by us all to go for a £10.00 subscription this year rather than £5.00. Unless our numbers grow significantly we are into replacement only which is excellent for year one.

3.6 Promotion of the group to the wider community

Promotion of the group is vital to make it self-sufficient and the slow drip approach has been adopted for publicity purposes. We write regularly in the village magazine to outline the development of the club to neighbouring villages. We have also used local newspapers to promote our teaching sessions by way of press releases. After some initial hiccups we were

able to get our web site onto the google search engine. Whilst this is a bit limited, it came free via BT for community groups. There are other options, for example Pianola and Bridgewebs which are specific bridge sites which could be adopted in the future. You will notice no expenditure for publicity as we have managed all without costs!!

3.7 To draw in Grants for infrastructure

Being largely self sufficient and with an operating surplus for playing bridge means that there is less pressure for resources. However, we have been active both in research and also in an application to the English Bridge Union for the purchase of scoring equipment but were turned down, unsurprisingly, as only affiliated groups were in the end eligible. We know of other sources of finance/ grants which we will pursue in 2019-20 for such items but we need to have both a committee structure and bank account in place first. Priorities are probably for electronic scoring equipment and a web site which is more useful for a bridge group. Both storage and a computer are fairly basic requirements initially.

4. Teaching and Learning

Carol and Shelagh rather stretched themselves in January and February by offering both a Beginners and Improvers weekend courses. The weekend arrangements actually worked really well in enabling fairly concentrated days and with people bringing their own lunch there was less pressure in terms of organisation. The centre is always warm and inviting and creates an ideal and well resourced teaching environment. The Improvers course was full and drew in both members and non members for an express revision programme focussed around bidding and playing in No Trumps. We couldn't have been more pleased with it.

It was not quite so good for the Beginners weekend as we were let down by people booking in and then not turning up. However, the weekend went ahead using the new EBU express programme. Two further Saturday morning sessions took place but there is a need to supplement these as well as to consider options for 2019-20. Bringing in new members is important both in terms of our mission to spread the game of bridge and make it local as well as to ensure future stability of the group.

5. Financial Statement and Report

It was with reluctance and by default, that Carol undertook the duties of treasurer when the happy duo set sail last June. The initial deal with the Community Centre was that the group paid either £15.00 for the room or 50% of the table money receipts, whichever was the lower amount. This helped us through the first few weeks and since those early days we have consistently been able to cover the rental costs. Indeed, as you can see from the Annual Report, we have also been able to purchase good quality equipment to enable the group to be self-sufficient. A bank account has not been opened yet, as money has come in and gone out almost immediately on necessary equipment. We are now at the stage of requiring the purchase of one more significant item i.e. a lap top and we can then open an account with a new treasurer in charge, hopefully elected at the AGM.

Going forward there seems no reason why our fiscal health should not continue to be good. Carol (now operating like a treasurer) would personally recommend leaving the subscription charge at £10

to give a good start towards obtaining scoring equipment and we will also probably have to finance a website such as Pianola, but of course that decision rests with the members at the AGM

Income and Expenditure Statement JUNE 2018 - MAY 2019

Income and Expenditure Report JUNE 2018 - MAY 2019

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
SUBSCRIPTIONS	£315.00	ROOM HIRE	£753.50
TABLE			
MONEY/COURSES	£1,915.70	TRAVELLERS	£15.66
		CLOTHS	£60.00
		BIDDING BOXES	£161.80
		TABLES	£570.00
		PRIZES/GIFTS	£27.50
		CARDS	£65.40
		TEA/COFFEE/BISCUITS	£88.49
		LAMINATING	£4.01
Total Income	£2,230.70		£1,746.36
Expenditure	-1746.36		
Cash in hand at			
31.05.19	£484.34		

6. Plans and Priorities for 2019-20

We need your input at the Annual General Meeting both for views and offerings of different options and we hope to draw these out through discussion. However, many are natural 'follow ons' from this report and we suggest.

- a. The development of a committee structure
- b. The procurement of a bank account
- c. Additional and more secure storage at the Community Centre
- d. Purchase of a computer both for scoring and for safe storage of group records.
- e. Development of better web site more appropriate for bridge which will probably require monthly subscription
- f. Application for grants to cover electronic scoring equipment
- g. Consideration of amalgamation with another group/ club
- h. Consideration of joining the English Bridge Union

7. Thank You

Yes, a sincere and deep thank you to you all for your continued support and making our group a success. We are proud of all your achievements so far and love the atmosphere within the group.

We enjoy the chat and hearing about your bridge weekends, holidays and other indulgencies. We have enjoyed the little parties and the Christmas feast and the lovely cakes from Gosia and gifts of biscuits and the like from members. We have even raised something for the local dog support charity, Canine Partners. The room set up is now pretty perfect and efficient thanks to our four stalwart helpers ...Marilyn and John; John and Josie along with all of you who clear away. A big thank you must go to Carol who fearlessly and tirelessly does the directing each week and to Marilyn and John for their scoring. What is not to like in all of this? Brilliant, Thank you! You can all give yourselves a good pat on the back and a High Five for your success in scoring on the travellers....no machines, good revision, well done!!

We thank you for your attendance at the AGM (or your apologies!!!) and look forward to another fun year with your help. If you have helped at the AGM with the food, I'm sure this is a big thank you too but let's leave it until the day!

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