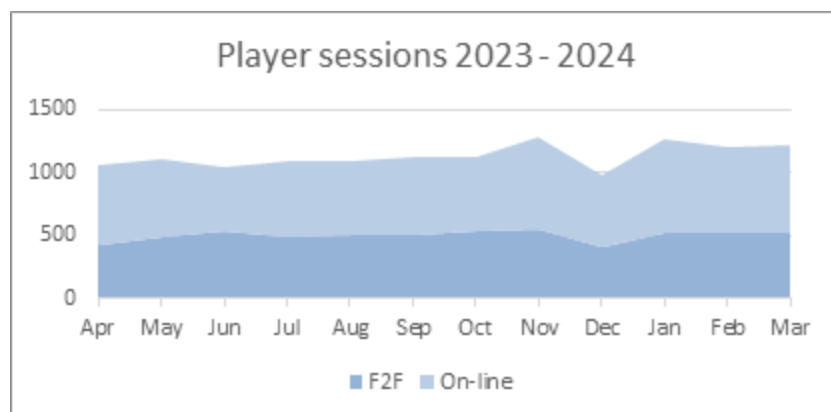


Chairman's Report OBC 2024

The past year has seen the club continue to provide a range of bridge playing opportunities to its members with a mixture of face to face bridge on the club premises and on line via RealBridge. The numbers playing online are larger than those playing face to face and have slightly increased in the past year. The numbers playing face to face have plateaued and numbers in all events overall are still down 30% on pre-covid times.



The Bridge Committee monitor attendance at all our sessions and where changes might be appropriate. None of us can be sure if online bridge in our club is here to stay though it seems likely given the convenience. All Wednesday evening bridge is now face to face including the monthly teams session which returned F2F in April this year. A big thank you goes to John Deech who has encouraged the return of players to the premises by generously sponsoring prize money and drinks/nibbles for the monthly Wednesday evening challenge pairs for a second year with the last couple of sessions this summer.

The education team led by Ursula Bowler have had a very successful year with excellent recruitment into the Bridge for All year 1 and 2 programmes and recruiting new teachers to support the educational sessions and seminars. I'd like to record the club's gratitude for the teaching commitment offered in particular by Christine and Ian Bishop who were solely responsible for keeping the BfA classes going for much of 2023. The Saturday drop-in social bridge session with tea and cake has attracted those who seek a very relaxed game without any competitive scoring. Please would all members help spread the word about the taster sessions starting soon for those to see if they might like to sign up for lessons in the new course starting in Sept.

There is very good participation in the Wessex League, the inter-club competition, across the divisions. 30 members played in the daytime league, 80 in the evening league and all these matches are now played online on RealBridge. Oxford A team did particularly well. We had very good attendance at the Andrew Robson day earlier this year and the OBA Swiss Pairs event held here last Sunday. We have a lovely clubhouse to host bridge events and more would be possible if one or more of you would consider filling the vacancy as our Social Secretary. Or encouraging someone else to take on this role. Having organised the catering for last Sunday's event, I can testify to the willing team of helpers who come forward to make cakes and/or assist on the day.

The player numbers and the education programme which brings new members into the club mean the club finances are healthy. The club receives some additional income from the chess club using our premises. The club also receives service charges from the leases on the two flats on the first and second floors of the premises but these go into a communal fund to which OBC also contributes to cover cost of maintenance or repairs to the fabric of the building.

Trustee Board

The Trustee Board oversees the OBC as a Charitable Institution and the functions of the club and meets 4 times per year. 8 members are trustees by virtue of the offices held (Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Tournament Secretary, Education Secretary, Premises Officer, Communications Officer, Conduct Officer -all elected/re-elected annually at the AGM) and there are 4 directly elected trustees without any particular responsibilities other than those of a trustee, who stand down after 4 years. I am very pleased that Brian Mills joined us as Communications Officer this year. There are vacancies for a replacement Premises Officer and 2 directly elected trustees this year for which nominations have been invited but no one has come forward. There are also vacancies for a replacement House Officer (to organise cleaning and supplies at the club) and, as I have mentioned, a Social Secretary, so I must appeal to you all to help in recruiting to these positions. The club cannot function without members willing to take on some of these responsibilities even though many are already contributing in many and varied ways.

I would like to thank my fellow trustees for their commitment and diligence in ensuring the club runs smoothly. In addition, thanks and appreciation go to many others who contribute in myriad ways to support the club.

I would like to congratulate all those who have won in the club's various competitions over the past year and all those who continue to improve or simply just enjoy their game.

Julie Anderson, Chairman, June 2024