



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION LIMITED
HELD AT THE IMPERIAL HOTEL, LONDON,
ON WEDNESDAY 5TH OCTOBER 2011**

Present:	Sally Bugden	Chairman
	Andrew Petrie	Vice Chairman & Tournament Committee Chairman
	Mike Hill	Treasurer
	Barry Capal	General Manager
	Jeremy Dhondy	Board Member & Laws & Ethics Committee Chairman
	Graham Jepson	Board Member
	Malcolm Oliver	Board Member
	Heather Dhondy	Board Member & Selection Committee Chairman
	Gerard Faulkner	Vice President & Norfolk Shareholder
	Margaret Curtis	Vice President & Essex Shareholder
	Tony Parks	Auditor
	John Pain	Minute Taker
	Karen Durrell	Reception
	Matt Betts	Press and Communications Officer

County	Shareholders: Present	Apologies	Proxy	County	Shareholders: Present	Apologies	Proxy
Avon		Mrs S O'Hara	Mr P Green	Lincolnshire		Mr P Wokes	
Bedfordshire	Mr D Gilling			London	Mrs C Duckworth	Mr J Smith	Mrs C Duckworth
Berks & Bucks	Mr T Garrett Mr N Thompson			Manchester	Mr S Travers	Mr R Lighton Mr M Newman	Mr S Travers Mr S Travers
Cambs & Hunts				Merseyside/Cheshire	Mr G Endicott Mr A Clark Mrs J Feldman Mr P Hassenson Mr R Hillman Mr R Amey Mr G Faulkner		
Channel Islands		Mrs P Panter	Mr N Le Cocq	Middlesex			
Cornwall	Mr G Warren			Norfolk		Mr J McCourt	Mr I Rankin
Cumbria		Mrs J Floutier		North East	Mr G Hedley		
Derbyshire	Mr C Band	Mr A Leslie		Northants	Mrs J Burgess	Mr K Rodgers	Mrs J Burgess
Devon	Mr T Treeby	Mr N Richardson		Notts			
Dorset	Mr R Heath	Mrs A Sharples	Mr R Heath	Oxford	Mrs B Harris Mrs S Nicholson Mr A Wilson Mrs R Brown		
Essex	Mrs M Curtis Mrs J Hartley	Mr D Green	Mrs M Curtis	Somerset			
Gloucestershire	Mr J Simons			Staffs & Shrops	Mr J Withers	Mr P Hackett	Mr J Withers
Hants & IoW	Mr R Ray Mr K Palmer Mrs M Gale			Suffolk	Mr M Carey		
Herefordshire				Surrey	Mr P Bentley Mr S Foster Miss S Pritchard	Mr H Marsen	Mr P Bentley
Hertfordshire	Mr W Blackman Mr B Eddleston Mr M Minting			Sussex	Mr P Bates Mr R Wheeler	Mrs J Clinton	Mr P Bates
Isle of Man		Mrs E Slatcher		Warwicks	Mr D Evetts Mr J Pyner Mr C Lang		
Kent	Mr B Crack Mr M Lewis			Westmorland			
Lancashire	Mr B Brelsford Mrs J Wright			Wiltshire	Mr P Green	Mrs K Hodgson	Mr P Green
Leicestershire	Mr R Northage Mr J Wilcox			Worcester	Mr P Hammond	Mr D Thomas	Mr P Hammond
				Yorkshire	Mr P Mason Mrs L Millet	Mrs J Staniforth Mrs J Latham	Mr P Mason Mrs L Millet

The following people were also present: Val Gibson, Simon Cochemé, Cecil Leighton, Drene Brown, Roger Morton, Ken Drane and Suzanne Gill.

Sally Bugden opened the meeting by welcoming all those present. She wished the women's team playing in the Venice Cup good luck and also congratulated the U20 team who had qualified for the World Championships in Cuba.

On a sad note, Sally reported the recent deaths of Michelle Brunner and TD Roland Bolton (Surrey). Condolences were expressed to their families.

1 Apologies for absence

See Page 1 for County information. Apologies were also received from Vice Presidents David Harris & Peter Stocken.

2 Announcement of Awards

SILVER AWARD

This award, given for outstanding contribution and recognition of long service as a volunteer at national and/or county level, will go to:

Cecil Leighton (*Essex*)

Cecil has been nominated by London Metropolitan Bridge Association in recognition of his truly exceptional services to the County and to bridge.

Cecil served on the LMBA Committee in a number of different capacities, including a period as Chairman, for some 54 years until his retirement at the LMBA AGM last summer. This length of service deserves very special recognition in itself, but it is worth emphasising that he has been a very hard and active worker on behalf of bridge in the capital during all that time.

Cecil was awarded a Dimmie Fleming Award some time ago, in 1992, and London understands that this silver award would now be the most appropriate way of showing the appreciation of the bridge world for all his efforts.

DIMMIE FLEMING AWARDS

This year's awards, given for outstanding contributions to the development of bridge at County level, go to:

Drene Brown (*Lincolnshire*)

Drene became County secretary in late 1970. Then became Lincolnshire EBU representative and attended meetings in London. She worked hard to promote the interests of the ordinary member. In the late 1970's she started writing a County newsletter and, with husband Alan, prepared hands for an annual County Pairs competition.

In the early 1980's she passed the EBU Teachers Certificate and ran Evening Classes teaching bridge. She qualified as a County Director in the early 1990's and assisted husband Alan in directing various events. During this time she and Alan were employed by a London Bridge company and directed many events both in this country and abroad.

In the early 1990's also became the Scunthorpe Bridge Club county representative on the County Committee and remained so for the next 14 years. In June 2007 she stepped in to become the County secretary and stayed on to do the job for the next 3 years, until ill health forced her to retire. She was also the Bridge correspondent for the Lincolnshire Echo for over 20 years.

Roger Morton (*London*)

Roger first became involved in bridge administration in 1963, when he joined the committee of the Mayfield Bridge Club. He only served in this capacity for one year as he then moved away from the area and in fact travelled the world, not returning to London until 1972. In 1973 he joined the BP Bridge Club where, over a period of 17 years, he served progressively as a committee member, 1st team Captain and Chairman.

Roger has been a qualified bridge teacher since the late 1970s, He passed the EBU 'Advanced' examination in 1981 and became an EBUTA Professional teacher in 1998. He taught extensively, on a voluntary unpaid basis, from 1975 until 1990 in a variety of local sports clubs. He continues to teach on a voluntary basis though now less intensively, including running bridge on cruise liners.

Roger joined the LMBA Committee in 1997, and since then has been one of the hardest workers for the Association. He initially took on responsibility for promoting the London Trophy, the knock out teams competition for teams from the South East of England from non-bridge clubs, which peaked at an entry of over 300 teams. He later took on the organisation of the annual Green-pointed Joint Venture Swiss Teams and Pairs, which he ran for a period 7 years.

One of his biggest contributions has been as county webmaster. He set up our website in 2000 and has continued to develop and maintain it ever since - it has always been impressively accurate and up-to-date.

Roger has also been Membership Secretary for the Association since 2006. Most recently, he has volunteered to become the London County Club representative on the Regional Club Committee.

In addition to these major roles, Roger has been one of the most consistent and valuable contributors to all the general work of the London Executive committee. His wealth of experience as a bridge player, teacher and administrator means that he always has a sensible suggestion or useful point to make in all our discussions. And he has done much to help sort out our finances during the county's recent difficulties with regard to its Treasurership.

Ken Drane (*Middlesex*)

Ken Drane joined the Middlesex County Bridge Association Committee in the 1990's, initially as Membership Secretary.

Ken went on to serve as Honorary Secretary of the Association from 1997 until 2010 and remains Membership Secretary, itself no easy job this past year or so!

Over the years, Ken has worked tirelessly for Middlesex; multi-tasking where and when ever needed, often in the role of competition secretary, event manager, congress host, marketing man and much more besides.

Following the introduction of P2P, some 300 or so Middlesex members were initially disenfranchised but thanks to Ken, many were re-signed resulting in over 125 direct members.

For over a decade, Ken was a dedicated Middlesex delegate to EBU Council / Shareholder meetings.

In addition, Ken has played a vital role at Ealing Bridge Club since the 1980s and served as club chairman for seven years.

Suzanne Gill (*Norfolk*)

Suzanne retired from her Norfolk commitments in December 2010 and a few weeks later from the EBU Board of Directors.

In 2000 she founded the Horning Bridge Club, mainly from players whom she had taught. In 2011 the club is thriving with average attendance at fourteen plus tables. She was also very helpful in the formation of the ABC Club in 2010 – also thriving.

Suzanne was Secretary for the County Tournament Committee for 10 years, manager of the first Norfolk website and for a time our newsletter Editor.

Recently she has been the County Club Liaison Officer and nationally the EBU Board Director responsible for Education.

Awards for members not present at the meeting would be made when convenient to the recipients

Derek Povah (Derbyshire)

Already presented on 7th September at the East Midlands Bridge Academy, Spondon, Derby.

In 1987 Mr John Derek Povah, the well-established chairman of the Rolls Royce Bridge club, realised that there was a shortage of opportunities for new bridge players in North Derby.

He had qualified as an EBU bridge instructor and taught evening classes. He so enjoyed teaching bridge he decided to establish some bridge classes in the Allestree area. His excellent approach to such classes, which were so enjoyed by the participants, was such that, when they had been completed, they asked Derek to help them to continue playing bridge.

Derek decided that the best way to achieve this would be to create a bridge club in the Allestree district and this led to the formation of the Allestree Bridge Club, under Derek's chairmanship, in 1990. This club has subsequently grown to become one of the largest bridge clubs in the South of Derbyshire with over 150 members with some 4 sessions of bridge each week. Derek has remained Chairman of the club until 2011, playing virtually every week, directing regularly and has helped and supported new and regular members

Derek Povah's actions over the past 20 years have provided the EBU and the DCBA with a number of its most important members, that is, the average club player – the backbone of the English Bridge Union.

Megan Taft (Lancashire)

To be presented at Lancashire Congress on 29th October.

Unfortunately ill-health has curtailed Megan Taft's work as Secretary of Brierfield Bridge Club, on the Executive Committee of the Lancashire Contract Bridge Association and on the National Club Committee.

She served as Treasurer of Brierfield Bridge Club from 1993 to 1997 and as Secretary from 1997 until 2010. As Secretary of Brierfield Bridge Club she worked tirelessly to enable the club to obtain its own premises, which were opened by Denis Robson in March 2003. The Club is flourishing and is the thirteenth best attended club affiliated to the EBU.

Megan was elected on to the Executive Committee of the Lancashire Contract Bridge Association in May 2001 and served until forced to resign last year. She took on the organisation of the three county (Lancashire, Manchester and Merseyside) green pointed weekends at Risley

When Pay to Play was proposed and volunteers were requested for a National Club Committee, Megan again stood up to be counted until her ill-health forced her to stand down.

Although shorn of much of her responsibilities, Megan still serves on the Committee at Brierfield, giving it the benefit of her advice.

Ted Reveley (Merseyside & Cheshire)

To be presented locally.

Over the years Ted has played many roles in the administration and organisation of bridge both at County and Club level. He is unfailingly courteous, helpful to less able players and he has taken on various roles.

For a period of time he was County Chairman, and he is currently Chairman of the Merseyside Bridge League. Ted founded (jointly with Mike Swanson) Merseyside Bridge Centre now a thriving Members Club. For many years he was the Match Secretary for MBL.

Ted regularly directs at various levels and he is a County Selector and a member of the County Conduct Committee.

Nigel Block (Norfolk)

To be presented in Norfolk at the end of October

Nigel retired from the post of County Chief Tournament Director after a total of 18 years service.

He continues to help directing at the Noverre and Wensum clubs. When Nigel directs the event always progresses smoothly – unflappable – his knowledge of movements is legendary and any problem is quickly solved.

He is also a regular member of the Norfolk 'B' team in the Eastern Counties League.

Christine Buchanan (Norfolk)

To be presented in Norfolk at the end of October

Christine retired in Match after 19 years as the County Secretary and during her time in office the workload increased significantly due to more information coming from the EBU and the desire to keep the 31 Norfolk clubs aware of this.

In addition Christine organises two charity bridge days a year which usually attract up to twenty tables.

She also ran teaching classes for more than 109 years and encouraged her pupils to take part in competitions for beginners and 'No Fear' events. In her retirement she now organises bridge on Saga cruises.

3 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 7th October 2009

The minutes were a matter of note, having been formally accepted at the Shareholders' Meeting on 13th April 2011.

4 Minutes of the Shareholders' Meeting on 13th April 2011

The minutes were signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Jeremy Dhondy gave an update on the position regarding BGB.

a) The final BGB Simultaneous Pairs would be held in January 2012. From April 2012 the British Simultaneous Pairs would be run directly by the EBU from Aylesbury. It will be run over five days rather than two using a new scoring system developed specially for the events. More information would be given as the new dates approached. In the meantime the new scoring system would be trialled via a test event to be held in December which would be free to affiliated clubs to

take part. Jeremy directed the shareholders to the Chairman's detailed article on simultaneous pairs in the October 2011 issue of English Bridge.

b) Gold Cup and Silver Plate. The Silver Plate used to be an EBU event and has become so again. Seven English/Welsh teams will qualify for the final stages being joined by one Scottish team. The Gold Cup is still being run by BGB but a tender document to run the event for three years beginning in 2012 is now available. A decision on the preferred organiser would be made in April. It was noted that the Gold Cup had made a loss in recent years and that the new arrangements should halt this. Gerard Faulkner asked what would happen to the finals weekend in Peebles if the EBU were the successful bidders. Jeremy said that the venue for the finals was not part of the tender but it will certainly move from Peebles. Teams had been polled and the majority favoured a move citing Peebles' remoteness, lack of railway connections, poor roads. He reminded delegates that Peebles was introduced as a temporary venue for alternate years but had become a permanent fixture. It was likely to be held in a midlands bridge club.

c) Home Internationals (Camrose, Lady Milne, Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer)

These would continue as now. However there will be a new slimmed down version of BGB to run them as the Regulating Authority. Peter Hasenson asked about the make-up of the new BGB. Jeremy said that face to face meetings of the Core Committee would be rare, with most work done by phone and/or email making a considerable saving in costs.

Item 3. Treasurer's report - Gerard Faulkner asked whether any progress had been made regarding fees payable to WBF and EBL and there was nothing further to report.

Item 7, para 5 – It was confirmed in reply to a question from Robert Northage that ordinary membership of the EBU only came as either a) a pay to play member or b) a direct member. Just playing as a county player did not give EBU membership.

5 Chairman's Annual Report for the year 2010/2011

Forgive me for continuing to bang this particular drum, but three years ago, when you elected me as Chairman, I promised that I would work to demonstrate the benefits that playing bridge can bring to society. Why did I make that promise? Because I honestly believe that bridge can make a difference to people's lives on very many levels. Whether it is creating numerate young people through playing Minibridge, or helping to protect against dementia through stimulating the brain and stemming cognitive decline through social interaction. These activities can and will have an effect on our society and our economy.

Currently at least 25% of GDP is generated from math's based business. This will reduce dramatically if the decline in math's teaching in schools in England is not stemmed. And if our children's math's ability improves it can be increased by 0.44% per annum which will enhance the economy over a period of years.

Today, according to the UK Alzheimer's society, we have 750,000 individuals suffering from dementia. The cost to the country of dealing with the condition has risen to over £20 billion. In the next ten years at least a further 250,000 people will become sufferers. In today's money that would cost another £6.5 billion.

Why mention this now? Because these activities demonstrating public benefit are at the core of registering the EBU as a charity, something that we will be asking you to discuss and vote on later in this meeting.

Charity registration will require a great deal of hard work. We have come a long way since the mid noughties and it is you, the shareholders as representatives of your counties who have enabled us, your Board, to work towards the goal of developing an organisation that has its activities recognised nationally and is an agent for good in our society.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

This time last year I talked about succession planning and the Board did a great deal of work creating roles and responsibilities for the officers, Board directors, standing committees and their chairmen. I hope that you are all now aware of the very positive debate we had at the county chairmen's meeting at the end of June. And of course, the one element that is implicit in our work is that this is a membership organisation made up of individuals with various interests in our game, all of whom need to be considered in everything that we do. This is the most interesting and challenging dynamic of being involved in running the not for profit business that is the EBU.

I am delighted that our investment in succession planning has provided us with three new members of the Board. Ian Payn who has now been elected to the Board and the Tournament Committee and has already proved himself as a talented and dedicated member of our team. Val Gibson who will be taking over from Graham Jepson as Chairman of the Club Committee. And Jerry Cope who will be taking up his appointment to the Board from tomorrow and who will help us on the development of our strategy plan for the next five years.

It is at this time of year that I have the opportunity to thank all those people who have helped carry out our work.

An enormous thank you to Baroness Henig for her continued chairmanship of the All Party Parliamentary Group and for her dedication to our cause.

Heather Dhondy for chairing the Selection Committee, for her understanding and commitment to international affairs and for her dedication to the Board.

Jeremy Dhondy – for chairing the L and E, his contribution to the Editorial Board, for representing the membership of the EBU at BGB and for his constant attention to detail.

Suzanne Gill, who organised the research and report on county education which formed the basis for an interesting and productive debate at our county chairman's meeting in June.

Michael Hill for his stewardship of our finances.

Graham Jepson for his work with developing the newly elected club committee and in his new role looking after our honours and awards.

Malcolm Oliver for his excellent contribution to the Business Planning Team. Malcolm will continue his excellent work as an appointed director for the coming year 2011-12.

Andrew Petrie – for his role as Chairman of the Tournament Committee, as lead director on charity registration, and for his constancy and support.

To Martin Pool for chairing the Tournament Directors Development Group

To Peter Stocken for hosting our summer away day Board meeting.

To Gerard Faulkner for his continued pro bono work and to David Harris for the advice and guidance he has provided as our honorary counsel.

To every member of every standing committee and subcommittee of the Board, without whom there would be no EBU.

To all the members of the disciplinary panels who work tirelessly to ensure that justice and regulation is upheld.

To all those who make donations to us including the Milton Damerall Trust, the Ormus Trust and Helen Schapiro.

To our General Manager, Barry Capal, who continues to take us in to the future with his consummate knowledge of IT and his management of Aylesbury.

And finally, an enormous thank you to our hard working and dedicated staff.

***Sources quoted are listed at the end of the minutes**

6 Hon. Treasurer's Annual Report for the year 2009/2010

The report was noted. The Treasurer said that he had nothing to add but would be happy to answer questions. Jim Simons noted that our liability to corporation tax was limited to trading with non-members. The Treasurer confirmed this saying that the figures were very small and that the corporation tax paid was on interest income

Peter Bentley asked whether the Treasurer was happy with the current position. The Treasurer said we currently had liquid assets of approx. £300K and while he was happy at the present time, he would not be so if we kept making a loss. There was a need to return to surplus in 2012/13. Sally Bugden said that all the staff were working to reduce costs and increase the surplus. She mentioned a new deal with the printers of *English Bridge* which would reduce costs.

Angus Clark asked about accrued magazine points. The General Manager said that 39200 magazines had been printed for October which meant that about 20% of members either did not have sufficient magazine points to receive a copy or had chosen not to receive one (married couples only having one between them, for example).

Grattan Endicott noted that the worth of the company was declining in real terms. The Treasurer said that what was important was that the liquid reserves were adequate to keep the company financially sound and that he had already said that was the case in answer to a previous question. Andrew Petrie said that it was hoped to have significant savings from 2012 when the new Simultaneous Pairs arrangements began. He concluded that 'significant' might mean 'tens of thousands of pounds'.

Ian Rankin asked about an electronic *English Bridge*. Sally said it had been considered but the members had indicated they preferred the current arrangement – it was a tangible membership service. The Board would work as hard as possible to continue with six issues a year. Angus Clark said it would be possible to move to four issues a year rather than six without a huge detriment to the members.

Colin Band queried the expenses on the international front. It appeared that we had spent £100K more this year. It was pointed out that the figures for 2010 were to be found in different places due to new accounting procedures. Nevertheless it was a large amount which his county members had asked him to raise. Others expressed the view that it was important that we take part and fund the events. The Treasurer said it was impossible to provide detailed year-by-year figures because of the nature of the international set-up being based on a 4-year cycle. In addition we didn't know whether England would or would not qualify for a particular competition. However he confirmed that the 5-year plan had projected costings as follows: 2011/12 £97K, 2012/13 £140K, 2013/14 £110K and 2014/15 £109K.

Grattan Endicott agreed it was difficult – the events are different, number of teams we might send is different but it was necessary to put an amount aside in case it was needed. And, of course the location could increase costs, especially as for many of these competitions we are given less than a year's notice or the venue is changed at the last moment.

7 Directors' Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2011

The report was approved and the annual accounts to 31st March formally adopted nem con.

8 Re-appointment of Auditors for the year 2011/2012

A proposal by Steve Foster, seconded by Darren Evetts that AD Parks & Co. be re-appointed was carried nem con. The Treasurer thanked Tony Parks for his contribution over a number of years.

9 Pay to Play and membership subscriptions for 2012/2013

The Board had proposed an increase of 2p in the pay to play figure for 2012/13. There were currently 605 affiliated clubs, approx 49000 members, with the numbers of club sessions for the current year running at just under 1m. It was noted that a 1p increase in the pay to play figure would raise about £17000 (after VAT). There was a short discussion about variable club affiliation fees based on a) club size and/or b) club activity but there had been no desire to introduce a sliding scale when the original research for universal membership had taken place between June and September 2007. The Treasurer reminded delegates that there was a small rebate for paying by direct debit.

Gerard Faulkner asked whether a rise to 33p was sufficient and whether the budget would support it. He would be happy for it to go to 34p. The Treasurer said that there was an expectation of extra income from other sources which meant that 33p should be sufficient. John Withers asked about the expectation that clubs which had left would start coming back. The Treasurer said that the 5-year plan had made an assumption of some clubs returning from year three.

Darren Evetts proposed and Grattan Endicott seconded the proposal to increase the pay to play figure to 33p. On a show of hands it was carried by many votes to 1.

Other proposals to raise the following subscriptions were carried nem.con.

	(for info) 2009/2010	(for info) 2010/2011	(for info) 2011/2012	Proposed 2012/2013
Pay-to-play	N/a	0.29	0.31	0.33
Existing Members	18.00	N/a	N/a	N/a
New Members				
Joining between 1 April 2011 and 31 October 2011	18.00	N/a	N/a	N/a
Joining between 1 November 2011 and 28 February 2012	9.00	N/a	N/a	N/a
Direct Members				
UK	28.00	23.00	24.00	25.00
Overseas	30.00	25.00	26.00	27.00
EBUTA Members				
Existing or new members joining before 31 October 2011	15.00	15.00	15.00	16.00
Joining between 1 November 2011 and 31 March 2012	7.50	7.50	7.50	8.00
Junior Members				
Over 17 and under 25 years old on 1 January 2011	5.00	N/a	N/a	N/a
Under 17 years old on 1 January 2011	2.00	N/a	N/a	N/a
Affiliations				
Club (via County)	20.50	30.00	30.00	32.00
Club (Direct)	41.00	30.00	30.00	32.00
University	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Schools	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Darren Evetts proposed a vote of thanks to the Treasurer which was greeted with applause.

10 Election of Directors

There were two nominations for two places. Val Gibson and Ian Payn were declared elected.

11 Appointment of Company Secretary for the year 2011/2012

Barry Capai was formally appointed for the year 2011/2012.

12 Election of 2 members to the Laws & Ethics Committee for the year 2011/2012

Three nominations had been received for two positions. Following a ballot David Burn (59 votes) and Martin Pool (53) were declared elected for a three-year term ending in 2014. David Stevenson (33) was not elected.

13 Election of 3 members of the Tournament Committee for the year 2011/2012

Three nominations had been received for three positions. However a ballot was needed to determine two three-year terms and one two-year term. Following a ballot Paul Hackett (63 votes) and Ian Payn (63) were elected for a three-year term ending in 2014 and Brian Crack (47) was elected for a two-year term ending in 2013.

14 Election of 4 members of the Selection Committee for the year 2011/2012

Five nominations had been received for four positions. Following a ballot Tom Townsend (64 votes), Simon Cochemé (62) and Nick Smith (47) were elected for a three-year term ending in 2014. Heather Bakhshi (44) was elected for a one-year term ending in 2012. Richard Bowdery (37) was not elected.

15 Ordinary resolution – to begin charity registration process

Andrew Petrie advised the meeting that charitable status could bring significant financial benefits to the EBU. It could raise the status and perceptions of the EBU for many years to come. The reason an application was possible was because of a change in 2006 to the charity legislation allowing mind sports. The success of Hitchin Bridge Club achieving charitable status appeared to have strengthened the EBU's hand. He understood the chess federation were also considering applying and he was due to meet with chess officials to see what could be usefully learnt from each other. He advised delegates that some of the EBU's processes might need to change but until the charity commissioners saw a completed application it was impossible to say what they might be.

Gerry Warren said that Cornwall county were also looking at a possible application but were minded to delay while an EBU application was being considered. Andrew said he could see no reason for Cornwall to delay applying as the two bodies were significantly different.

Peter Hasenson asked about the cost of applying and it was thought to be of the order of £10K - £20K. However if additional professional advice was needed it might rise to £30K.

Sally Bugden stated that Andrew Petrie had already saved the EBU substantial funds through the work that he had undertaken on our behalf.

Andrew said he was asking for what amounted to an enabling motion to take the process forward.

Darren Evetts proposed and Terence Treeby seconded the ordinary resolution:

'That the shareholders accept the principle of the EBU applying to become a charity. This acceptance is subject to the principle that any changes to the Constitution will require Shareholder approval through a Special Resolution at a further General Meeting.'

Carried nem con.

16 Minutes of County Chairman's conference June 29th 2011

Lesley Millett gave a resume of the education situation in Yorkshire. The Bridge Development Committee had made a lot of progress and the new 'Learn Bridge Yorkshire' website would be going live shortly. It had been set up so other counties could have their own equivalent sites.

Nigel Thompson asked about club disciplinary procedures. It was noted that any member could make a complaint about another member to the NBO. Jeremy Dhondy said that where a member fell foul of a club, the club should have proper procedures in place to deal with the situation. The problem came where a club had no adequate procedure for dealing with appeals against summary justice. Martin Pool is putting together some advice for clubs and counties.

16.1 Review of County responsibilities on shareholders role

Sally Bugden said that while it was right to list the statutory items the EBU should not try to define the non-statutory items. She hoped that County delegates would communicate with the county committee and local clubs.

Gerard Faulkner questioned why some of items listed as 'statutory' were classified as such. Sally said they form part of the Articles of Association.

Sid Travers noted that EBU Shareholders were not true shareholders and that they are really county representatives their shares being based on numbers of members within their counties rather than financial. Brian Crack reminded the meeting that before the current arrangement there were two bodies EBU and EBU Ltd with defined roles and it was necessary to clear up any confusion between statutory and non-statutory.

17 Proposal to rename the Silver Award

The meeting considered a suggestion from LMBA that the newly created Silver Award should become a named award. The term 'Silver' possibly implying that it was inferior to the Gold Award. Other suggestions included 'The Chairman's Award' but Sally pointed out that at its meeting in September the Board had decided there should be a Chairman's Award for an outstanding contribution to the EBU from a volunteer within a specific year. Darren Evetts suggested that named trophies lose their value once the name has passed on (who was Harold Poster someone asked – a successful London property developer). Others thought that naming awards helped keep the name alive. On a show of hands the meeting was not in favour of renaming the Silver Award.

18 Summary on a proposal on funding

Sally said it was correct to clear up some misinformation that was circulating regarding a proposal to fund development in bridge in England. Following a letter from the Board there had been no further contact with the member.

19 Treasurer's report for the current year

The Treasurer's report was accepted with no additional questions.

20 Minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors

20.1 March 24th 2011 accepted. No questions.

20.2 June 14th 2011 accepted. No questions.

20.3 August 17th 2011 accepted. 8.2 Gerard Faulkner was amazed at the apparent incompetence of both the WBF and EBL administration regarding the qualification of the juniors.

Sally said the matter was not resolved and she was appalled that the first time it was announced to the EBU was at the awards ceremony.

20.4 September 7th 2011. The majority of items had been discussed at today's meeting.

21 Minutes of the Meeting of the Laws & Ethics Committee

21.1 April 12th 2011 accepted.

21.2 September 21st 2011 accepted.

Jeremy Dhondy said that Frances Hinden was drafting a schedule of penalties for misdemeanours in *Best Behaviour at Bridge*. He said it was important that if people misbehaved they were treated consistently (subject to mitigating circumstances). He was hoping the schedule would be available following the January 2012 L&E meeting. He confirmed that Max Bavin had redrafted certain regulations, naming the one which now gave clubs the right to refuse entry to non-club members for events such as the National Pairs and heats of simultaneous pairs.

Ron Heath thanked the L&E for assisting with the case listed as 'Chicago'. He said the innocent party had been the County who had been hit financially. He expressed concern that the proposed Mediation Committee would be a waste of time and money. Jeremy thanked the county for their assistance and said that he and the L&E secretary would be drafting some guidelines for the proposed Mediation Committee and welcomed any input from the county in this regard.

22 Minutes of the meeting of the Selection Committee on June 6th 2011

Heather Dhondy presented the minutes, and said she was keen to point out that the committee had been asked to make substantial savings. Several events were now self-funding, they were looking to use cheaper accommodation for trials and use cheaper hotels when away. Junior budgets had been reduced and the squad were being asked to contribute towards the cost of travel expenses for squad training weekends.

23 Minutes of the meeting of the Tournament Committee on July 7th 2011

Andrew Petrie presented the minutes. He said that he was standing down as Tournament Committee chairman to concentrate of the charity application. He thanked Brian Crack as Vice Chairman, all the other Tournament Committee members and the Aylesbury staff for their hard work and for dealing so efficiently with the occasional upset member.

Peter Bentley asked about the introduction of Blue Points. Their introduction had been welcomed as there was sometimes a long way to travel to get Green Points. Blue Points were exchangeable with up 150 Blue Points converted to 50 Green Points. Andrew said that so far he had heard no grumbles about the new points.

Roger Amey said that participation in Knock Out events was declining to the point where his team was the only Norfolk team playing in the NICKO. Terence Treeby agreed citing his 2nd round match from Devon having to travel to Hampshire. Andrew said the committee was aware of the problem and the new committee would be looking at the issue.

Shirley Pritchard said she was impressed to see how many new people had attended the Cheltenham Midweek Congress. Was it possible to see how many new people went to other events? Andrew said that a list was available for the host at each event so it was possible to produce the figures. He thanked her for the comments about Cheltenham and it was nice to know when we got something right – the venue and format had helped.

Malcolm Carey thanked the Committee for abandoning the regulation which required non-experts to score at least 50% before being eligible for a category prize. He said at the recent Guernsey Congress the loudest round of applause had been a local Guernsey non-expert team. He remembered playing in a competition – Club Player of the Year (all expenses paid by EBU) which had encouraged him to take up competition bridge on a regular basis. Andrew said the committee would look at all options.

24 Dates for Shareholders' meetings for the year 2012/13

Wednesday 18th April Shareholders' Meeting – Royal National Hotel, London

Wednesday 3rd October Annual General Meeting – Imperial Hotel, London

Wednesday 11th July County Chairmen's Conference – Royal National Hotel, London

All meetings would start at 1pm.

25 Any Other Business

Barry Capal said that the National Grading Scheme would be going live early in the New Year and would benefit from almost two years worth of data. A number of members tried to ask about the detailed calculations but Barry said the mathematics of the scheme was extremely complicated but anyone who was genuinely interested could see how it was put together.

Margaret Curtis asked whether it would be possible to know quite early on whether retiring committee members were intending to submit themselves for re-election. Quite often it wasn't known whether an incumbent was re-standing or whether there was a genuine vacancy. People were often reluctant to stand against a person seeking re-election but might be prepared to stand when a genuine vacancy occurs.

Chris Duckworth raised four points from the London AGM with reference to representation, inclusion and service provision to existing members and potential members of the EBU. The Chairman asked Chris to provide the detail from the London AGM and that the Board would consider the issues therein at its next meeting.

Closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked Shareholders for their attendance at what had been a very productive meeting. The meeting closed at 4pm.

**Date of the Next Meeting is Wednesday 18th April
at The Royal National Hotel (The Edward VII Suite), Bedford Way, London
Start 1pm**

*Sources in the Chairman's report:

Alzheimer's Society <http://alzheimers.org.uk> About Dementia>Statistics

Williams, P. "Independent Review of Mathematics Teaching in Early Years Settings and Primary Schools". DCSF Publications June 2008

Roberts, L. "Learn maths to boost the economy, scientist advises" Daily Telegraph 18th November 2010