

FARNHAM FESTIVAL OF BRIDGE – ORGANISERS GUIDE

This document is intended to assist those who organise any future festival of bridge similar to the Farnham Festival of August 2018.

9 months + in advance

1. Identify and communicate with the various bridge groups in your area, and seek their support. (These groups may range from EBU affiliated clubs, to No Fear / friendly duplicate and afternoon rubber, to informal groups who play in each others homes).
2. Appoint 2 or 3 persons to plan & co-ordinate the event. (For the Farnham event, Tony Philpott & Mike O'Donnell took central roles, Tony handling all publicity, sponsorship, promotional & event materials, the “look and feel” of the event, with Mike handling logistics, Finance & registrations).
3. Contact local bridge teachers and their groups, plus youth groups, to seek their support and involvement.
4. Identify and provisionally book a venue of suitable size. (Choose a date that does not clash with local club evenings or major county events).

6 months in advance

1. Hold a meeting with representatives of participating clubs, seek volunteer helpers, agree detailed format of event (e.g. 4 sections – open, no fear, Chicago & beginner/taster). Agree target entry fee, raffle or not, charity for profits).
2. Seek sponsors (e.g. to support free entry for all under 21s).
3. Send out a “save the date” for clubs to put on their websites & noticeboards or send on to their members.
4. Agree that all finances will be put through the audited books of one local established club.
5. Agree price per participant. Ideally arrange to accept payments in advance rather than collecting money on the door.

3 months in advance

1. Confirm venue booking & refreshments. Pay deposit.
2. Produce target P&L based on best & worst case participant numbers.
3. Hold meeting with key representatives / volunteers.
4. Allocate responsibilities for prizes, raffle, boards dealing, registrations, refreshments.
5. Produce event flyer.

6 weeks in advance

1. Announce event on all local club websites & noticeboards & open registrations.
2. Send publicity article to local newspaper(s), local free magazines, community websites, County Bridge Association etc.
3. Confirm event and funding with sponsors. Offer to have their promotional materials at the event.
4. Start accepting registrations.
5. Appoint directors / scorers & leaders for each section.
 1. Arrange for suitable numbers of bridge tables, bidding boxes etc. to be loaned & delivered to venue for the day.
6. Agree movements & scoring arrangements with directors (Farnham Festival used 2 sets of bridgemates set to different channels, & separate computers/servers for open & no fear sections, with “Mitchell + arrow-switch” for both. Chicago was manual scoring, not totally successful & taster session used teaching boards).

2 weeks in advance

1. Check bridge software & hardware will work in the venue, and that there are suitable electricity points. If using bridgemates, set open and no fear section bridgemates and servers to different channels.
2. Track progress of registrations & adjust plans for the day as appropriate.
3. Produce room layout, programmes & any other materials to be handed out on the day.
4. Arrange for appropriate sets of duplicated boards to be dealt (at least 4 sets x 24 boards plus 60+ print-outs).
5. Finalise prizes
6. Finalise running order of the day.
7. Reconfirm directors, scorers, helpers, introductory & prize-giving speakers.
8. Confirm arrangements for tables, bidding boxes & other supplies delivery, clearing away and return.
9. Reconfirm all arrangements with venue.

On the day

With the right preparation ,everything should run smoothly, but have an extra helper or two available to handle the unexpected!

After the day

1. Send note of thanks to all involved.
2. Thank sponsors.
3. Finalise accounts, pay all bills, donate profits to charity.