



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION LIMITED  
HELD AT THE IMPERIAL HOTEL, LONDON  
ON WEDNESDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2006**

<b>Present:</b>	Denis Robson	Chairman
	Philip Mason	Vice Chairman
	John Neville	Treasurer
	Barry Capal	General Manager
	Sally Bugden	Board Member
	John Carter	Board Member & Hants & IOW Proxy
	David Harris	Board Member
	Jeff Morris	Board Member
	Alan Nelson	Board Member & Tournament Committee Chairman
	Martin Pool	Board Member & Laws & Ethics Committee Chairman
	Gerard Faulkner	Vice President, Selection Committee Chairman & Norfolk Shareholder
	Grattan Endicott	Vice Presidents & Merseyside & Cheshire Proxy
	Peter Stocken	Vice President
	Max Bavin	Tournament Manager
	Karen Durrell	Reception
	Tony Parks	Auditor

County	Shareholders: Present	Apologies	Proxy	County	Shareholders: Present	Apologies	Proxy
Avon		Mrs MA Harris	P Green	Lincolnshire	MRD Hill	J Smith	
Bedfordshire	RR Davis	Mrs V Lawson		London	S Cochemè		
Berks & Bucks	R Brock			Manchester	JA Smith	B Kaye	
	Mrs M Hatch					GD Rice	
Cambs & Hunts	D Carmichael	CN Jagger		Merseyside & Cheshire	KA Drane	Dr J Leather	G Endicott
Channel Islands	Mrs P Panter			Middlesex	P Kaufmann	P Tobias	
Cumbria				Norfolk	R Amey		
					JG Faulkner		
				North East		MJ Baker	MG Oliver
							CF Owen
Derbyshire		Mrs J Floutier		Northants		RF Vajda	I Spoors
Devon		T Treeby		Notts	EH Nunn	Mrs J Burgess	T Thrower
Dorset				Oxford	Mrs A Claridge	P Baxter	
					Mrs B Harris		
Essex	Mrs M Curtis	SJ Prince		Somerset		Mrs S Stuttard	J Dilworth
Gloucestershire	E Hill			Staffs & Shrops	PD Hackett	J Withers	
Hants & IoW		Dr S Strachan		Suffolk	MR Carey		
Herefordshire	G Harrington	Dr S Munday		Surrey	P Bentley	M Curtis	
					Mrs M Griffin		
Hertfordshire	BN Eddleston			Sussex	Mrs JB Virley	PJ Bates	
	M Hancock				ER Buddery		
	MW Minting				Miss JB Simpson		
Isle of Man	Dr EF Slatcher			Warwicks	J Pyner	M Allen	C Lang
						J Downing	
Kent	BR Crack			Westmorland			
Lancashire		J Brelsford	D Pendlebury	Wiltshire	P Green	Miss K Hodgson	
		AA Cordery					
Leicestershire	RH Northage	Mrs P Watson		Worcester		Mrs L Boyes	Ian Thompson
	J Wilcox					PD Hammond	
				Yorkshire	GW Jepson		
					Mrs J Latham		
					IR Rodger		

Opening the meeting, the Chairman introduced Barry Capal, who took up his appointment as General Manager in early June.

### **1 Apologies for absence**

See page 1 for County information.

### **2 Announcement of Dimmie Fleming Awards**

The Chairman presented certificates to the recipients, and gave a short resumé of their valuable contribution to their respective County Associations over a considerable number of years.

Gladys Gittins	Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire
Michael Hill	London
Robbie Roberson	Norfolk
May Langmaid	Sussex

Hector Barker (Lancashire) was unable to attend, and his award was accepted by David Pendlebury on his behalf.

### **3 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> October 2005**

The minutes were signed as an accurate record.

#### **3.1 Matters Arising**

Clive Owen gave his reasons for not standing for re-election to the Selection Committee, and said that in his opinion the current selection process, particularly in respect of Seniors and Juniors, was flawed. In his experience as a selector, many members of the Selection Committee were not in the habit of attending Trials, and would not recognise the country's leading junior players. If the Committee's procedures were to be examined for the future, the importance of the respect and integrity of its members must be taken into account.

### **4 Minutes of the Shareholders Meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> April 2006.**

The minutes were signed as an accurate record.

#### **4.1 Matters Arising**

##### **4.1.1 Item 5**

Brian Crack said his recollection was that agreement had been obtained from the Treasurer that the National Bridge Centre would be self-financing. In response the Treasurer said that it had been expected that competitions held at Kettering would be, and it was hoped that they would also make a significant contribution to the running of Aylesbury.

##### **4.1.2 Membership Development Advisory Group Update**

Philip Mason outlined the current composition of the Group, i.e. himself, Sally Bugden, John Carter, David Graham and Brian Crack. Peter Kaufmann, originally a member, had now relocated to North Wales.

Sally Bugden and David Graham, with help from by Val Lawson, had visited around 20 clubs in an attempt to identify what was causing the steady decline in EBU membership, and further initiatives were planned. Early indications were that behavioural standards were an issue, and clearly it was vital to bring new members into clubs via a teaching programme.

In response to a comment that counties had not been fully informed of visits to their clubs, Sally Bugden said that every Secretary and the Counties where the visit was to take place had been contacted by telephone.

Malcolm Oliver said that he had been sceptical about the introduction of the Group at the outset, but had been pleasantly surprised at the reaction at the meeting held at Darlington Bridge Centre, and clearly the Union was seeking to improve membership services. In the light of this it was disappointing to note that for the time being our expectations in respect of the Brighton Summer Meeting had to be lowered. Barry Capal reported that he had spent four days at the Congress, and had received numerous complaints about the conditions, and the level of service offered by the Hilton Metropole. However, even though Brighton appeared to be the favoured venue for the Summer Meeting, Barry had already investigated other possible venues and attempts would continue to be made to find an affordable alternative venue: suggestions would be welcomed.

#### 4.1.3 *Kettering Update*

Barry Capal reported that he had visited Kettering soon after his appointment, and while the playing conditions were good, the Centre was otherwise not user-friendly, and the lack of suitable hotel accommodation was a serious drawback. He had visited another hotel in the Midlands with Max Bavin, which offered a high standard in every respect, and bookings would be made for 2008.

### **5 Chairman's Annual Report for the year 2005/6**

The Chairman had nothing to add to his report, circulated in advance, except to congratulate the English Women's team who had won the bronze medal at the European Championships in Warsaw, and the U20s team on winning the Peggy Bayer Trophy. The Shareholders joined the Chairman in wishing the Women every success in the Venice Cup in Shanghai.

### **6 Hon. Treasurer's Annual Report for the year 2005/6**

The Treasurer confirmed that financial statements had been circulated in July, together with additional information on various areas of activity, and that the bulk of the figures had been published on the website.

Comments were made as follows:

- Michael Hill noted that the membership figures and income for the year did not tally. The Treasurer explained that the figures in the accounts are net of VAT @ 9%, and included an element of *BFA* income, which largely accounted for the discrepancy.
- Gerard Faulkner noted a considerable decrease in both income and expenditure on EBUTA and Youth affairs. It was noted that there had been reduced activity in these areas, and there had been no Teacher's Jamboree during the year.

- A decrease in Sponsorship and Other Income was also noted by Gerard Faulkner. The Treasurer reported that the main income in this area was from Bridge Great Britain, and that there had been a distribution of accumulated reserves in the previous year.
- An increase in the cost of Home Internationals was queried by Gerard Faulkner. Subsequent to the meeting it was confirmed that this represented the cost of hosting the Lady Milne Trophy in April 2005.

## **7 Directors Report and Accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006**

The accounts were formally approved.

## **8 Re-appointment of Auditors for the year 2006/7**

A proposal from the Chair that A D Parks & Co. be re-appointed, was carried nem. con.

## **9 Appointment of Company Secretary for the year 2006/7**

It was agreed nem. con. that Brian Smith, appointed as Company Secretary on a temporary basis, be replaced by Barry Capal.

## **10 Election of Board of Directors for the year 2006/7**

A proposal by Ian Spoons, seconded by Robert Northage, that the elections for the Board of Directors and the Selection, Tournament and Laws & Ethics Committees take place following review of the minutes of their meetings, was carried by 16 votes to 14.

In answer to a question from Grattan Endicott on the timing and procedure for electing Officers of the Company, Peter Stocken confirmed that under the Company's new Constitution, candidates for the Board of Directors can indicate a willingness to stand for office, but no nominations for office can legally be made until the Board of Directors has been elected.

It was requested that in future details of the candidates for election to the various committees be published on the website, and this was agreed.

## **11 Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Directors of EBU Limited**

### **11.1 9<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

#### *11.1.1 Stratified Newcomers Pairs*

Robert Northage said that there appeared to be some confusion about the introduction of a stratified National Newcomers Pairs. Max Bavin confirmed that the idea had been abandoned as unworkable, and ideas were needed for a new format to generate interest in the event.

#### *11.1.2 English Bridge*

Sally Bugden said that due to limited space, dictated by the need for advertising income, a decision had been taken to publish only leading results for competitions in *English Bridge*, and flag up forthcoming events. An extended results service was available on the website, and Counties could use the County News section to highlight their members' achievements, alongside the detailed master-point promotions.

### 11.1.3 *Bridge Great Britain*

John Neville outlined the rationale behind his recommendation that the status quo on how the split of the surplus from Bridge Great Britain's simultaneous pairs events be divided should be maintained for a further five years. Currently Bridge Great Britain raises around £50K annually from simultaneous pairs events, with England receiving 60% of the profit, and Scotland and Wales 20% each. Whilst it was conceded that around 80% of the income was derived from English competitors, a successful working relationship existed between the three countries and in his view to reduce the share for Scotland and Wales would be unduly harsh.

Grattan Endicott paid tribute to David Harris's outstanding reputation abroad as England's ambassador for international matters.

## 11.2      12<sup>th</sup> July 2006

### 11.2.1 *Centralised Subscription Collection*

Margaret Curtis raised the question of central collection of subscriptions, and a general discussion ensued, some Shareholders expressing the views that some members would be lost if the scheme became mandatory, a number of members do not favour payment by direct debit, and the Counties would lose the opportunity of the personal approach to those members of their Associations who need encouragement to renew. In addition, there was a feeling that the suggested £2 surcharge for members not renewing by Direct Debit from 2008/9, was too high.

In response John Neville expressed his gratitude to County Membership Secretaries for the work they had undertaken on the EBU's behalf. However, it had been increasingly difficult to run an efficient membership system at Aylesbury for 39 counties with differing membership regulations. He conceded that it would be impossible to have mandatory renewal by Direct Debit, but a higher proportion than as at present would save the Union a great deal of time and money presently spent on chasing late payers - 3,500 this year - and it was imperative to have a more streamlined and more accurate operation. Barry Capal agreed, saying that the present system was unworkable for the future, and that unless central collection becomes the norm, accurate data could not be guaranteed. These views were supported by a number of Shareholders, who felt that the EBU must move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, keep pace with technology and dispense with convoluted procedures, thereby saving Membership Secretaries a great deal of time.

The general feeling of the meeting was that the level of communication with Membership Secretary must be improved, and that further discussion was needed on the level of surcharge to be imposed in respect of members not renewing by Direct Debit from 2008.

### 11.2.2 *Membership Development Action Group*

Margaret Curtis enquired why the Membership Development Action Group had found making progress with County Associations logistically difficult. John Carter replied that due to his pressure of work the pilot meeting with Counties had not been progressed, and other members of the group had focussed on their tasks of contact and research with clubs.

### 11.2.3 *Education*

The requirement that new bridge teachers use the *Bridge for All* system was raised, and it was reported that many Local Councils do not allow a system which incorporates an additional

subscription element. Barry Capal responded that the Board has now approved plans for a new approach for teachers and clubs which it is hoped may avoid the issue.

#### 11.2.4 EBU Trust

David Harris reported that an application would shortly be made for charitable status for an education Trust, and that the newly elected Officers would be the Trustees. Gerard Faulkner suggested that the word “unlikely” in the final sentence of 4.1.1 of the minutes be changed to “non-existent”.

#### 11.2.5 Educational DVD

It was confirmed that the educational DVD had not been found, and the Chairman apologised that he had not had time to pursue the matter with the previous General Manager.

#### 11.2.6 Medical Healthcare Scheme

Gerard Faulkner asked whether any progress would be made on a Medical Healthcare Scheme for the membership. John Neville said that he had attended a meeting to examine what was offered, and formed the view that the evidence provided was not consistent with the claims made. He stressed that any service offered to EBU members must be thoroughly researched to ensure that the benefits offered were genuine.

#### 11.2.7 Bridge Ryder Cup

Gerard Faulkner said he supported John Neville’s cautious approach to hosting a Bridge Ryder Cup in future, without a substantial amount of sponsorship money being guaranteed. According to Jeff Morris the Irish had been extremely pleased with both the event’s publicity and attendance, and over 30,000 people worldwide had watched the play daily on Bridge Base Online. Given that there is currently no TV coverage for Bridge, every effort must be made to raise its profile, particularly to young people.

Simon Cocheme pointed out that England was unlikely to have to host the event before 2030.

#### 11.2.8 EBU Diary

Barry Capal apologised for the delay in the 2006/7 diary, which had been caused by an external production problem.

### 11.3 Board Minutes, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2006

It was agreed that these minutes be deferred to the next Shareholders Meeting, but that amendments be made to Item 8.2.1, as follows:

2007 National Womens Teams: 7<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> September at Hinckley  
2008 “ “ “ 5<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> September at Hinckley  
(The first complete weekend in September is now the permanent date)

## 12 Minutes of the Laws & Ethics Committee of 6<sup>th</sup> June & 6<sup>th</sup> September 2006

### 12.1 Announcements and the Hard of Hearing

Presenting the minutes, Martin Pool said that following the introduction of the new Orange Book the Committee had received a deluge of correspondence from national Hard of Hearing groups on the subject of announcements. Research had been undertaken and advice sought from the Andrew Robson Bridge Club on potential problems. Announcements cards have been produced and were available at Brighton, a loop system is being considered, Tournament

Directors are instructed to be sensitive to the problem, and every effort will be made to improve players' bridge experience generally. The situation will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

#### *12.2 Convention Card*

Martin said it was hoped that the new format convention card would be more user-friendly, though initial reaction to it suggested that some modifications might need to be made. He would liaise with the L&E Secretary to ensure that the necessary adaptations were made to the Webcard, and these would be dated.

#### *12.3 Extended Rule of 25*

It was confirmed that it is not permitted to open a Benjamin 2♣ on insufficient values ie 14 HCP minimum as described in the Orange Book. In addition, all bids must be accurately described to opponents when asked.

The minutes were accepted.

### **13 Minutes of the Tournament Committee of 4<sup>th</sup> May and 13<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

The minutes were presented by Alan Nelson.

#### *13.1 Mobile phones*

Gerard Faulkner said that he was unhappy with the Committee's response to concerns about mobile phones. Alan confirmed that TDs have standard powers and penalties in force, and that stronger announcements will be recommended.

#### *13.2 Scarborough and Brighton Summer Meetings*

On the Committee's behalf Alan apologised for the venues at Scarborough and Brighton. A meeting will be held at Brighton two weeks prior to next year's event between himself, Barry Capal, Peter Jordan and the Hotel Manager, to seek to ensure that the level of service is significantly improved.

In general terms the Committee has a very heavy administrative role, but the General Manager is keen to be involved and every effort will be made to introduce new thinking, and address all the issues raised by the membership.

#### *13.3 Calendars*

Mike Minting pointed out that Counties plan their events around the EBU's draft calendars, and the change of dates for the Mens' and Womens' Pairs and Womens' Teams had caused a clash with a county event. Alan said that every effort would be made to minimise changes to the final draft calendar, and to keep counties informed by email of any unavoidable amendments.

#### *13.4 Simultaneous Pairs*

Robert Northage noted that while masterpoint awards had been reduced for licensed events, the introduction of green points for Simultaneous Pairs events had had the effect of significant numbers of green-point hunters turning up to clubs where they were not members. The Chairman agreed that the matter would be reviewed in a year's time.

*13.5 Format changes for tournaments*

The Chairman said that the Committee was seeking to provide a greater variety of events, and the need to explain the change in tactics with the introduction of Butler Scoring would be addressed by Max Bavin, and publicised.

*13.6 Garden Cities*

In answer to a question from Jeff Morris, the Chairman said that it was not possible for the Regional Final and National Final to return to Coventry Bridge Club in 2007, as the Union is committed to a booking at Kettering.

*13.7 Northern Seniors Congress*

Gerard Faulkner said that the introduction of a Northern Seniors Congress had clearly been a success, and suggested that a possible alternative venue might be York. Philip Mason replied that alternative venues will be sought in a number of areas.

*13.8 Overseas Congress 2008*

The Chairman announced that the 2008 Overseas Congress had gone out to tender, and that a quotation from Mercian Travel had been accepted for the event to be held at the Mare Nostrum Resort, Tenerife.

The minutes were accepted.

**14 Minutes of the Selection Committee Meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

Presenting the minutes Gerard Faulkner echoed the Chairman's congratulations to the English Womens' team on winning the bronze medal in Warsaw. The Open team had finished 10<sup>th</sup>, and accordingly an English team qualifies for the Champions Cup. England will be represented by the 2006 winners of Crockfords Cup.

*14.1 Open Trials*

After a number of withdrawals, 8 teams have played the first weekend of a two-weekend Trial, and the leading scores are as follows:

Janet de Botton 71, Neil Rosen 46, Tom Townsend 41, Jeremy Dhondy 34, John Armstrong 12.

*14.2 U20s Squad Manager*

The Committee had accepted with regret Mel Starkings' decision to retire as the U20 Squad Manager. Michael Byrne has been appointed as his successor with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January.

*14.3 Membership Development Action Group*

The Committee had discussed the Group's request for assistance in terms of the membership drive. A point made forcibly by the Committee was that the Union does not have the services of a Publicity Officer, or regular contact with local journalists, and concern was expressed that raising the profile of Bridge can only be achieved by getting information about our players to the media. This was endorsed by Jeff Morris who said that it was extremely difficult to get TV or radio coverage, but this could only be achieved by building up contacts. Clive Owen reported that he had been successful in attracting sponsorship for two international matches at Darlington in exchange for media coverage, but conceded that it was easier at local level.



#### 14.4 Seniors Trials

Brian Crack said that whilst his team had thoroughly enjoyed competing in the Seniors Trials for the European Championships in Warsaw, the process of selection had been something of a travesty, given that a number of strong contenders had not been eligible for selection. In response the Chairman said that the Committee had taken the decision to use the results of the Seniors KO Salver as qualification for the Trials, and must honour its published commitments. However, it would look very seriously at Trials for Seniors as for all other categories.

#### 14.5 Junior Trials

Paul Hackett expressed surprise that the Squad Manager of the U25s had sole responsibility for deciding who competes in the Junior Trials. The Chairman said that the Squad Manager was a voting member of the Selection Committee, and on its behalf had the power to decide who would be a member of the Squad. However, if Paul would provide chapter and verse, he would take up the matter of exclusions with him.

#### 14.6 Appointment of Assistant Coach for Warsaw

Robert Northage expressed surprise that, despite a decision being taken that an Assistant Coach would not be appointed for Warsaw, Per Olof Sundelin had been engaged without the Non-playing Captain's prior knowledge, though not at the Union's expense. The Chairman replied that the matter would be discussed at the next Committee meeting.

#### 14.7 International budget

Paul Hackett noted that the budget for internationals was substantial, but that currently England had a reputation for being second class. Whilst it was clear that our juniors must be supported, expenditure was only justified in other areas on the basis of acceptable results. He suggested that players should pay their own way, except for entry fees and uniforms, but would be financially rewarded when successful.

The general feeling was that the Board should examine the budget in terms of the best use of the funds available. The Treasurer concurred, and reported that Steve Eginton and Max Bavin would shortly be producing a financial plan for the Committee.

#### 14.8 Committee procedures

The Chairman said that he fully understood the concerns expressed by Clive Owen, particularly in respect of committee members declaring a conflict of interest and not abusing their position on the committee. Clive had also made the point that not everyone serving on the committee was fully up-to-date with the current form of potential international players, and there was general agreement amongst the Shareholders that it should be a condition of membership of the Committee that where possible they make every effort to attend all Trials, or watch them on Bridge Base Online.

Ian Spoors expressed the view that the Selection Committee's current procedures appeared to be less than satisfactory, and that it would be useful if they produced, for the next meeting, a model of what they wished their function to be.

Gerard assured the meeting that he would ensure that the new Committee takes on board all the points raised.

### **15 Election of Directors for the year 2006/7**

Twelve candidates had been duly nominated, and the outcome of the vote was as follows:

#### **Elected:**

Sally Bugden 67, Alan Nelson 62, John Neville 60, Martin Pool 57, Peter Stocken 57, David Harris 48, Graham Jepson 46, Jeff Morris 45, Philip Mason 44, John Carter 43.

#### **Not elected:**

Michael Hill 42, Richard Fleet 32.

### **16 Election of Chairman for the year 2006/7**

Nominations had been received for John Neville and Philip Mason. Peter Stocken was proposed by Malcolm Carey, and seconded by Ted Hill.

The result of the election was as follows:

Peter Stocken 36, John Neville 20, Philip Mason 16.

Taking the Chair, Peter Stocken thanked Denis Robson for having served as Chairman for the last four years and thanked Philip Mason for having served as Vice-Chairman for the past four years.

He went on to say that the future was going to be difficult; the English Bridge Union had its back to the wall and some hard decisions were going to have to be taken in the very near future.

### **17 Election of Vice-Chairman for the year 2006/7**

Sally Bugden was proposed by Gerard Faulkner, seconded by Roger Amey, and appointed as Vice-Chairman for the year 2006/7.

### **18 Election of Hon. Treasurer for the year 2006/7**

John Neville was proposed by Graham Jepson, seconded by Gerard Faulkner, and appointed as Treasurer for the year 2006/7.

### **19 Election of three members to the Laws & Ethics Committee**

Jeremy Dhondy and Mike Amos were elected for a three-year term of office expiring in 2009. David Stevenson was elected for a two-year term of office expiring in 2008.

### **20 Election of two members to the Tournament Committee**

Two nominations had been received for two positions. Mrs Heather Dhondy and Alan Nelson were accordingly confirmed as elected for a further three-year term of office expiring in 2009.

## 21 Election of three members to the Selection Committee

David Muller and Raymond Brock were elected for a three-year term of office expiring in 2009, and Peter Hasenson was elected for a one-year term of office expiring in 2007.

## 22 Dates of Shareholders Meetings for 2006/7

21st February 2007	Royal National Hotel, London
6 <sup>th</sup> June 2007	Imperial Hotel, London
3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2007	Annual General Meeting, Imperial Hotel, London.

## 23 Hon Treasurer's Report

John Neville reported that figures for the four months were broadly in line with expectation, and the projected surplus for the year remained at around £33K.

## 24 Membership Subscriptions for the year 2007/8

A proposal from the Chair that the recommendations of the Treasurer be approved en bloc as follows, was carried:

Existing Members	£16.50
New Members:	
Joining between 1/4/07 and 31/10/07	£16.50
Joining between 1/11/07 and 28/2/08	£ 8.25
Direct Members:	
UK	£25.00
Overseas	£27.00
EBUTA Members:	
Existing or new members joining before 31/10/07	£13.50
Joining between 1/11/07 and 31/3/08	£ 6.75
Junior Members:	
Over 17 and under 25 on 1/1/07	£ 5.00
Under 17 on 1/1/07	£ 2.00
Affiliations:	
Club (via County)	£20.00
Club (Direct)	£40.00
University	£ 5.00
Schools	£ 0.00

The Treasurer said that an annual increase to keep in line with inflation was imperative. The alternative of an increase every two or three years by a larger amount would, in his opinion, be universally unpopular.

## 25 Any other business

Erika Slatcher thanked the EBU for their co-operation with the Isle of Man Congress, which had broken even.

Brian Crack said that he believed that *Bridge Magazine* planned an editorial on “The state of the Union”. Barry Capal confirmed that he had been interviewed by Mark Horton and that a half-page article would appear in a forthcoming issue.

Margaret Hatch congratulated Aylesbury on distributing two sets of minutes by email. Barry Capal said that one of his first tasks as General Manager had been to tackle the enormous cost of postage, i.e. £90K. Whilst a large proportion of this figure represented the cost of mailing *English Bridge*, £1.5K had been spent on mailing the annual Masterpoint statistics to over 1000 clubs. This information would in future be available on request, and on the website. Paul Hackett reported that the International Bridge Press Association now sends 90% of its bulletins by email. Simon Cochemé said that those members of IBPA who chose to receive the bulletin by post had to pay substantially more.

To assist with a more efficient system of communication, Counties were asked to supply the EBU with email addresses for their officers.

In answer to a question from Malcolm Carey as to why considerable time is still spent on counting members’ masterpoints, Sally Bugden said that black points were very important to new players as a measure of their achievement, though it was hoped that technology to eliminate the process would be available before long. The possibility of direct crediting Simultaneous Pairs points would also be investigated. Sally went on to say that she hoped that the Membership Survey which was to be launched on the website in December would elicit as much information as possible about what services our members wanted to receive information about. Included would be an enquiry as to whether members would appreciate receiving *English Bridge*, or parts thereof, by email.

Peter Bentley requested that the introduction of mandatory membership of the Union for all members of affiliated bridge clubs be pursued.

**The next Shareholders meeting will be held on  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2007 at the  
Royal National Hotel, Woburn Place (Russell Square), London.**

***All meetings commence at 12:30pm unless otherwise indicated***