



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION 1 APRIL 2011- 31 MARCH 2012

I am delighted to introduce the English Bridge Union's first annual report. Here you will read about the progress that has been made in taking forward the EBU for the benefit of its members including the activities undertaken by all our departments and national committees in the year **1 April 2011 to 31st March 2012.**

The English Bridge Union provides the infrastructure, regulation and development of the game of duplicate bridge in England. We hope this report demonstrates that what we do at national level ensures that these services are delivered promptly and effectively locally. We exist to serve all members, whatever their level of interest and we are dedicated to encouraging more people to take up the wonderful and compelling game of duplicate bridge. I hope that this report will be of interest to all our clubs, counties and members along with those individuals and organisations that provide us with support to develop the game. It reinforces our values which are to:

Always act in the interests of our membership
Take pride in delivering quality and value for money
Respect each other and celebrate diversity so that everyone can give of their best

This has been an exceptional year for the EBU, with a special message from Her Majesty the Queen congratulating us on our 75th anniversary and recognition from our fellow national bridge organisations and governing European and World associations at our achievement of reaching such a great age! I believe, however, that we are young at heart and that we invigorate our game and stimulate interest in it whilst providing appropriate services to our current and future members.

I would like to thank all of the volunteers that make up our national team - the Directors of the Board and all the members of its standing and sub committees. And the dedicated team of staff under our General Manager, Barry Capal, at Aylesbury.

A full list of national volunteers and staff appears at the end of this report.

Sally Bugden
Chairman
3 September 2012



The Board

The Board is made up of ten directors, eight elected by the shareholders - who are the representatives of our counties - and two appointed by the Board. The directors receive no remuneration for the work they undertake. They have legal and financial responsibilities as set out in the Company's Act 2006.

Each director takes responsibility for one or more aspects of the EBU's business. This responsibility includes budgetary control, delivering strategic objectives and regular reporting on the work of the department and committee associated with it. For the year 2011-12 the responsibilities were as follows:

Chairman – Sally Bugden

Vice Chairman - Andrew Petrie

Treasurer – Michael Hill

Tournament Committee Chairman - Andrew Petrie 1/4/11 –17/11/11

Tournament Committee Chairman - Ian Payn 17/11/11 onwards

Selection Committee Chairman - Heather Dhondy

Laws and Ethics Committee Chairman - Jeremy Dhondy

Board Director responsible for Charity Conversion – Andrew Petrie

Board Director responsible for Education – Ian Payn 1/4/11 – 4/10/11

Board Director responsible for Education – Sally Bugden 5/10/11 onwards

Board Director responsible for premises and retail – Malcolm Oliver appointed 5/10/11

Board Director responsible for strategy – Jerry Cope appointed 5/10/11

National Club Committee Chairman – Graham Jepson 1/4/11 – 4/10/11

National Club Committee Chairman – Val Gibson 5/10/11 onwards

Editorial Board Chairman– Sally Bugden

Tournament Directors Development Group Chairman - Heather Dhondy 5/10/11 onwards

Board Director responsible for Bridge Great Britain – Jeremy Dhondy

Board Director responsible for European and World duplicate bridge affairs – Sally Bugden

Board Director Responsible for Awards – Graham Jepson

As well as the responsibilities above the Board started the detailed work investigating registration as a charity. This investigation was approved by the shareholders at the Annual General Meeting held on 5th October 2011. Formal approval to become a registered charity will be required at a General meeting but only after extensive consultation which might identify matters which may make registration too complex and costly. This project has involved substantial work on corporate governance including proposed amendments to the EBU's constitution.

During the year we worked on Succession Planning including the provision of detailed role descriptions for officers of the Board, standing committee chairmen and all individuals applying for a volunteer post at national level. We presented this as a subject for discussion at the Annual County Chairmen's meeting in June 2011 to assist counties with their own succession planning.



We addressed developing services that enhance the bridge playing experience of our members whilst ensuring that these services are delivered efficiently and economically. This included the onward development of a simultaneous pairs package and the continued development of the National Grading Scheme which was launched to great accolades on 1 March 2012.

We also fully explored our relationship with our fellow national bridge organisations within Bridge Great Britain and worked towards a greater understanding of the work that we do together for the benefit of the members in all our countries. This resulted in a streamlined operation covering the Gold Cup and the home internationals, the Camrose (Open), the Lady Milne (Women), the Junior Camrose (Under 25s), the Peggy Bayer (Under 20s) and Senior Camrose (60 and over).

We have worked on the delivery of our strategy for 2013 onwards.

We have reviewed our accommodation at Aylesbury, which was purchased in 1988 and, after thorough investigation, have decided that currently this is the most effective location and building for the organisation's needs.

Finance

The budget for 2011-12 was a conservative one in the light of the difficult economic situation that the country was facing. This was only the second year of the new universal membership system with only the previous year's results on which to base our financial projections for this aspect of the organisation's activities.

We are delighted to have turned a budgeted loss of £60,000 into a surplus of £69,500. Much of this was due to the hard work of staff and volunteers to ensure that the finances were managed for the best possible outcomes including savings in magazine printing and distribution, the cost of meetings, temporary staff and overtime.

There was increased income from subscriptions, licences, student training and English Bridge advertising. A small reduction in turnover in the shop and on competitions was largely matched by related cost savings.

Professional charges for charity conversion have been carried over to the 2012-13 budget as the majority of the work for this project was undertaken by the Board at no cost in the reported financial year.

The annual accounts provide a detailed financial picture; the latest set of accounts will be available on line after the Annual General Meeting.

Club Services

The new National Club Committee (NCC) formed through elected county and then regional club representatives for the 5 regions of the EBU, met in its new incarnation for the first time in November 2011 under the Chairmanship of Board Director, Val Gibson. Its terms of



reference are to ensure all members receive an excellent experience playing bridge in a pleasant environment with value added services. The new structure strengthens links between clubs and counties and the EBU. The NCC is not a decision making body and does not replace shareholder and County consultation. It provides an opportunity to look in depth at how proposals affect clubs and communicate that to decision makers. This year the group have looked at the impact on clubs of the EBU seeking charitable status and the content of English Bridge amongst other issues. A proposition on the number of exempt Pay to Play charitable sessions was put to the Board which provided agreement for the new approach. It has shared best practice, for example stratification of sessions, and shared the experience from Hitchin Bridge Club which successfully obtained charitable status at club level, these issues being communicated via the regional club committees and the EBU's specific club management electronic communication Club Focus.

Club services, including advice, guidance and assistance on any issues affecting clubs are provided through staff at Aylesbury including a Club Liaison officer, Communications Officer, the Education Manager and his assistant. Club Teacher and Club Tournament Director courses have reached over 160 clubs in this year. Our Club Liaison Officer is on hand to discuss these courses along with our Communications Officer who can advise clubs on their efforts to recruit students.

Education and Development

As well as our club teacher courses and club tournament director courses the education department also manages the English Bridge Union Teachers Association (EBUTA) – a year's free membership of this organisation is given to each newly trained club teacher who also receives free training dependent on converting a minimum of four student members from their classes into regular members for their club after twenty four months. EBUTA provides our teachers with a huge resource of materials for their classes as well as providing advice and guidance on teaching methods.

Three Partner Teacher courses and two courses aimed at assisting individuals to run duplicate bridge teaching on cruise ships were also run during the year – these courses are fully paid for by those taking part.

Three Really Easy congresses also took place; in Derby in the Spring, Brighton in the Summer and Wroxton near Banbury in the Autumn. All of these events take place to try to encourage newcomers to try tournament play.

The county education research project was presented to the County Chairmen's meeting in June 2011. Presentations from both Surrey and Yorkshire on the development of education in their respective counties demonstrated a wealth of ideas to all those in attendance.

All Party Parliamentary Group for Bridge

The group was inaugurated on 9th March 2009 through the efforts of Baroness Ruth Henig. It exists to develop an awareness of the benefits of bridge (particularly for young people and for senior citizens) and to promote enjoyment of the game, and bridge events, with the



legislatures of other countries. Baroness Henig continues to Chair the group. This year the All Party Parliamentary Group kindly entertained pupils from the Bungay School in Suffolk to a bridge match and tea at the Houses of Parliament in November and members also attended the MinibrIDGE day which was held at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club in January. The group also reviews any of our initiatives to promote research to stem cognitive decline amongst older people.

The EBU's MinibrIDGE initiative continues via our work with David Adelman and many local volunteers. This work is funded by the EBU's Youth and Education Trust which has its own website: www.bridgewebs.com/ebuyoutheducationtrust/ which also contains an annual report and accounts about its work on this initiative and junior international initiatives.

The EBU's place in the world of duplicate bridge

International Bridge Competitions

England's representation in international duplicate bridge competitions is an important part of the EBU's activities as a national bridge organisation. It provides us with an international profile in the bridge world and it also brings extra voting power within the European Bridge League (EBL) and the World Bridge Federation (WBF) – this gives us a stronger voice when participating at EBL and WBF general meetings.

The Selection Committee, made up of seven elected individual members of the EBU under the chairmanship of Board director Heather Dhondy, is responsible for selecting the teams to represent us internationally; these include Open, Women, Seniors and Juniors. Although we sent players to a record number of international events, the majority of these were on a self-funded or partially-funded basis – as asterisked below. Notable achievements in 2011-12 include:

Camrose* 1st

Lady Milne (1st=)*

Venice Cup (semi-final)

Women's Elite tournament, Beijing 4th*

Sport Accord Mind Games 2nd (Nicola Smith 2nd in the individual)*

Junior European U20s (4th)

Channel Trophy Girls (2nd)

The Selection Committee also organised the Premier League, and the International Simultaneous Pairs enabling clubs to support international activities. They introduced player profiles to assist with the selection procedure.

International Bridge Administration

The EBU is affiliated to the European Bridge League which makes up one of the 8 zones of the World Bridge Federation, to which the EBU is also affiliated. Every few years the European Bridge League runs an officers' seminar and the Chairman and General Manager attended the 2012 February Seminar in Budapest at the expense of the EBL. We had the



opportunity to update our colleagues from the other national bridge organisations in Europe about our activities. We were congratulated specifically on:

- the implementation of our universal membership system,
- the proposed national grading scheme,
- our efforts to prove, through robust research, the benefits that bridge can bring to society as a whole, but especially to young people in schools through the teaching of Minibridge, and older people through a mind game that also allows socialising thus helping to stem cognitive decline.

Regulation

The Laws and Ethics Committee (L&E), made up of seven elected individual members of the EBU under the chairmanship of Board director Jeremy Dhondy, are responsible for the regulation of the game in England. It provides information to the membership in the form of the Orange Book (our book of regulations) updated annually. There is a simpler Tangerine Book aimed at clubs and also the White Book which is mainly for tournament directors, clubs and anyone else running tournaments. All these documents are available electronically and are updated each year on August 1st.

The L&E have dealt with about a dozen disciplinary cases during the year. In some cases they have been referred to counties to deal with and advice has been offered. The L&E have also trialled a mediation service where, if both sides agree to be bound by the decision, a dispute can be heard by a mediation panel appointed by the L&E. This has already resolved one case.

The L&E license new methods on an annual basis. These days there are fewer applications than there used to be and only two were approved in 2011 – 2012 for use from August 2012/13.

Appeals from tournaments are reviewed so that the L&E can offer advice and also to ensure a consistency of decision. Sometimes they can make useful case law. We decided during the year that as the arbiters of regulations for Bridge in England if we were approached we would hear appeals from non affiliated clubs but they would be charged for this service so that clubs who are affiliated are not at a disadvantage.

The L & E review and add to the referees' panel. This is a panel of players who have agreed to serve as referees and appeal chairman at congresses on a voluntary basis.

The committee give advice to tournament directors through the minutes of meetings and also via a bi-annual publication called Appeal Focus. Best Behaviour at Bridge has been in force for some years now and has done a lot to reduce bad behaviour at our events. The L&E has introduced a standard table of penalties to help ensure consistency of decisions at events.

Tournament Directors Development Group

This subcommittee of the Board deals with the appraisal, promotion, development and management of the EBU's active tournament directors. During the year it was chaired by



Martin Pool to October 2011, and then by Heather Dhondy. As well as its ongoing work it consulted on a code of conduct for tournament directors which was approved by the Board in March and issued to all tournament directors.

Tournament Committee

The Tournament Committee, made up of seven elected individual members of the EBU under the chairmanship of firstly EBU Vice Chairman Andrew Petrie and from November 2011, by Board Director Ian Payn, oversees the tournament programme of the EBU and reviews activities so that they meet the needs of those who currently play in and those who may like to play in our national competitions. The TC has taken note of the responses to the market research survey at the beginning of 2011 which identified the need for more tournaments to be accessible and not involve overnight stays. Thus several one day competitions have either been created or converted within our congresses.

Work on a new Blue Point system has taken place during 2011-12 for implementation on 1 January 2013. Blue Point awards will use the current Local Point scales (100 Local=1 Blue). All Masterpoint ranks will allow up to 50 Green points to be replaced by Blue Points in the ratio of 1Green = 3 Blues. Clubs and counties will be able to run events offering these new awards and it is hoped that this will attract more players to their events.

The tournament department at our Aylesbury headquarters run our competitions and should be congratulated on reducing the costs and increasing the surplus in this financial year.

English Bridge

The Editorial Board for English Bridge is a subcommittee of the Board chaired by EBU Board Chairman Sally Bugden. Jeremy Dhondy is a member of the Editorial Board along with the Editor, General Manager, Advertising Manager and Communications Officer of the EBU. The Editorial Board has worked hard to reduce the losses incurred in 2010-11 and has increased advertising by nearly £19,000 and reduced expenditure by £3,000 to achieve this aim. Through the year we have listened to our readership, taken on suggestions from the National Club Committee and worked on ways to fit as much news, views, results and achievements within the magazine as we possibly can

EBU Headquarters at Aylesbury

Streamlined activities through universal membership leave us with a full time staff equivalent of just over seventeen, serving nearly fifty thousand members through the provision of tournaments, education, regulation, international support, club and membership support services including a shop providing bridge books and supplies and communications including Club Focus, Tournament Focus, Events Focus and Appeals Focus. Work on an improved website will start in earnest during the financial year 2012-13.

Our staff at Aylesbury have supported and implemented many initiatives already mentioned in this report. These include the onward development of software for the running of



simultaneous events involving a successful testing programme with our clubs and the infrastructure support for the national grading scheme which continues to be honed by a small group of dedicated and committed volunteers. Social media has also been developed to allow networking and access to all levels of bridge players online. This is envied by many of our fellow national bridge organisations. We have also achieved success in the conventional media with a slot on BBC Radio 4's Women's Hour in October stemming from the success of our women's team reaching the world championship Venice Cup.

General Meetings and Shareholdings

The EBU is a company limited by shares. Our shareholders do not get any financial remuneration, their shareholdings and voting rights are based on the number of members their county has. There are two shareholder meetings a year, one of which is an annual general meeting. This report will be presented to the shareholders for discussion at the Annual General Meeting on 3rd October 2012.

For full details of our constitution and structure please see the EBU's Articles and Bye Laws available on the EBU's website www.ebu.co.uk or by request from Aylesbury on 01296 317200.

The statutory annual report of the directors of the EBU and its accounts will be available after approval by the shareholders at the AGM.

Sally Bugden

Chairman

For and on behalf of the Board of the English Bridge Union

Staff Members and National Volunteers

Board

Sally Bugden, Andrew Petrie, Mike Hill, Jerry Cope, Heather Dhondy, Jeremy Dhondy, Val Gibson, Graham Jepson, Malcolm Oliver, Ian Payn

Laws and Ethics Committee

Jeremy Dhondy, Frances Hinden, Mike Amos, David Burn, Tim Rees, Neil Morley, Martin Pool

Selection Committee

Heather Dhondy, Simon Cochemé, Heather Bakhshi, Peter Baxter, Paul Hackett, Nick Smith, Tom Townsend

Tournament Committee

Ian Payn, Brian Crack, Margaret Curtis, Paul Hackett, Philip Mason, Alan Nelson, Addis Page,

English Bridge Editorial Board

Sally Bugden, Elena Jeronimidis (Editor), Jeremy Dhondy, Chris Danby (Advertising Manager)



National Club Committee

Val Gibson, Colin O'Hara, David Latcham, Chris Harris, Trevor Ward,
Barbara Herold

Tournament Directors Development Group

Heather Dhondy, Jeremy Dhondy, Joy Mayall, Martin Pool

National Grading Scheme Working Group

Mike Christie, Barrie Partridge, Paul Bond, Paul Habershon, Andy Kittridge,
Anthony Moon, Peter Lee

Honorary Counsel

David Harris

Pro Bono Advisor

Gerard Faulkner

All the members of the disciplinary panel

National Awards Panel

Graham Jepson, Margaret Curtis, Philip Mason, Jeff Morris

Staff

General Manager	Barry Capal	
English Bridge Editor	Elena Jeronimidis	
Tournaments Manager/ Chief TD	Max Bavin	
Assistant Chief TD	Gordon Rainsford	
Tournaments Administrator	Peter Jordan	
Tournaments Administrator	Dawn Mertens	
Tournaments Assistant	Gill Pain	
Accounts Manager	Gail Nancarrow	
Press & Communications Officer	Matt Betts	
Club Liaison Officer	Krys Kazmierczak	To 31 March 2012
Bridge Shop Manager	Sue Humphris	
Trading Assistant	Kim Moore	
Education Manager,	John Pain	
Laws & Ethics Secretary	John Pain	
Education Assistant	Lisa Miller	
Office Manager / Membership	Karen Durrell	
Administration Assistant	Kay Carter	
Membership/Accounts Assistant	Clare Dumbarton	
Receptionist/Office Assistant	Julie Murray	
Support Officer / Webmaster	Michael Clark	
IT Support/ Masterpoints	Ian Mitchell	
IT Assistant	Adam Lugmayer	