



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION LIMITED
HELD AT THE IMPERIAL HOTEL, LONDON,
ON WEDNESDAY 25th November 2015**

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Present: | Jeremy Dhondy | Chairman & Cambs & Hunts/Somerset proxy |
| | Andrew Petrie | Treasurer |
| | Ian Payn | Board Member and Tournament Committee Chairman |
| | Barry Capal | Company Secretary & Cumbria Proxy |
| | Jerry Cope | Board Member |
| | Heather Dhondy | Board Member |
| | Darren Evetts | Board Member |
| | Rob Lawy | Board Member & Avon Proxy |
| | Ron Millet | Board Member |
| | Andy Bowles | Selection Committee Chairman |
| | Margaret Curtis | Vice President & Essex Shareholder |
| | Tony Parks | Auditor |
| | John Pain | Minute Taker |
| | Peter Stockdale | Communications Officer |
| | Karen Durrell | Reception |
| | Kay Carter | Reception |

| County | Shareholders: | | Proxy | County | Shareholders: | | Proxy |
|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Present | Apologies | | | Present | Apologies | |
| Avon | | Mrs S O'Hara | Mr R Lawy | London | Mrs C Duckworth | | |
| Bedfordshire | | | | | Mrs E Kay | | |
| | | | | | Mr J Smith | | |
| Berks & Bucks | RC Davey | Mrs JM Baldock | | Manchester | | Mr R Lighton | Mr JK Morris |
| | | | | | | Mr M Newman | Mr JK Morris |
| | | | | | | Mr S Travers | Mr JK Morris |
| Cambs & Hunts | | Mr P Bond | Mr J Dhondy | Merseyside/Cheshire | Mr C Merill | | |
| | | Mr CN Jagger | Mr J Dhondy | | Dr C Raymond | | |
| Channel Islands | Mrs P Panter | | | Middlesex | Mr P Hasenson | | |
| | | | | | Mr SJ Panchamia | Mr H Patel | Mr JD Harris CBE |
| Cornwall | Mr JM Booth | | | Norfolk | Mr R Amey | | |
| Cumbria | | Mrs KM Cooper | Mr B Capal | | Mrs S Gill | | |
| Derbyshire | | Mr T Ward | | North East | | | |
| | | | | Northants | Mrs N Bainbridge | | |
| Devon | Dr M Hamon | Mr R Andrews | Dr M Hamon | Notts | Mrs C Batten | Mr K Rodgers | |
| | | Mr T Treeby | Dr M Hamon | | | | |
| Dorset | Mr M Hooper | Mr R Heath | Mr M Hooper | Oxford | Mrs S Claridge | | |
| | | | | | Mrs S Nicholson | | |
| | | | | | Mr A Wilson | | |
| Essex | Mrs M Curtis | | | Somerset | | Mrs G Howard | Mr J Dhondy |
| | Mrs J Hartley | | | Staffs & Shrops | Mr P Hackett | Mr J Withers | Mr P Hackett |
| | Mr K Thompson | | | | | | |
| Gloucestershire | Mr J Simons | | | Suffolk | Mr M Carey | Prof R Hanley | Mr M Carey |
| Hants & IoW | Mr R Ray | Mrs M Gale | Mr R Ray | | | | |
| | Mrs L Lewis | | | Surrey | Mr J Allerton | | |
| Herefordshire | | Mr C Chowney | | | Miss S Pritchard | | |
| | | Mr D Weller | | | | | |
| Hertfordshire | Mr R Banbury | | | Sussex | | Mr P Bates | Mr DM Pool |
| | Mr M Minting | | | | | Mrs J Mayall | Mr DM Pool |
| | Mr R Teesdale | | | | | Mr R Wheeler | Mr DM Pool |
| Isle of Man | | | | Warwicks | Mrs SJ Galvin | | |
| Kent | Mr B Crack | | | | Mr L Reece | | |
| | Mr M Lewis | | | Westmorland | | Mr M Rothwell | |
| Lancashire | Mr B Brelsford | | | Wiltshire | Mr P Green | Miss K Hodgson | Mr P Green |
| | Mrs J Wright | | | | | | |
| Leicestershire | Mr D Benton | | | Worcester | Mr P Hammond | Mr D Thomas | Mr P Hammond |
| | Mr RA Smith | | | | | | |
| Lincolnshire | | | | Yorkshire | Mrs J Latham | | |
| | | | | | Mrs L Millet | | |
| | | | | | Ms J Staniforth | | |
| | | | | | Mr N Woolven | | |

The following people were also present: David Burn, Bernard & Margaret Eddleston, Philip Mason, Bill Pencharz, Vivian Priday, Christine & Geoff Smith, Bernard Teltscher, Tom Townsend, Charlotte Vine.

Apologies were received from Anthony Golding (Board Member), Tim Rees (Laws & Ethics Committee Chairman)

Jeremy Dhondy, Chairman, opened the meeting by welcoming all those present.

1 Apologies for absence

See Page 1 for County information.

2 Announcement of Awards

TONY PRIDAY AWARD

JD said that this new award was named after Tony Priday, who sadly died last year. He had been a Vice President for over 40 years as well as Chairman of the Selection and Laws and Ethics Committees. He always gave advice that was sound and sensible. Vivian Priday had consented to the new award and was at the meeting to present it to the inaugural recipient Bernard Teltscher.

Bernard had played with Tony Priday in many events in the past, including in the 2014 Teltscher Trophy, with the Great Britain team finishing second, and Tony & Bernard finishing second in the cross-imp scoring.

He is the current President of the London Metropolitan Bridge Association.

Has sponsored the prestigious Lederer trophy. Bernard had established' and funded the Senior Camrose – now the Teltscher Trophy.

He had restarted Cambridge BC, in 1946, which had been dormant during the war, and acted as its President.

JD noted that Bernard is the only EBU member to recognise the work of the EBU staff through the giving of a gift at Christmas.

In reply Bernard said that Tony had been a genius player. When he partnered him he felt like a mouse to Tony's elephant.

DIAMOND AWARDS

This new award is given to players in recognition of excellence and success over a sustained period for England's international teams.

David Burn

David has represented England with distinction on a number of occasions. He has been a successful coach of England Teams for nearly thirty years. He coached Great Britain to the Bermuda Bowl silver medal (1987) and victory in the European championships (1991), has coached the highly successful England Women's team over recent years, and aided the Senior team in their victory in the 2014 European Championships. He has also acted as NPC for many Camrose teams.

Sandra Landy (To be presented at the 2016 Summer Meeting)

Sandra represented Great Britain with distinction for more than three decades winning five European Championships and two World Championships. She has also represented England successfully in both the Camrose and Lady Milne.

SILVER AWARD

This award is given in recognition of outstanding contribution and recognition of long service as a volunteer at national and county level.

Philip Mason

Philip is President of Yorkshire having been its very successful chairman for 25 years until earlier this year. He is a member of the EBU tournament committee and served with distinction as its chairman for

some years. He was an EBU board member and became its vice chairman. He was also the board's representative to Bridge Great Britain.

There is no sphere of bridge administration with which Philip has not been involved, at county or national level for a period of over thirty years.

DIMMIE FLEMING AWARDS

JD reminded the meeting that the Dimmie Fleming award is named after a former Secretary of the EBU and who also played at the highest international level. The award is given in recognition of a valued and sustained contribution to the game of Bridge at county level.

Five members had elected to have their awards presented locally:

Colin Woods (Cumbria) - To be presented at the Cumbria Congress -March 2016

Colin Woods became Treasurer of Cumbria in 1995 and has done a sterling job of looking after its finances for 20 years, and continues to do so. He is at the Cumbrian Congress every year, often the first person to welcome the visitors, with his list of entrants, taking money and sorting out the prize money, before becoming one of the players himself.

Elizabeth Muir (North East) – To be presented at a County meeting in March 2016

Liz has given over twenty five years service to the NEBA committee - her roles covering all aspects of 'officer-ship' from Chairman, Secretary, Congress organizer, Selector and numerous other roles which have championed Bridge in the North East, all of which she has carried out with true honesty and integrity.

Joan Burgess (Nottinghamshire) – To be presented locally in December

Joan was a member of the Nottinghamshire CBA Committee from 1991 to 2015. She was its Masterpoint Secretary until 2010. She was Teams of 8 League Secretary from 1992 – 2011, and Team of 4 Secretary from 2011 to 2015. She was Secretary from 2001-2003 and Shareholder for Nottinghamshire from 2001 to 2014.

David Burgess (Nottinghamshire) – To be presented locally in December

David was a member of the Nottinghamshire CBA Committee from 2000 to 2015. He was Events Secretary from 2001 to 2004, and Secretary from 2004 to 2014. For the county he directed many of the weekly Wednesday drives and ran most of the major events for some years. He was also the Appeals Chairman for the county. David was a member of the EBU Panel of Referees from 2006 to 2011 and chaired appeals panels at EBU congresses in the Midlands during that time.

David wrote a suite of scoring programs which were later used for club events that he scored for Keyworth, and for Nottinghamshire major events that he ran. They were also used for the annual Nottinghamshire Heat of the EBU school event.

David Galpin (Sussex) – To be presented at the County AGM in April 2016

David has served the Sussex County Contract Bridge Association for very many years in multiple roles, particularly:

Membership of the Management Committee for over thirteen years from 2002 to date.

Honorary Treasurer of the County Association for over thirteen years from 2002 to date.

Membership of the Tournament Committee for sixteen years from 1999 to date.

Membership of the Selectors' Committee for twelve years 2002 – 2014, including taking the Chair from 2006 - 2014.

Membership of the County Tournament Directors panel for twenty years from 1996 to date.

Tournament Organiser for the annual Sussex League for sixteen years from 1999 to date.

David has made an enormous contribution to the success of Sussex bridge over a period of time which is now reaching twenty years. However, it would be wrong to measure his service simplistically just in terms of time. Rather we should look at the personal input he has provided and reflect on the level of enthusiasm, commitment and sheer effort involved.

Five members were present to receive their awards at the meeting:

Bernard Eddleston (Hertfordshire)

Bernard joined the Executive Committee of Hertfordshire in 2002 as Treasurer. He was an EBU shareholder from 2002 until 2015 and attended most shareholder meetings. In 2008 he was elected President (Chair) of the County Association and was responsible for ensuring a smooth transition to Universal Membership. As Chair he placed particular emphasis on the executive committee being more accountable to members through the publication of all committee decisions, clear selection criteria for County representation and the introduction of a regular newsletter to members. He established meetings with the Chairs of all affiliated clubs and made a point of visiting all affiliated clubs in the County.

Bernard became a trustee of English Bridge Education and Development (EBED) in 2014 and continues in that role with a particular emphasis on developing teaching bridge in schools.

Bernard decided to retire as President in May 2015 but has been the driving force making the County association more efficient and relevant to its members and affiliated clubs.

Geoff Smith (Kent)

Geoff joined the KCBA Committee in 1990 and thus completed 25 years at this year's AGM. In 1991, after only one year on the Committee, he became treasurer. His success in this post can be judged by the fact that he retained the position for 19 years until becoming Deputy Chairman in 2010. After one year as Deputy Chairman, Geoff took over as Chairman in 2011. This has meant that he has been directly involved in the transfer to P2P all the way through. What is important is that, since the transfer, the number of Kent members has increased significantly under his leadership.

He has been very keen to get more Tournament Directors and bridge teachers in the county's clubs and pushed hard to achieve this. Numbers at Kent events have increased significantly. He also set up all the necessary organisation to deal with disciplinary matters at all levels. Following the resignation of the Chief Tournament Director in 2012, he took on this role as well.

Another initiative which Geoff drove forward was the appointment of an Archivist, this has resulted in an excellent addition to the KCBA website.

Barry Brelsford (Lancashire)

Barry has been the anchor of bridge administration in Lancashire for many years since his retirement in 1997. This has involved various posts at the LCBA for over 20 years.

In 1996 he was elected Vice-Chairman of the LCBA and became Chairman in 1999 but stood down in 2001 to become Secretary, a position he still holds. In 1997 he was elected as a Lancashire delegate to the EBU Council and became a Lancashire Shareholder. He has been on the LCBA Selection Committee since 2006. When the EBU introduced universal membership, he rewrote the LCBA Constitution to conform to the new circumstances. Barry has put in a lot of time and effort to promote bridge in Lancashire and he has ensured that 'things run smoothly at county level for many years'.

Charlotte Vine (Middlesex)

Charlotte has served on the MCBA Committee for 15 years, the last 11 as President until her retirement from this role earlier this year. She was also a county and club Tournament Director for many years until retiring from such duties in 2011.

Charlotte attended many county committee meetings. She organised and attended county events and generally promoted the county. A steadying influence on those around her and was always on hand for advice.

Leslie Reece (Warwickshire)

Leslie has been a member of the Warwickshire Executive Committee, formerly Council, for thirty four years. Joining the Committee in 1981 as assistant League Secretary, Leslie took over as League

Secretary in 1985, an office he held until he became Vice-Chairman in 1990. Leslie took over the Chairmanship in 1992 and remained for two years until he retired and then spent a year as an Ex-Officio member of the Committee. In 1996 Leslie returned to the office of League Secretary, a post he held for nine years until, in 2005, he became Treasurer, an office he still holds today. In addition to his various roles on the Committee Leslie has, over the years, represented Warwickshire as a Shareholder, which he still continues to do. He has also served on many subcommittees of the County, and on the Midland Counties Congress Committee.

A presentation would be made to Elena Jeronimides, as retiring editor of *English Bridge* in due course. All recipients were applauded by the Shareholders and guests present.

3 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 26th November 2014

The minutes were a matter of note, having been formally accepted at the Shareholders' Meeting on 13th May 2015

4 Resolutions – Standing Committee reform:

4.1 Articles of Association (Special Resolution)

4.2 Bye-Laws (Ordinary Resolution)

JD outlined the board's case for changing the three standing committees (Laws and Ethics, Tournament and Selection) into sub committees of the board. He said that board already had sub committees (Editorial Board) and previously short term committees had been set up for specific reasons (Universal Membership) and disbanded once they had fulfilled their function. The first suggestion to change had been a year ago, with firmer proposals at the May Shareholders and the County Chairman's conference. Today's motion reflected the concerns and suggestions of those meetings.

There were many contributions from shareholders and their proxies present at the meeting. A selection of items raised included:

- Why was there only a proposal to alter all three committees *en bloc* rather than take each committee separately.
- The original papers circulated indicated that all three standing committee chairmen were in favour of the proposals, when in fact one was not. The papers were reissued.
- It was unhelpful that the printed papers only showed the changes proposed, when a copy of new v old would have helped considerably.
- It was felt the proposals lacked clarity.
- There was opposition to no fixed term of tenure for committee chairmen.
- Playing in trials doesn't necessarily mean you are playing for selection. Whilst that would be an honour if it happened, some played just for the experience. That did not show self-interest.
- There was support to retain the present structure. It was too important to be a sub committee, meaning shareholders lost control. The present setup allowed shareholders a choice (when the number of candidates allowed for an election). Counties' powers had been eroded already and this was another erosion.
- There was support for the proposed change. It provides clear governance. Appointees could be interviewed by the board. The delegate said he did not always have any knowledge of those standing for election.
- There was support for the board and gratitude for past successes, but this proposal made him uncomfortable. Why shouldn't shareholders have a say? Some committees could be reformed but taking it as all-or-nothing was not the right way.
- The Tournament Committee, Selection Committee and Laws & Ethics Committees should be acting on behalf of EBU members throughout the country
- The Laws & Ethics Committee is responsible for investigating complaints against EBU members. It is important that the Laws & Ethics Committee remains independent of the Board; it is

difficult for L&E members to act independently if worried that they will be ousted from their positions if they taken any action which does not meet with the approval of EBU Board members. If the Laws & Ethics Committee decides that a case should be prosecuted, the Disciplinary Panel (an independent panel, appointed by the Board) performs the function of judge and jury. It is not be appropriate for both organisations to be appointed by the same people.

- There were numerous other contributions mostly against the change.

IP said that moving some committees would not make for a simpler structure – to have some remaining as Standing Committees and others as sub committees would be more complicated. He reminded members than the function of the Selection Committee was not just to select. It had a budget to look after and the juniors. He felt the board was in a better position to appoint appropriate people to appropriate roles.

A full paper vote was taken and the result was:

In favour of the change 57.5%; Against the change 42.5%

The necessary majority had not been achieved so the motion was declared defeated.

JD said the board had listened to the arguments put for and against the motion and would discuss revised proposals at its next meeting in late January with a view to putting modified proposals to the next shareholder's meeting in May.

5 Minutes of the Shareholders' Meeting on 13th May 2015

The minutes were signed as a true record.

Matters arising:

Scoring courses – What was the prospect of holding courses for scoring using EBUScore (formerly Pairs Scorer). JD said that the new program had not been ready in time to run courses during the Brighton Summer Meeting but it was now planned to hold courses for scorers. I was also open for a county to arrange a course for its clubs. They should contact the Tournament Manager – Gordon Rainsford.

Was it possible to have lists of UMO members? BC said that if club officials logged into My EBU it was possible to run UMO lists for clubs. It was asked whether this could be extended to counties. BC said that the current office software was to be replaced in the new year, when Workbooks is installed and he would report back at the next meeting regarding the asked for facility.

6 EBU Annual report 2014/2015

JD introduced the fourth annual report, which had been circulated in advance, which replaced the Chairman's and Treasurer's annual statements. It is attached to these minutes.

Appendix A.

There were no matters arising from the floor. JD said that the report only contained information up to March 2015 and much had happened since then. He said that the report would an '18 month' report for next year with the intention of returning to a 12 month report thereafter. This would allow for a more relevant and up to date report to be produced.

7 Directors' Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2015 including management accounts and statement on reserves. The Treasurer reported as follows:

One question had been submitted in advance. The surplus of £43K had been largely brought about by tighter controls on spending and the good offices of the Aylesbury staff and General Manager. He said that of all the business he had been involved in the EBU's finances were the most transparent. He noted that the worth of the company had risen to over £1m for the first time.

He said that the finances should be considered as a 4-year cycle rather than individual years. A significant investment could be expected over the next three or four years. He said a great deal of media exposure in recent months had raised the profile of the game. Estimates suggested that paying for such exposure in the media could have cost around £2m.

Notified question:

Middlesex had asked what the costs of entry fees and subscription payments to EBL and WBF events had been.

Answer: In the past two years there had been three entries to EBL events costing approx. £1300, £1900 and £8500. For the WBF two entries of £8800 and £145.

Subscriptions are paid a year in arrears for all members (excluding juniors) who play at least 12 times in a club during the year. In 2013/14 fees of £25K had been paid to each of EBL and WBF. In 2014/15 the fees were EBL £23K, WBF £24K.

In answer to a question about the on going cheating allegations at both EBL and WBF level, JD said that in his view the EBL was making some attempt to catch up, but the WBF still had considerable work to do in this area.

8.1 Number of members by county 31/3/15

The published list is attached to these minutes. - **Appendix B**

9 Re-appointment of Auditors for the year 2015/2016

A proposal by Jeremy Dhondy, that Beacons be re-appointed was carried *nem con*. The Treasurer thanked Tony Parks for his contribution over a number of years.

10 Membership subscriptions for 2015/2016

The Board had proposed no increase to any subscriptions rates for 2016-17, with the UM rate staying at 36p. This was carried *nem con*.

| | (for info) 2012/2013 | (for info) 2013/2014 | (for info) 2014/2015 | (for info) 2015/2016 | Proposed 2016/2017 |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Universal Membership Subscription | 0.33 | 0.34 | 0.35 | 0.36 | 0.36 |
| Direct Members | | | | | |
| UK | 25.00 | 26.00 | 27.00 | 28.00 | 28.00 |
| Overseas | 27.00 | 28.00 | 30.00 | 31.00 | 31.00 |
| EBUTA Members | | | | | |
| Existing or new members joining bef 31 October 2016 | 16.00 | 16.00 | 17.00 | 17.00 | 17.00* |
| Joining between 1 November 2016 a 31 March 2017 | 8.00 | 8.00 | 8.50 | 8.50 | 8.50* |
| | | | | | * Now set by EBED |
| Affiliations | | | | | |
| Club | 32.00 | 33.00 | 34.00 | 35.00 | 35.00 |
| University | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 |
| Schools | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

11 Election of Directors

There were four nominations for four vacant places. Jerry Cope, Jeremy Dhondy, Anthony Golding and Ron Millet were elected for three year terms ending in 2018. Anthony Golding, who had been a board nominee, became an elected member replacing Andrew Petrie.

11.1 Election of Chairman: Jeremy Dhondy was declared elected.

11.2 Election of Treasurer: Jerry Cope was declared elected.

JD said that at the January board meeting up to two additional board members could be appointed.

12 Appointment of Company Secretary for the year 2015/2016

Barry Capal was re-elected as Company Secretary.

13 Election of 2 members to the Laws & Ethics Committee for the year 2015/2016

Neil Morley had stood down at the end of his term. Mike Amos was re-elected and Richard Fleet was elected. Both would serve for a three year term ending in 2018.

14 Election of 2 members of the Tournament Committee for the year 2015/2016

Gillian Fawcett and Addis Page had stood down at the end of their term. No nominations had been received to replace them. The committee would continue with only five elected members.

15 Election of 2 members of the Selection Committee for the year 2015/2016

Andy Bowles had stood down at the end of his term. David Burn was re-elected and Peter Hasenson was elected. Both would serve a three year term ending in 2018.

Additional Item

The draw took place for the prize winners in the Simultaneous Pairs competitions. Every pair who had entered an EBU or BGB Simultaneous Pairs and every club who had run a heat were entered into the draw. The leading prize winners were:

| Leading Pairs | Players | Club |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1st Prize - £1000 per pair | Susan Dodds & Hetty Jackson | Castle Morpeth Bridge Club |
| 2nd Prize - £500 per pair | Jan Pennington-Smith & Kathy Liversidge | Wymondham Wednesday Bridge Club |
| 3rd Prize - £200 per pair | Lisa Furnival & Peter Finbow | Summertown Bridge Club |

Leading Clubs

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1st Prize - £1000 | Wantage Bridge Club | Oxfordshire |
| 2nd Prize - £500 | Nottingham Bridge Club | Nottinghamshire |
| 3rd Prize - £200 | Norfolk & Norwich Bridge Club | Norfolk |

All prizewinners including runners up are listed on the website <http://www.ebu.co.uk/node/2226>

16 Notes of County Chairman's conference July 1st 2015

The notes were approved. JD said that no date had been set aside for 2016. The attendance in the previous three years had been 23, 24 and 22, suggesting insufficient interest for an annual meeting. He said a date would be put forward for 2017.

17 Treasurer's report for the current year

AP gave his final report. He said the costs incurred for the judicial review may show up in costs but were yet to be determined. The judicial review in September had found against the EBU, but leave was being sought to appeal. If the EBU is successful in an appeal, then costs would be minimal. If the appeal was lost there would be cost incurred. If the demand for costs was excessive a 'costs judge' would adjudicate the claim.

The VAT appeal, held in July, had been referred to the European Court. The decision was expected in mid-2016. HMRC had agreed no costs. AP thanked the EBU Honorary Counsel, David Ewart for acting on behalf of the EBU in a *pro bono* capacity.

It was suggested that the level of reserves was close to the maximum allowed for a non-profit making body. AP said that was the very reason why the board was considering significant investment in the next 4-year cycle. Around £50K had been earmarked to replace the current office system (Enterprise) with Workbooks.

18 EBED update

Jerry Cope was standing down as EBED chairman. He had overseen the setting up of the charity. He said there had been various successes including EBUTA, TD training but progress on the youth front was slower than hoped for. He thanked the trustees and Simon Barb, who was leaving at the end of November. AP thanked JC for his work as chairman and the meeting showed its appreciation.

19 Minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors – 11th March, 16th June and 16th September 2015.

The meeting considered the minutes. There were no questions.

20 Minutes of the Meeting of the Laws & Ethics Committee on 27th May 2015 and 14th October 2015.

JD presented the minutes on behalf of the Chairman, Tim Rees.

The Surrey delegate noted that in item 1C of the L&E minutes of 27th May 2015, there was reference to a Board proposal to split the Laws & Ethics Committee into two bodies, one dealing with law and regulation, the other dealing with disciplinary matters. The L&E Committee had asked various questions on how the split would work and it was stated that a firm proposal would be published in time for the AGM in November. He asked the Board what progress had been made with the proposals.

Replying on behalf of the Board, JD said that they had some ideas of the basic concept but this matter had been deferred whilst the Board concentrated on its general proposals regarding the Standing Committees and a change to the bye laws, which would be necessary would be tabled at a later date.

21 Minutes of the meeting of the Tournament Committee on 19th May 2015

IP presented the minutes. there were no questions.

22 Minutes of the meeting of the Selection Committee on 4th June and 17th November 2015

Andy Bowles presented the minutes. He highlighted success of the U20s and U25s. He also mentioned the well earned silver medal by the women in the Venice Cup and the 4th place finish of the Open Team in the Bermuda Bowl.

23 Dates for Shareholders' meetings for the year 2016

Thursday 12th May Shareholders' Meeting

Wednesday 23rd November Annual General Meeting

All meetings would start at 1pm Both meetings would be held in the Tudor Room, Imperial Hotel, London.

24 Any Other Business

Lou Hobhouse is replacing Elena Jeronimides as editor for *English Bridge* from the February 2016 edition. She has already begun work.

Closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked Shareholders for their attendance. The meeting closed at 3.50pm.

**Date of the Next Meeting is 1.00pm Thursday May 12th
at the Imperial Hotel , London**

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION

1 APRIL 2014- 31 MARCH 2015

The English Bridge Union is the governing body for duplicate bridge in England representing communities of bridge players at club, county and national level. It is funded by members for members and provides the infrastructure and development of the game in England. All monies are re-invested into our national game.

This annual report provides an insight in to the work that we do to support our clubs, counties and members and will be of interest to those individuals and organisations that, in turn, provide us with support to develop the game.

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 can be found on the EBU website at <http://www.ebu.co.uk/biographies/ebu>

The statutory annual report and accounts will be able to be viewed on our website www.ebu.co.uk shortly after the EBU's Annual General Meeting on 25th November 2015.

The Board

The Board is made up of eight directors elected by the shareholders, who are the representatives of our counties, and up to 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 2014-15 the responsibilities were as follows:

Chairman: Jeremy Dhondy

Vice-Chairman: Ian Payn

Treasurer: Andrew Petrie

Tournament Committee Chairman: Ian Payn

Board Director responsible for facilitating the strategic plan: Jerry Cope

Board Director responsible for staff development: Jerry Cope

Board Director Responsible for Education: Rob Lawy

Board Director Responsible for the County Working Group: Darren Evetts

Board Director responsible for legal matters: Anthony Golding

Editorial Board Chairman: Jeremy Dhondy

Tournament Directors Development Group Chairman: Heather Dhondy

Board Director responsible for Bridge Great Britain: Heather Dhondy

Board Director responsible for European and World duplicate bridge affairs: Jeremy Dhondy

Board Director responsible for the European Champions Cup: Heather Dhondy

Board Director responsible for Awards: Ron Millet

Board Director Responsible for the All Party Parliamentary Group: Ron Millet

We continue with our efforts to reclaim VAT on entry fees. We are grateful to David Ewart for his great assistance in representing us on a pro bono basis. We have also invoked the process of judicial review concerning Sport England's refusal to recognise us as a sport. Any success here will not be based on popular definitions of sport but on whether Sport England has correctly applied the law.

We have continued our programme to update our bye laws and articles. We have discussed reform to our standing committees and will introduce suggested changes to them at the AGM.

During the last year the board have reviewed awards. We have introduced a new player award called the diamond award aimed at our most successful players and presented the first two to Nicola Smith and Tony Forrester.

Vice Presidents

Sadly, during the year, two of our Vice Presidents died (Tony Priday and Hylda Townsend). We are grateful to both of them for their long and outstanding service. The board propose to introduce a Tony Priday Award (for outstanding contribution) at the 2015 AGM.

Finance

As a not-for-profit members' organisation which does not distribute any surplus but retains it to invest in the future of the game, we are generally cautious with our budgets, putting into them all costs which we think realistically might occur. This usually means we beat the budget and this is true again this year. The 2014/15 outturn is very satisfactory showing a profit of £42.8K against a budget loss of £15K. This has come about mainly through:

- A tight control of costs by all budget holders
- Not using temporary staff to cover maternity leave
- Savings in the postage for English Bridge associated with a reduced size
- Not needing to use a £10K contingency fund set aside for playing accommodation costs at EBU congresses

The strength of our cash reserves, which now stand at over £700K, means that the time is right to invest further in the development of the game and to assist our members, clubs and counties to do the same. The Board will be announcing details at the 2015 AGM and these will be available on the EBU website.

Clubs and Club Services

15 clubs affiliated during the period April 2014 – March 2015 and the Club Liaison Officer undertook a programme of visits across the country. A number of clubs have used the gift aid claim process and documentation has been made available on the EBU website to assist this process. Plans to take over the software provided by Jeff Smith are advanced and will come into practice in October 2015. The software will be renamed EBUScore and will be available free to all affiliated clubs.

South Bucks Bridge Centre was generously donated to the charity EBED by Laurie Champniss during the year and the EBU are taking some responsibility for its management.

We experimented with online club play and have come to an agreement with Bridge Club Live where they have become our first online affiliated club.

Education and development

Most education activities are now run by the charity, English Bridge and Education. Full detail can be seen in their annual report.

The All Party Parliamentary Group for Bridge

The group is now chaired by Baroness Henig who has been supportive to Bridge and the EBU. Bob Blackman MP, who has been particularly helpful and vocal in our campaign for the recognition as bridge as a sport. Meetings of the group address the development and awareness of the benefits of bridge (particularly for young people and for senior citizens) and the promotion of enjoyment of the game, and bridge events, with the legislatures of other countries.

This year the APPG have hosted two visits from schools that play bridge and/or minibridge. These outings are great fun and the school pupils and their teachers visit the Lord Speaker in her office, tour the Houses of Parliament and then play bridge in the River Room and are treated to tea at the end of a long afternoon. The children demonstrate without doubt the benefits of playing bridge at school.

International Success

England's representation in international duplicate bridge competitions is an important part of the EBU's activities as a national bridge organisation. Successes at international level help to raise public awareness of English bridge and to attract new players to the game. Our participation in international events provides us with an international profile in the bridge world and it also brings more influence within the European Bridge League (EBL) and the World Bridge Federation (WBF).

The Selection Committee, made up of seven elected and two ex officio members and chaired by Andy Bowles, is responsible for selecting the teams to represent us internationally. It has been a very good year for England at international level, with medals in all three categories at the European Championships (the first time that any country has achieved this), and wins in two of the five Home Internationals:

- **Open**

The Open team won the Bronze Medal in the European Championships, qualifying for the Bermuda Bowl for the second time in succession.

- **Women**

The Women's team continued their run of medal-winning performances with the Silver Medal at the European Championships, qualifying once again for the Venice Cup.

- **Seniors**

The Senior team won the Gold Medal at the European Championships, qualifying for the D'Orsi Bowl.

- **Juniors**

The Junior teams again won both the Junior Camrose and the Peggy Bayer trophies. Tom Paske and Graeme Robertson won a Bronze Medal at the European Youth Pairs.

Junior squads

The Selection Committee is also responsible for the junior squads which provide training for young players. Through the hard work of squad leaders Alan Shillitoe, Michael Byrne and Sarah O'Connor, supported by a number of top players who provide coaching and mentoring, the junior squad system continues to bring young players into the game and to prepare successive generations of players for national and international competition.

This year a new U15 squad was formed, in order to prepare a team for the new U15 category at the 2015 European Championships. Under Sarah O'Connor's able leadership a sizeable pool of players has been identified, and preparations for the Europeans are well advanced.

We have been making plans to hold our first international championship in England for some years, the European Champions Cup.

Regulation

The Laws and Ethics Committee (L&E), made up of seven elected individual members of the EBU under the chairmanship of Tim Rees, is responsible for the regulation of the game in England.

Updated regulations were published in August 2013, including a revised White Book and a new Blue Book. These are smaller than their predecessors and written in plainer English. Both publications are available electronically, free, from the website and will be updated annually. Only very minor amendments were made in August 2014.

The L&E hears cases of both a technical and disciplinary nature. During the last year, there have been three appeals to the National Authority, which is the final step for appealing a Director's ruling. One of these cases was rejected due to lack of merit, and the deposit retained. The other two cases were heard, with one being successful.

Disciplinary problems over the last year have been down on previous years. By coincidence, two cases the L&E prosecuted this year were both caused by players walking out of EBU events without notice having received a Director's ruling with which they disagreed. There have been several other problems raised by individuals relating to club/county bridge, but the L&E encourages these issues to be dealt with at a local level, which has successfully happened in this year's cases. The L&E provides advice on model disciplinary regulations for clubs, counties and jointly run events.

Appeals from tournaments are reviewed by the L&E so that they can offer advice and ensure the consistency of decisions. An annual booklet of the major decisions is published and is available electronically from the EBU website. Appeals are reviewed and comments published in the minutes of their meetings.

There is a panel of referees appointed by the L&E who hear appeals at tournaments and act as telephone referees in knock out events, on a voluntary basis. They are also called upon from time to time to give rulings from club and county events.

Tournaments and Competitions

This year saw the introduction of the Player of the Year Championship. It awards place-points to those ranking highly in a range of our toughest pairs and teams events, to provide an extra challenge of interest to our top players.

Other changes introduced in the last year, in response to the paper that Gordon Rainsford presented last year to the board, are that the Autumn Congress now has a slightly different format than any of our other congresses, adding some variety to the calendar; and it has been decided that from 2016 the National Pairs will offer a number of regional finals around the country for qualification to the national final, open to all EBU members without any need to qualify in clubs. Discussion was also had regarding the moving of the Summer Congress from Brighton to another venue. This change will take place in 2016.

Blue-Pointed Holidays have not attracted as much interest as had been hoped and will stop after the final one in 2015 at Chilworth Manor. However we are still keen to provide events for

less experienced players, aiming to bridge the gap between clubs and congresses. With that in mind we have been running Really Easy Afternoons four times a year at some of our congresses, and at the same time clubs around the country have run satellite events, playing the same hands and scoring them all together nationally.

Bridge Overseas Ltd continue to source venues for our tournaments at prices we would not be able to negotiate for ourselves, many of them free, helping us to minimise price increases. They also negotiate and arrange accommodation for our members, but there is no obligation to use their services and members are free to look for other offers if they wish.

Numbers at many of our competitions continue to decline despite our best efforts, but our Bridge Overseas congresses abroad, like the ones in Montenegro and Lanzarote during the year, continue to attract good numbers and make a healthy contribution to the Competitions Department's budget. It was decided last year that the committee should have fewer meetings, and more of its work has been done this year via email.

Tournament Directors Development Group

This subcommittee of the Board deals with the appraisal, promotion, development and management of the EBU's active tournament directors. It is chaired by Board Director, Heather Dhondy. This year the TDDG ran a highly successful TD training weekend, and has seen six new trainees join the panel. Nicole Cooke and Phil Godfrey are promoted to Senior Congress TDs and James Vickers and Colin Simcox to "A" TDs. The group continues its work of recruiting and training new tournament directors to continue the excellent service provided at our national tournaments.

The County Working Group

The EBU County Working Group was set up by the Board to focus on County development, the key objectives of which include communications and relationships with Counties, Clubs, Members, and potential Members. The National County Working Group will explore development opportunities and make recommendations to the Board on ways forward.

It is made up of representatives from the five Regional County Working Groups (Eastern, Metropolitan, Midlands, Northern and Western). Each Regional County Working Group is made up of Counties, based primarily on the Inter-County League Groups. Guernsey, Isle of Man, and Jersey are, for geographical reasons, outside of the Regional Groups, but have each been contacted by the Group Chairman, and invited to send a representative to the National Meetings, or to communicate directly with him on any matters they would like to raise.

The meetings held so far have been very positive, and the indication is that this structure has excellent potential, due in no small part to the support, commitment and dedication of those members who have agreed to represent their County, and Region, in engaging in this process. I hope that as many members as possible will make their views known to their Club, and County, so that we can all participate in shaping the future of Bridge in England

English Bridge

The Editorial Board for English Bridge is a subcommittee of the Board chaired by EBU Board Chairman Jeremy Dhondy. During 2014-15 we have further developed the archive of past magazines on our website going back to 1945. Our current magazine is available online to members. We have successfully introduced a new size magazine which makes significant postal savings. The online version of the magazine now includes video footage. We will be appointing a new editor in the coming year.

EBU Headquarters at Aylesbury

We have a full time staff equivalent of around eighteen, serving over 54000 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 Management Focus, Events Focus and Appeals Focus. It has been, as usual, a busy year with the following notable developments:

- ***Success in the Media***

In early 2015 we applied for leave to go to Judicial Review concerning Sport England's refusal to consider bridge being regarded as a sport. We were turned down after written submissions but received approval for an oral hearing at which Mr Justice Mostyn decided that the review should be held. This decision generated a huge amount of media interest, with numerous officials, board members, staff, and members appearing on television and radio. The case was reported in all major newspapers, and on many news networks in the UK and overseas. The coverage of the case was mostly fair, and certainly positive in relation to the benefits and enjoyment that can come from playing bridge. Our print monitoring service estimated that in the week of the case the print and online reports had a value of £1.48m (i.e. that would be the cost of paying for the equivalent level of exposure) – this excludes the coverage on television and radio. There was also media coverage of the VAT appeal and this will proceed further in the coming year.

- ***Diary***

The diary will be printed by the same company as for the last version. Due to an increased number of members opting out of receiving a copy we will be able to make savings on the cost of delivery.

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 25th November 2015.

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.

Jeremy Dhondy

Chairman

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

Staff Members and National Volunteers 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015

Details of the directors, committee members and staff can be found at <http://www.ebu.co.uk/biographies/ebu>. In addition we are grateful for the assistance of

Honorary Counsel

David Ewart QC

Pro Bono Advisor

Stephen Barnfield

Disciplinary Panel (this group hears and decides on cases that are prosecuted by the Laws & Ethics Committee)

Joy Mayall, Kath Nelson, William Nicolle, Alan Oddie, Jackie Pye, Paul Roberts, Ed Scerri, Paddy Seligman, Geoff Smith, Jeff Smith, Keith Stanley, John Williams, Norman Innis

Awards Panel (this group scrutinises applications from counties for the Dimmie Fleming award and makes recommendations to the EBU Board)

Margaret Curtis, Philip Mason, Jeff Morris

THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION LIMITED**NUMBER OF MEMBERS BY COUNTY AS AT 31ST MARCH 2015**

NB The numbers below include anyone designated as a member on the EBU database as at 31st March 2015.

| County | 31 March 2015 | | | | | | | Clubs | 31 March 2014 | | | | | | | Clubs |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|-------|--------|---------|---------|-------|-------|---------------|-------|--------|---------|---------|-------|-----|-------|
| | UMD | UM1 | UM2 | Direct | Juniors | for All | Total | | UM1 | UM2 | Direct | Juniors | for All | Total | | |
| Avon | 138 | 122 | 622 | 17 | 3 | 0 | 902 | 5 | 257 | 624 | 18 | 2 | 15 | 916 | 5 | |
| Bedfordshire | 56 | 59 | 282 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 417 | 5 | 97 | 274 | 23 | 0 | 4 | 398 | 6 | |
| Berks & Bucks | 585 | 489 | 1928 | 62 | 42 | 23 | 3129 | 35 | 997 | 1866 | 68 | 33 | 51 | 3015 | 35 | |
| Camb & Hunts | 102 | 99 | 534 | 11 | 51 | 23 | 820 | 15 | 221 | 531 | 13 | 45 | 10 | 820 | 15 | |
| Channel Islands | 111 | 64 | 205 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 392 | 7 | 144 | 221 | 7 | 1 | 7 | 380 | 7 | |
| Cornwall | 63 | 72 | 414 | 5 | 4 | 35 | 593 | 13 | 146 | 425 | 8 | 4 | 15 | 598 | 13 | |
| Cumbria | 83 | 48 | 385 | 10 | 0 | 17 | 543 | 5 | 142 | 368 | 11 | 0 | 19 | 540 | 5 | |
| Derbyshire | 137 | 143 | 572 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 869 | 15 | 242 | 553 | 1 | 4 | 27 | 827 | 14 | |
| Devon | 155 | 223 | 1036 | 26 | 0 | 18 | 1458 | 23 | 353 | 1013 | 27 | 0 | 40 | 1433 | 21 | |
| Dorset | 103 | 102 | 399 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 631 | 6 | 209 | 428 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 666 | 6 | |
| Essex | 449 | 297 | 1297 | 32 | 1 | 83 | 2159 | 29 | 634 | 1383 | 35 | 1 | 96 | 2149 | 29 | |
| Gloucestershire | 138 | 158 | 579 | 22 | 4 | 10 | 911 | 13 | 311 | 587 | 19 | 4 | 8 | 929 | 13 | |
| Hants & Isle of Wight | 168 | 298 | 1037 | 48 | 1 | 33 | 1585 | 25 | 532 | 1064 | 44 | 1 | 92 | 1733 | 23 | |
| Herefordshire | 90 | 49 | 358 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 506 | 10 | 152 | 367 | 8 | 0 | 7 | 534 | 10 | |
| Hertfordshire | 207 | 287 | 1338 | 58 | 8 | 83 | 1981 | 20 | 476 | 1354 | 60 | 2 | 104 | 1996 | 20 | |
| Isle of Man | 9 | 13 | 86 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 114 | 2 | 18 | 84 | 8 | 0 | 5 | 115 | 2 | |
| Kent | 338 | 419 | 1766 | 49 | 5 | 63 | 2640 | 32 | 720 | 1756 | 50 | 5 | 59 | 2590 | 31 | |
| Lancashire | 145 | 223 | 1375 | 51 | 2 | 45 | 1841 | 10 | 441 | 1385 | 53 | 1 | 40 | 1920 | 10 | |
| Leicestershire | 143 | 111 | 618 | 37 | 4 | 18 | 931 | 12 | 235 | 642 | 41 | 4 | 11 | 933 | 12 | |
| Lincolnshire | 142 | 95 | 534 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 781 | 11 | 254 | 510 | 9 | 0 | 3 | 776 | 11 | |
| London | 403 | 346 | 630 | 137 | 40 | 23 | 1579 | 13 | 656 | 671 | 150 | 34 | 6 | 1517 | 13 | |
| Manchester | 234 | 232 | 800 | 73 | 39 | 19 | 1397 | 10 | 470 | 842 | 74 | 39 | 1 | 1426 | 10 | |
| Merseyside & Cheshire | 157 | 152 | 701 | 29 | 6 | 21 | 1066 | 8 | 330 | 704 | 28 | 7 | 38 | 1107 | 8 | |
| Middlesex | 273 | 260 | 867 | 117 | 14 | 117 | 1648 | 13 | 475 | 904 | 123 | 15 | 77 | 1594 | 14 | |
| Norfolk | 90 | 157 | 766 | 10 | 1 | 38 | 1062 | 22 | 236 | 785 | 12 | 0 | 10 | 1043 | 20 | |
| Northants | 167 | 196 | 697 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1066 | 11 | 288 | 639 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 936 | 11 | |
| North East | 283 | 205 | 1086 | 13 | 1 | 29 | 1617 | 23 | 431 | 1116 | 17 | 1 | 27 | 1592 | 24 | |
| Nottinghamshire | 67 | 103 | 537 | 21 | 3 | 16 | 747 | 10 | 145 | 536 | 20 | 3 | 14 | 718 | 10 | |
| Oxfordshire | 164 | 203 | 980 | 24 | 94 | 76 | 1541 | 21 | 414 | 976 | 25 | 69 | 12 | 1496 | 19 | |
| Somerset | 56 | 111 | 559 | 27 | 1 | 27 | 781 | 14 | 184 | 559 | 29 | 1 | 23 | 796 | 15 | |
| Staffordshire/Shropshire | 50 | 109 | 705 | 41 | 2 | 10 | 917 | 13 | 196 | 723 | 42 | 0 | 13 | 974 | 12 | |
| Suffolk | 113 | 162 | 730 | 13 | 3 | 31 | 1052 | 19 | 319 | 707 | 15 | 3 | 52 | 1096 | 19 | |
| Surrey | 998 | 864 | 3175 | 103 | 4 | 168 | 5312 | 47 | 1781 | 3300 | 106 | 4 | 165 | 5356 | 46 | |
| Sussex | 398 | 429 | 2055 | 25 | 10 | 53 | 2970 | 30 | 719 | 2186 | 30 | 10 | 28 | 2973 | 29 | |
| Wanlockshire | 395 | 318 | 1738 | 18 | 7 | 54 | 2530 | 13 | 860 | 1728 | 19 | 5 | 118 | 2730 | 13 | |
| Westmorland | 6 | 24 | 146 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 184 | 2 | 33 | 141 | 5 | 0 | 20 | 199 | 2 | |
| Wiltshire | 67 | 126 | 624 | 17 | 2 | 110 | 946 | 15 | 173 | 617 | 15 | 2 | 35 | 842 | 13 | |
| Worcestershire | 53 | 83 | 520 | 21 | 0 | 48 | 725 | 14 | 150 | 526 | 24 | 0 | 36 | 736 | 14 | |
| Yorkshire | 507 | 481 | 2579 | 29 | 27 | 87 | 3710 | 34 | 885 | 2644 | 33 | 25 | 105 | 3692 | 34 | |
| Non County Members* | 56 | 10 | 29 | 436 | 28 | 0 | 559 | | 64 | 20 | 423 | 18 | 0 | 525 | | |
| | 7899 | 7942 | 35289 | 1672 | 414 | 1396 | 54612 | 625 | 15390 | 35759 | 1727 | 344 | 1396 | 54616 | 614 | |
| Affiliated Clubs | | | | | | | 625 | | | | | | | 614 | | |

UMD denotes members who have not played any club sessions in the financial year. Info only available from 2015.

UM1 denotes members who have played at least 1 but fewer than 12 club sessions in the financial year

UM2 denotes members who have played 12 or more club sessions in the financial year

* these include direct overseas members and members who have expressed a desire not to be affiliated to a county