

## **Dear Members**

It's been a very mixed summer with changeable weather, political upheaval, continuing Covid infection and travel chaos. Thankfully bridge allows us the opportunity to play online, or to play face to face meeting friends we haven't seen for a couple of years. Since I last wrote to you there's been a lot happening behind the scenes.

## **AGM 24 May**

The last meeting of the "old" organisation and the first AGM of the new SCIO took place on 24 May. In addition to the usual formalities and the election of three new trustees Neil Archibald, Gavin Easton and Mike Hodder, there was a lively Q&A session where many of the practical concerns for the bridge clubs during and post pandemic were raised. Minutes of both meetings are available on the website.

## **National Competitions**

Thanks to members who took the time to complete our two recent surveys.

We must continue to meet the needs of those wanting to play face to face and those wanting to play online. We also recognise that clubs' future viability is critical to SBU's success and that there will continue to be uncertainty for the foreseeable future. The Board recognised that the numbers and spread of members playing in the weekly SBU online events doesn't necessarily significantly affect the current slow return to F2F, but it was felt there was likely to be an overall capacity issue for members. Players will decide which of numerous options over any one week they will play, and generally, there was felt to be a need to nudge members back to Club events, both F2F and online. Consequently, we have taken the short-term view that the weekly weekend pairs and individual games, SOL and Bronze League will continue, but the Tuesday pairs will stop at the end of August.

National tournaments will be held online for the rest of 2022, although it's up to districts to decide how heats will be held. We are actively planning the national events in 2023, deciding what changes are advisable, and determining an appropriate balance between face to face and online to meet the needs of our members.

We are also planning longer term since it is inevitable that the landscape for playing and teaching bridge will continue to evolve and change. Challenging times!

## **Meeting with club representatives**

To best support the needs of clubs, the trustees have scheduled five online meetings over the next few weeks with club representatives to share ideas and to help us resolve any issues together. Those interested in attending please contact Juliet ([secretary@sbu.org.uk](mailto:secretary@sbu.org.uk)).

## **Treasurer and Bookkeeper Vacancies**

We are very grateful to Scott Macdonald, who is stepping down from his role as Treasurer, for the huge amount of work he has done over the last 2 years, managing a very smooth transition into the new SCIO, and coping with the additional workload created by online bridge. The level of work has grown significantly, so we have decided to split the role into two:

**Treasurer** - a volunteer role of approximately 10-15 hours/month.

**Bookkeeper** - a paid role of approximately 8-10 hours/week.

Please contact Sarah Gunn ([sarah.gunn@live.co.uk](mailto:sarah.gunn@live.co.uk)) if you may be interested in either of these roles.

### **Other organisational changes**

After many years of excellent service, Fiona Greenwood is stepping down from her current role as Tournament Convenor. We thank her for all the invaluable work she has done for SBU. We are delighted that Mike Baron has agreed to coordinate a new team of convenors to help run our national competition activities, and Angus Macdonald is Chief Tournament Director managing our team of TDs. We are very grateful to the large number of volunteers who have agreed to support our efforts.

### **Affiliation Agreements and Byelaws**

A lot of documentation has been produced ensuring we meet the governance requirements of the Regulator. This is still work in progress but can be viewed in the “About” section of the website. Most recently, Byelaws have been written describing how the organisation operates, and Affiliation Agreements issued to clubs describing their relationship with SBU.

### **Social and health benefits of playing bridge**

An important goal for SBU is that people in Scotland are aware of the social and health benefits of playing bridge. Recent research and analysis done by Stirling University and others clearly demonstrates the facts. Any member interested in helping in this area please get in touch with me.

Best wishes to all our members for a great summer.

Alan Goodman ([chair@sbu.org.uk](mailto:chair@sbu.org.uk))

July 2022