

## **Dear Members**

Hopefully, members have been enjoying the warm spell of weather when not playing bridge. I know that some clubs will have closed for the summer, but many are now back playing in the clubs throughout the year. As usual, it has been very busy behind the scenes.

## **Annual General Meeting**

The AGM on 23<sup>rd</sup> May was attended by 68 members and we received a record number of 129 proxy votes. There were lots of questions and discussion, and the minutes of the meeting can be found on the website.

## **Finances**

Although our financial position remains strong, the changed bridge landscape has also had a significant impact on our financial management as income from congresses, traditional tournaments, masterpoints and subscriptions have all fallen over the last few years. Although we have healthy reserves, much of these are already earmarked to cover known capital expenditure, contingencies, and other planned projects.

As agreed at the AGM, the membership subscription from 1 September 2023 is to be £12 and will be the same for members of clubs affiliated to the SBU, as well as members joining directly.

## **National Competitions**

At the AGM it was agreed that although most National Competitions will revert to face to face, we wish to retain the flexibility to have a limited number played online. The calendar of events for 23/24 will be published on our website very soon.

## **Mempad Upgrade**

The Mempad system consists of a membership database and a Masterpoints system. It has served us well over many years but requires to be upgraded. The Trustees looked at several alternative system solutions but concluded that we are best served by spending money on an upgrade rather than seeking a new solution. This upgrade is being done over the summer and will be completed before the end of August. More information will be available before the new season starts in September.

## **EBL Hall of Fame**

Liz McGowan has been inducted into the European Bridge League Hall of Fame, the first Scot to have received this award since its inception in 2017. Liz is Scotland's only World and European Grand Master, but the award recognises not only her international bridge successes but also the considerable amount of pro bono work done over many years.

## **Bridge Olympic Esports Week**

This is an important event for the bridge world yet accessible to every bridge player in every country no matter their rank.

The publicity gained from the event has potentially far-reaching implications, particularly if it allows bridge to be considered an ESport. Raising the profile of bridge in the UK could possibly lead the UK Government to treat it as a sport, opening significant funding opportunities.

Please take part in the inaugural **Bridge Olympic Esports Week** Tournament on BBO which starts on **19th June 2023**. See the SBU website and BBO for more details.

### **Allegations of Cheating**

It is very disappointing that allegations of cheating are still being reported. Although we are actively reviewing our disciplinary processes and sanctions, members should be aware that the Trustees will not tolerate behaviour that is spoiling enjoyment for the rest of our members. Further communication will be issued reminding members what constitutes cheating and what is expected from members.

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

**June 2023**