

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026

Minutes of the meeting held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Belfast on Saturday June 27th 2026 from 2pm.

Present:

Delegates (60)

Alan Hill, Alan McKay, Anne Davey, Anne Fitzpatrick (Treasurer), Anne Milligan, Barbara Ewart, Barbara Irwin, Brian Burrell, Brian Moore, Brian Mullan (International Match Manager), Cora Morrison, David Alexander, David Parkes, Davie Kildea, Dympna Shields, Emmet Devlin, Gerry Henry, Gerry Starrs, Harold Curran (President), Heather Watson, Helena Strong, James Agnew, Jamie Johnston, Jane Richardson, Jim McGilly, John Ferguson, John Forsythe, John Lavery, John Murchan, John O'Neill, John Taylor, Judy Young, Keith Bloomfield, Liz Scott, Lynn Forsythe, Mandy Degan, Mary Flynn, Maureen Kelly, Michael Coffey, Michael McNamee, Mioara Gavrilescu, Norma Irwin, Nuala Mooney, Patricia McDowell, Penny Montgomery, Peter McGonigle, Rae Seaton, Rex Anderson, Richard Vaughan, Robbie Russell, Rosemary Mulholland, Rosemary O'Neill, Roy Blair, Sam Barr, Sharon Martin, Suzanne Aiken, Tom McKeever, Toni Bradley, Toni Sproule, Wendy Alexander.

Other Attendees (16)

Diane Greenwood (Chairperson), Helen Hall (Vice Chairperson), Michael McFaul (Secretary), Ian Hamilton (Master Points Secretary)

Angela Fitzpatrick, Joan Baird, Hilary Ferguson, Valerie Russell, Liz Thomas, Lesley Agar, Ian Lindsay, Heather Hill, Stan Lowe, David Greenwood, Sandie Millership, Lynda Horner.

The Chairperson, Diane Greenwood welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Brian McDowell, Christine Byrne, Collette Carlin, Kathleen Cassidy, Una Cole, Wayne Somerville, Ken Hammond, Anne Hassan.

2. Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting.

Agreed on a proposal by Helen Hall, seconded by Anne Fitzpatrick.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. President's Report

Harold Curran thanked the Officers for their tireless efforts over the past year. He sent his best wishes to Pat McDaid and Zrinka Kokot who are representing Ireland in the European Mixed Championships being held in Riga. He went on to say that the Union was at the crossroads when it came to survival or not and he urged members to vote in favour of the proposal to merge with the CBAI to form 'Bridge Ireland'.

5. Chairperson's Report

In addition to thanking all the Officers, Diane Greenwood mentioned Sandie Millership and Alan Hill as long-standing Tournament Directors. She referred to those who had passed away in the last year – Wilson Hanna, Michael Patterson, Beatrice Lowry, Dorothy Malcolm. She concluded by appealing to members to enter more NIBU competitions and also for volunteers to train as TD's.

6. Hon. Secretary's report

Michael McFaul paid tribute to Diane for carrying out her role tirelessly over the past 2 years. He went on to lament the decline in attendance at face-to-face events and made a special plea for the Union to organise a Congress in the new season. This would enable new players to experience Bridge in its best social setting.

7. Hon. Treasurer's report

Anne Fitzpatrick stated that income was slightly down on the previous year, including affiliation fees. However income from Inter-Club events had increased. She highlighted the high cost of Junior expenses at the Home Internationals.

8. Hon. Masterpoints Secretary's report

Ian Hamilton lamented the continuing decline in attendance at face-to-face events leading to many cancellations. He confirmed that the 'Player of the Year' awards were based on masterpoints earned during the Bridge season 1st September – 31st August.

The Officers' reports were accepted on a proposal by Brian Mullan and seconded by Alan Hill.

9. Selection Committee report

Michael Coffey spoke of the continuing decline in entries to trials for the Home International series.

10. Youth Committee report

Sandie Millership thanked Wayne Somerville for drafting the report and spoke of the difficulty in recruiting young people to the game.

11. Financial Accounts.

The accounts for year ending March 31st 2026 were passed on a proposal by Helen Hall and seconded by Sandie Millership.

12. Election of Officers.

Michael McFaul, Anne Fitzpatrick and Ian Hamilton were re-elected on a proposal by Harold Curran and seconded by Roy Blair.

13. Honorary Competitions Secretary.

There were no nominations for this vacant Officer role.

14. Chairperson's handover.

Diane Greenwood vacated the Chair and Helen Hall took over the role.

15. Incoming Council

Helen Hall advised that Council Membership would remain in situ pending the forthcoming vote and clarification on structural matters and roles within Bridge Ireland.

16. Election of Examining Accountant

Peter Green was re-elected for a period of one year on a proposal by Brian Mullan and seconded by Alan Hill.

17. Trustees

Alan Hill, Harold Curran and Ian Lindsay were confirmed as being willing to continue in the role.

18. Presentation of trophies

The following trophies were presented and photographs were taken:

Kelvin Cup – Harold Curran, Anne Fitzpatrick, B.J. O'Brien, Derek O'Gorman

Mackinnon Cup – Brian McDowell, Alan Sharp, Rex Anderson, Pat Barry, Robin Burns, Ian Lindsay

Millership Cup – Paddy Hamill, Brian Clarke, Sam Barr, Christine Byrne.

Senior League – Anne Fitzpatrick, Harold Curran, B.J.O'Brien, Derek O'Gorman.

Intermediate League – Mary Flynn, Helena McCambridge, Toni Bradley, Ray Nicholas.

Player of the Year:

Senior -Harold Curran

Intermediate A – Patricia McDowell

Intermediate B - Marylou McDonnell

19. ‘Bridge Ireland’

A full and frank discussion took place between members, delegates and Officers on the proposal to amalgamate with the CBAI. Rex Anderson clarified the position from a legal point of view. It was agreed to proceed with the vote on the understanding that the following documentation would be completed and approved at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the NIBU:

- **Constitution for Bridge Ireland**
- **Constitution for Bridge Ireland Northern Ireland Region (to replace the existing constitution of the NIBU)**
- **Transfer and Merger Agreement (for the merger of the CBAI and the NIBU)**

Members subsequently voted on the proposal to amalgamate as follows:

On a show of hands 48 voted in favour with 12 against. There were no abstentions.

The meeting ended at 3.45pm.

Michael McFaul
Hon. Secretary