



NEWCASTLEBRIDGE

The Newcastle Bridge Club Incorporated ABN 16 405 302 022

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

For meeting held Tuesday 13/01/2026



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COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Location:	Newcastle Bridge Club	Date:	13 January 2026
Chair:	Jeff Biddlecombe	Time:	1:30pm
1. Apologies: Jenny Bissett			
2. Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Previous meeting dated 09 December 2025 2.2. Protocol for Minutes (including voting on motions, and handling of post meeting discussions) 			
3. Correspondence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Email from Bridge NSW re hosting Hunter Regional Finals for the new format State Pairs and Teams. 3.2. Email from Toronto Bridge Club re Director's Course 3.3. Email from Ronnie Ng to Peter Peterson re GNOT 2026 			
4. Financials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. P & L to December 2025 (circulated) 4.2. Treasurer's report for January meeting (circulated) 			
5. Business arising from correspondence and previous minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1. Suggestions received at AGM – follow up 5.2. Email re Supervised Session to be run concurrently on Tuesday night 5.3. Banking – changes required to signatories and access cards 5.4. Youth membership – revisit decision made in December meeting re the membership fee to apply 5.5. Events promotion role 			
6. New Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1. Agree Congress details needed to prepare Brochure and post details on My ABF website (cost, etc) 6.2. Bridge NSW: New region-focused State Championships for 2025 – how do we handle (refer email from Ken Wilks 11/12/2025) 6.3. Catering for weekend events 6.4. Members joining October and November-December 6.5. Advertising Beginners Lessons on Bridge NSW website (refer Neil Best's report) 			
7. General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1. Suggestion box 7.2. 			
8. Next meeting: Tuesday 10/02/2026			

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: January 2026

Location:	Newcastle Bridge Club	Date:	13/01/2026
Chair:	Jeff Biddlecombe	Time:	1:30 pm
Attendees:	Jeff Biddlecombe, Les Brien, Julie Butel (minute taker), Kathleen Drew, Ailsa Kearney, James Leitch, Peter Peterson, Effie Roach, Ken Wilks.		

AGENDA ITEM
1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Jeff opened the meeting at 1:35 pm.

Apologies: Jenny Bissett

2. MINUTES
2.1. Minutes of the previous meeting (9/12/2025)

Les moved that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted and Ailsa seconded the motion which was agreed by all. Jeff then signed the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

2.2. Protocol for Minutes

A summary document which summarises the current procedure used for Minutes was circulated prior to the meeting (see attached). There were no objections to the process described so it will continue to be followed.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

3.1. Email from Bridge NSW re hosting Hunter Regional Finals for the new format State Pairs and Teams. Ken replied and advised that a decision had been made not to host the event.

3.2. Email from Toronto Bridge Club re Directors Course. An email has been sent to all members informing them of the course and what to do if they are interested in attending. The flyer is also on display at the Club. Kathleen advised that she is attending and will provide a list of attendees from our Club.

3.3. Email from Ronnie Ng to Peter Peterson re GNOT 2026. There are a few changes from the ABF:

- *After the online National Final in September, four open teams and 12 (not 8) non-metropolitan teams to qualify to play in the F2F national final. The F2F Final will now be held in Brisbane, not Sydney.*
- *The table levy ABF charges for each table in CQEs will increase from \$10 to \$14*
- *The entry fees for teams to enter the national final will increase from \$300 to \$400.*

This will mean an increased charge to clubs (amount TBA once Bridge NSW makes a decision, but likely to be minimal)

AGENDA ITEM

4. FINANCIALS (Les)

4.1. P & L to December 2025 (see attached)

4.2. Treasurer's report for January meeting (see attached)

Les tabled his report for the 6 months to December 2025 noting a profit of \$5796 compared to \$5194 for the same period for the previous year. Les advised that quotes had been provided from our broker for our Business Insurance renewal (details circulated prior to the meeting) and commented on the huge variation between providers. Our current insurer has quoted \$9946 compared to \$7796 last year but was still the most competitive quote.

After taking into account the additional ~\$2000 for insurance and a similar amount for increased capitation fees, Les forecasted that the year end result would be breakeven at best. However, Les added that as a NFP with no real KPIs for profit, he does not consider this to be an issue.

Jeff advised that we are yet to bed down Smart Shift for our energy management, but that once this happens we should start to see some savings in energy costs.

Les moved that the P & L and his report be accepted, including acceptance of the Building Insurance renewal quote. This was seconded by Ken and agreed by all present.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE / PREVIOUS MINUTES

5.1. Follow up on suggestions received at the AGM

Jenny advised prior to the meeting that no progress had been made with this. Carry over to a future meeting.

5.2. Email re Supervised Session to be run concurrently on Tuesday night.

An email was sent to all members to gauge the level of interest in playing in a supervised play session as part of the Tuesday night session. Some positive responses have been received. Neil Best also sent an email to people who have attended lessons but have not yet become members and received positive responses from 6 people. It was agreed that we would need at least 6 pairs on a regular basis as well as a dedicated supervisor if it is to proceed.

Action: Jeff will progress

5.3. Banking changes (signatories and access cards)

This has now been completed.

5.4. Youth Membership

As noted in the Minutes of the December Committee meeting, we are now aware that anyone can become a member of the ABF Youth Club free of charge and remain a member until they turn 26. Hence there is no need for us to introduce a Youth Membership category.

It was agreed that the cost per session for ABF Youth Club members will be the same as the table fee for NBC members.

5.5. Events Promotion Role

Discussion has not yet taken place. Carry over until the February meeting (Jeff).

AGENDA ITEM

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1. Restricted / Novice Congress

The following was agreed:

- Maximum number of tables: 24
- Entry fee: \$35 / player (an increase of \$5 to cover increased costs)

Action required:

- **Set up the Congress on My ABF website this week (Julie)**
- **Liaise with Caroline Carey to get a brochure prepared (Julie)**

Details for the June Congress will be discussed at the February Committee meeting. In the meantime, Ken advised Ailsa to check with TBIB to see if they will again sponsor the event.

6.2. Bridge NSW new region-focused State Championships for 2026

The details regarding the re-shaping of the NSW State Pairs and Teams Championships in 2026. A few questions, including what was meant by “Clubs can conduct up to three Club Selection Events **in times regularly allocated to club sessions**” were raised. (In the past we have used our Club Championship events as qualifiers, which are run on a Sunday), Also how many qualifiers can go to the Regional Final.

Action: It was agreed that James, Peter and Ken would get together to resolve. James volunteered to contact the person at Bridge NSW who is responsible for coordinating the Championships.

6.3. Catering for weekend events

Ailsa has prepared a “Call for Volunteers” flyer as well as a catering calendar for display on the Club notice board. This will be supplemented by contact with members during sessions and a general email.

6.4. Members joining in October and November – December

Ken advised that the fee for anyone joining during October is \$35 (to cover Bridge NSW and ABF charges), and during November / December is \$15 (no Bridge NSW charges applicable in these months). People considering joining at these times may want to wait until January to join.

6.5. Advertising Beginners Lessons on Bridge NSW website

Prior to the meeting, a report by Neil Best was circulated re a Bridge NSW webinar he had attended(“Supporting Club Beginner Lessons 2026”). Most of the details will be discussed at the next meeting of the Lessons Sub-Committee. However, Bridge NSW is offering to advertise Club lessons on its website and Neil sought permission from the Committee for this.

All present were in favour but it was agreed that our branding should be obvious.

Neil also advised that he and Greg will be running two lesson sessions this semester starting Thursday 12 February and Wednesday 18th February. 30 people have registered interest to date (U3A has advertised, but has not sent any names as yet). To date, there are 5 definite attendees for Wednesday nights and 13 definites for Thursday afternoons.

AGENDA ITEM

7. GENERAL BUSINESS:

7.1. Suggestion Box

No suggestions have been received since the last meeting

7.2. Request to supply GF biscuits and specialty teas

The question was raised if GF biscuits and specialty teas could be supplied by the Club. It was acknowledged that this issue has been discussed in the past and while efforts are made for special events (e.g. AGM meeting, Christmas lunch, etc), the general view was that if members want specialty items for regular Bridge sessions, they should bring their own.

8. NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 10/02 commencing at 1:30pm.

9. MEETING CLOSE: The meeting concluded at 2:45 pm

CONFIRMED TO BE A TRUE RECORD OF THE MEETING:

Moved by:	KEN WILKES
Seconded by:	AILSA
Signed by:	JF Biddle
Date:	10.2.26

Protocol for Minutes of Meetings

Approval Process

1. Aim to circulate the first draft minutes to attendees within 3 days of the meeting.
2. Meeting attendees may suggest changes if the draft minutes contain factual errors, miss a decision or agreed action, or are unclear or misleading. Suggestions must relate to accuracy, not to changing decisions after the meeting.

NB. If someone disputes the minutes, the minutes may include "X requested that their view be noted." "There was disagreement about..." etc. This maintains integrity while acknowledging the concern.

3. If required, the draft minutes are amended and the updated draft (clearly marked "DRAFT") is circulated to the Committee, and posted on the website and noticeboard. The objective is to do this within 1 week of the meeting.
4. The minutes are formally approved and signed at the next Committee meeting (or accepted with amendments or further edits). Once approved and signed, the minutes become the official record.
5. The approved signed minutes are then posted on the website and filed on the office computer. The original hard copy is filed in the Minutes Folder.

What Happens if New Discussion Arises After the Meeting?

- New information that arises after the meeting does not change the minutes of the meeting. Minutes are a factual record of what happened during the meeting, not what was discussed afterwards. This ensures integrity and accuracy of the official record, transparency, prevention of retrospective rewriting, and clear governance boundaries.
- If new information comes to light regarding a decision made during the meeting, it is acceptable to include a note to this effect and to state that the decision will therefore be revisited at the next meeting. ***This should be clearly marked as not being part of the meeting's proceedings.*** If the matter is urgent and cannot hold over until the next meeting, it may be resolved via email or other means and then recorded in the Minutes of the next Committee meeting.

General notes:

Minutes should include accurate, concise summaries (not verbatim); decisions, votes, and outcomes; actions with owners and deadlines; motions (who moved/seconded, if relevant)

Minutes should NOT include personal opinions, emotional or subjective language, unnecessary detail or long quotes.

The tone and style of the minutes should be professional and neutral, past tense, third person (e.g. "The committee agreed...").

The Newcastle Bridge Club Inc.

12 Young Road Broadmeadow 2292

Profit & Loss [With Last Year]

July 2025 To December 2025

	This Year		Last Year	TY - LY
	TY		LY	
Income				
Competitions				
Weekend Club Events	\$806.00		\$746.00	\$60.00
Hosting Events	\$470.00		\$470.00	\$0.00
Memberships				
Subscriptions	\$9,305.00		\$8,900.00	\$405.00
Table Fees				
Monday Supervised Play	\$5,816.00	10.2%	\$4,676.00	\$1,140.00
Monday Afternoon	\$3,846.00	6.7%	\$4,876.00	(\$1,030.00)
Tuesday Morning	\$12,792.00	22.4%	\$10,960.00	\$1,832.00
Tuesday Night	\$4,044.00	7.1%	\$4,398.00	(\$354.00)
Wednesday	\$3,610.00	6.3%	\$3,118.00	\$492.00
Wednesday Supervised Play	\$4,008.00	7.0%	\$0.00	\$4,008.00
Thursday Supervised Play	\$0.00	0.0%	\$428.00	(\$428.00)
Thursday Morning	\$11,556.00	20.3%	\$10,744.00	\$812.00
Friday	\$5,616.00	9.8%	\$5,628.00	(\$12.00)
Saturday	\$5,750.00	10.1%	\$5,532.00	\$218.00
Total Table Fees	\$57,038.00	100.0%	\$50,360.00	\$6,678.00
Board Dealing	\$1,744.00		\$1,065.00	\$679.00
Hall Hire	\$30.00		\$0.00	\$30.00
Lessons	\$670.30		\$100.00	\$570.30
Sundry Receipts	\$14.09		\$680.00	(\$665.91)
Total Income	\$70,077.39		\$62,321.00	\$7,756.39
Expenses				
Accounting Fees	\$990.00		\$935.00	\$55.00
Card Dealing	\$1,072.00		\$872.00	\$200.00
Cleaning	\$8,580.00		\$7,150.00	\$1,430.00
Consumables	\$3,497.84		\$3,404.94	\$92.90
Insurance	\$82.85		\$0.00	\$82.85
General Expense	\$57.00		\$56.00	\$1.00
Printing, Stationery & Postage	\$2,952.89		\$2,305.50	\$647.39
Prize Money	\$2,407.77		\$2,988.00	(\$580.23)
Refreshments	\$2,665.95		\$2,275.54	\$390.41
Socials	\$2,132.48		\$1,902.81	\$229.67
Competitions				
Congress	\$136.62		\$110.86	\$25.76
Other Competitions	\$1,752.40		\$2,034.81	(\$282.41)
Employment Expenses				
Wages				
Office Staff	\$6,920.78		\$6,452.09	\$468.69
Superannuation	\$875.03		\$671.27	\$203.76
Non Playing Director	\$7,900.00		\$5,390.00	\$2,510.00
Fees & Levies				
Affiliation (NSWBA)	\$5,720.00		\$5,300.00	\$420.00
Capitation (ABF)	\$91.20		\$30.00	\$61.20

July 2025 To December 2025				
	This Year		Last Year	TY - LY
	TY		LY	
Masterpoints	\$1,221.39		\$1,507.73	(\$286.34)
Repairs & Mtce				
R&M Air Conditioning	\$220.00		\$163.64	\$56.36
R&M Building	\$795.00		\$39.94	\$755.06
R&M Equipment	\$1,146.48		\$808.65	\$337.83
R&M Grounds	\$231.00		\$264.00	(\$33.00)
Utilities				
Electricity	\$1,252.24		\$1,213.94	\$38.30
Rates - Land / Water	\$6,931.35		\$6,888.49	\$42.86
Telecommunications	\$2,129.44		\$2,092.84	\$36.60
Computer Systems				
Events Calendar	\$170.50		\$170.50	\$0.00
MYOB Esentials	\$72.00		\$72.00	\$0.00
Pianola	\$0.00		\$600.00	(\$600.00)
Depreciation	\$4,500.00		\$2,889.00	\$1,611.00
Loss on disposal of NC assets	\$1,500.00		\$850.00	\$650.00
Total Expenses	\$68,004.21		\$59,439.55	\$8,564.66
Operating Profit	\$2,073.18		\$2,881.45	(\$808.27)
Other Income				
Interest Income	\$3,723.13		\$2,313.40	\$1,409.73
Total Other Income	\$3,723.13		\$2,313.40	\$1,409.73
Net Profit/(Loss)	\$5,796.31		\$5,194.85	\$601.46

Table fees to -		Weeks to	Wkly Ave	Est for Yr
July	11014.00	5	2203	114546
August	20326.00	9	2258	117439
September	31384.00	13	2414	125536
October	39624.00	18	2201	114469
November	48310.00	22	2196	114187
December	57038.00	27	2113	109851
January				
February				
March				
April				
May				
June				
NB Total table fees for the year ended 30th June 2025				104159

Membership at	June 2025	April 2024	April 2023
Home members	274	255	247
Alternate members	33	38	28
Total	307	293	275
June 2025 includes 6 life members			

Newcastle Bridge Club – Treasurer's Report for January 2026 meeting

P&L for 6 months to December 2025 shows a result of \$5796 profit compared to a profit of \$5194 last year. See excel file P&L months of 26 year, sheet DECEMBER 25. Insurance will be payable in January and the quote is \$9946 for the next year, compared to \$7796 last year. I have attached a copy of the brokers email for your information.

An estimate has been made for depreciation at the rate of \$750 per month allowing for the new solar panels and battery installation and likely purchase of new chairs. An allowance has also been made for the loss on disposal of the old solar panels at the rate of \$250 per month. The actual amounts will be processed by the Accountants at year end. There are also some explanations noted in the spreadsheet. Please note that interest of \$1986 was received in December, and \$1329 will be received in January 2026 from our term deposits.

Also see **Table Fees** exercise showing table fees to end of the month; a weekly average; and an estimate for the year. Table fees are up by 13%.

Funds at end of December – cheque account \$12108 Online saver account \$2875 Greater Bank business access account \$792.

Greater Bank Deposit \$63312 for 6 months at 4.15% pa(matures 10th January 2026), and \$95217 for 6 months at 4.15% pa(matures 29th June 2026).

BRIDGE NSW

Webinar: Supporting Club Beginner Lessons 2026. 11th December, 2025.

Introduction: Ben Falkenmire

Bridge NSW is offering:

Promotion Material

- Advertising of lessons on their website
- Templates for promotional material
- Certificate of Course Completion
- Free customisation of flyers (including QR code linking back to Club website).
- Email templates – e.g. Club to members to share with family and friends
- Listing of ideas on how to reach people.

Teacher Resources

- Beginning Lesson Plans.
- Access to online courses – Joan Butts, Bridge NSW

Collegiality

- WhatsApp group of teachers to discuss ideas etc. Current membership of 40.
- 28th January – Webinar for people who want to be teachers.

Online Supervised Lessons.

- These ran on a Sunday afternoon for some time during this year.
- Generally attracted 8/9 tables.
- Analysis of hands – defence as well as Declarer play
- Start again on 8th February.
- (Feedback from people at the meeting was that these were excellent.)

General Discussion.

- Retention rates were an issue in several locations. Issues included:
 - the tension between established club members who enjoyed competitive Bridge and those who wished to play socially. (Need for a whole club approach to welcome new members, mentoring, supervised sessions etc). Need to ensure fun was emphasised.
 - Small numbers not allowing supervised play sessions.
 - People who learnt but were now playing in small groups outside Club
 - Lack of Club venues
 - Finding partners for new players – (one Club had a WhatsApp group organised in which people could seek partners for a session.)
- Attracting new Beginners for lessons.
 - Suggestions including advertising in venues (eg doctor surgeries, schools, shopping centres etc) and community forums (eg U3A).
 - Issues included attracting younger people who were still working.

Review of Teaching Resources on Website

Website Access: *Bridge NSW – Club Resources – For Teachers*

- **General Information:**
 - Teacher Survey
 - Teaching Principles
 - Teaching Tips
 - The First Class

Comment: *These notes provide a very good reference for those Bridge teachers who do not have a background in education. They emphasise the importance of:*

- *social interaction and fun,*
- *consistent organisation,*
- *non-embarrassing questioning technique,*
- *the importance of active learning*
- *and the importance of a slow buildup of knowledge.*

As experienced teachers, Greg and I are already aware of these guidelines.

Some of these tips have already been introduced by us, eg quizzes, emails home, feedback opportunities, vocabulary sheets, use of open hands when first beginning to play. Other tips include breaking up lessons into smaller components and use of mini-bridge hands. We will consider these suggestions.

- **Recommended Course Structure**

- While acknowledging different Bridge bidding systems, Bridge NSW recommends the same system that we teach – 5 Card major opening, 3+ minor opening, 15-17 NT opening, simple stayman, major suit transfers, takeout doubles.
- Differences: they recommend weak 3 bids (not weak 2 bids), negative doubles. Their Beginning Player programs lasts 16 lessons (we have 9) but includes lessons on defence, bidding strong hands, hand evaluation, opening leads. Their lessons also start with playing Notrump hands – we start with bidding and playing suit contracts. They do not introduce bidding until Lesson 4 – we introduce bidding suit contracts in Lesson One.

- **Retention Ideas:** Notes on this aspect include the following. There are others.

- The bridge lessons and play practice comprise only 20% of the task of retaining new members. The next 80% relies on how the club handles the introduction of new players into the club scene.
- What will get the beginners through the first few weeks of club play is friendliness, kindness and encouragement. *Remind other players in the session(s) where you introduce the beginners that the onus is on them to make their new players feel comfortable, welcome and – most importantly – not intimidated. They do need to expect slowness and more noise.*
- Need to reduce time pressure – don't worry if they play fewer boards.
- Mentors etc

- **Bridge Training.com**

- The website refers teachers to this website which enables bridge teachers to create hands and situations which can be distributed to others on order for beginners to practise. I have not yet examined this in any great degree, but a quick glance indicates that this could be an excellent teaching tool.

Other Resources on Bridge NSW Website

- Bridge NSW is attempting to develop a community of Bridge Teachers.
- There are links to other websites and resources, with the opportunity to distribute / promote club developed resources