

**BALLARAT BRIDGE CLUB**

# **Strategic Plan**

## **2019 – 2024**

**(Modified March 2021)**

### **Mission Statement**

To provide opportunities for players at all levels from novice to expert to enjoy the competitive game of Bridge and develop their skills through learning and participation at a well-equipped facility which offers a welcoming environment

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Ballarat Bridge Club (BBC) is the only bridge club in the Ballarat Region. It is affiliated with the Victorian Bridge Association (VBA) and the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF), under whose guidelines it operates. BBC has approximately 120 members (mostly seniors) and offers duplicate sessions over five days each week. It provides a friendly and competitive environment for all players.

We are financially stable and have a skilled membership base. Many members volunteer time and effort to maintain and improve the attributes of our club.

BBC has a core of highly skilled players, directors, teachers and administrators within the membership.

This document aims to create a forward-looking Plan. Because the priorities and environment in which the Club operates will continue to change, it is assumed that this plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure that its strategies are still relevant.

## 1.2 Document Structure

Chapter 2 identifies the general groups that make up the Bridge playing community

Chapter 3 identifies the aims of the BBC

Chapter 4 describes the objectives that the BBC is focusing on that will achieve the Club's aims

Chapter 5 suggests strategies to follow to achieve the club's objectives

Chapter 6 outlines BBC's plan for 2019

# 2. Our members

## 2.1 Introduction

BBC recognises four general groups within the bridge playing population and understands that members have a variety of expectations and that they may change with time

## 2.2 Social Players

The largest cohort of BBC membership

We believe that this group has the following expectations:

- that they will play in a comfortable playing area, which has a positive ambience
- that the needs of senior members will be catered for
- that their progress is recognised by the gaining of green and red master points

- that there will be opportunities for skills to be challenged and improved with intermediate lessons and competitive play
- that they will be supported while establishing rewarding partnerships for their bridge playing sessions
- that the club facilities will be clean, safe and hygienic

## **2.3 Competitive Players**

The members in this group mostly attend the playing sessions that provide the opportunity to compete in a challenging environment. This group includes players who regularly compete in national events and local congresses. As well, many improving players wish to compete against the best BBC has to offer

We believe that this group has the following expectations

- that they will be able to compete in a competitive range of events weekly
- that they will be offered challenging skill development opportunities from sources such as visiting bridge experts, and advanced lessons
- they will receive recognition of achievements in BBC events and events at other bridge clubs

## **2.4 Beginners and Advancers**

BBC aims to conduct two beginner courses each year with a duration of approximately 6 sessions. Each course is followed by a variety of duplicate games as an introduction to club competition

While acknowledging players will progress at different rates support for players in this group will be provided by

- a friendly and welcoming environment
- supervised sessions to continue the learning process
- support for players to establish a partnership with another member
- a regular and attractive program to help players improve; may comprise lessons, guest speakers, mentoring, and support for the development of partnership understandings

## **2.5 Youth Players**

We currently have no youth players but they are important for long term viability of the club

Youth players can be introduced to the game through friends, Bridge playing family, university, sports clubs

## **3. Aims of the Ballarat Bridge Club**

- 3.1 That the Ballarat Bridge Club maintains and develops its programs to ensure ongoing viability**
- 3.2 To fulfil the expectations of current and potential members as described in Chapter 2**
- 3.3 To provide a facility and environment that enables a rewarding bridge playing experience and thus membership stability**
- 3.4 To provide members with bridge skill development opportunities**

## **4. Objectives**

### **4.1. Achieve and maintain a viable membership level**

Maintaining and potentially increasing membership to ensure

- financial viability of Ballarat Bridge Club
- vibrancy and diversity of competition program
- that membership number will implicitly ensure that it is feasible to offer the range of programs needed to satisfy individual differences and expectations

### **4.2 Provide an environment conducive to a satisfactory bridge experience for as many players as possible**

#### **4. 2.1 Physical**

That the members will find the physical facilities

- comfortable
- clean
- safe
- attractive
- suitable parking facility

#### **4. 2.2 Social**

To encourage an enjoyable atmosphere that fosters a bridge playing community spirit

#### **4. 2.3 Bridge playing**

To develop and implement strategies to help all players improve their skills by ensuring:

- a stimulating experience
- recognition of personal differences and respect for the needs of other players
- that program scheduling is suitable for both existing and new members
- To implement a supportive environment that acknowledges that learning Bridge is a process that never stops and is not mastered in a few lessons

### **4.3 Provide internal communication to the members**

Communication is important so members can participate in the Bridge Programs

### **4.4 Review whether current management procedures are optimum for Ballarat Bridge Club**

4.41 Ballarat Bridge Club is currently managed by a central member elected committee, supported by sub-committees and a large number of volunteers. This operation has become progressively more complex in past years with increased activity.

### **4.5 To develop a budget for revenue and a strategic plan for the management of assets**

4.5.1 To ensure the ongoing financial viability of the Ballarat Bridge Club forward planning of revenue, costs, cost increases and asset replacement should be recorded

4.5.2 To ensure Ballarat Bridge Club continues to meet its longer term financial obligations cost increases, asset replacement costs and the purchase of new assets as identified.

## **5. Strategies**

### **5.1 Achieve and maintain a viable membership level**

- Appeal to members to encourage potential members to join
- Promotion of Bridge playing where new players are likely involved eg. Seniors magazines, U3A, sporting clubs, universities, schools
- Determine if the current scheduling of sessions may be deterring potential members eg limited evening opportunities to participate
- Establish a partner matching network
- Development of a youth program
- 'Come and see days'
- Retention of beginner players – particular issues to be identified
- Determine why attrition is occurring - establish an ongoing record for review purposes

## **5.2 Provide an environment conducive to a satisfactory bridge experience for as many players as possible**

### **5.2.1 Physical:**

- **Building and Grounds**

- Ensure the premise is secure
- Upgrade rear toilet area and provide disability access
- Maintain and improve the front garden area
- Examine and investigate new initiatives to improve building facilities, for example solar panels, roof replacement

- **Main Playing Area**

- Paint wall and ceiling
- Monitor quality of heating/cooling/airflow

- **Office and Internal Areas**

- Review office area to cope with the additional demand for board dealing

- **Facilities**

- Identify maintenance and improvements to be included in the financial planning process to be addressed as funds allow and requirements arise
- Planned replacement of items in the kitchens and playing requisites
- Upgrade the computers, sound system and similar equipment
- Plan for rear toilet replacement and general upgrade

### **5.2.2 Social**

Investigate strategies that will improve the playing experience of members.

Include

- Social aspect of club offerings
- Respect for new players
- Consideration for members with special needs
- Table etiquette
- Wearing name badges for new members and visitors

### **5.2.3 Bridge Playing**

- Identify improvement pathways for players
- Plan how to best assist players achieving playing goals
- Provide options for advancers such as formal lessons, supervised play, post hand discussion, organised post session discussions
- Establish a mentor support network
- Promote use of the BBC library
- Determine if there is a cohort of existing and new members that would prefer sessions scheduled at times not currently offered

## **5.3 Provide effective internal communication to the members**

- 5.3.1 Evaluate how effective is the Ballarat Bridge Club committee's communication with the membership
- 5.3.2 Identify the most effective means of communicating with the members.  
Consider: BBC website, program/calendar book, pre-session announcements, notices on notice boards, newsletter, monthly committee meeting minutes

## **5.4 Ensure the administration of the Ballarat Bridge Club assets reflects best practice**

- 5.4.1 Establish and maintain a register of volunteers and the tasks they accept responsibility for; noting the level of support they receive; their involvement in decisions made relative to their roles; training of new volunteers; the number of hours committed to the task

## **5.5 To develop a budget for revenue and a strategic plan for the management of assets**

- 5.5.1 Monitor revenue and expenses to ensure the Ballarat Bridge Club meets its financial obligations
- revenue sources: table fees, membership fees, special events
  - record actual and imminent cost increases
- 5.5.2 Maintain a schedule of planned asset replacement
- 5.5.3 Identify how new expenditure for new assets will affect the budget
- 5.5.4 Manage revenue to ensure funds are accumulated as necessary to service anticipated increased expenditure

## 6. Our future plans

### 6.1 Action for 2019

- 6.1.1 Continue to develop major events - Congress, Festival of Bridge, Ballarat/Bendigo Ashes, Friendly Pairs
- 6.1.2 Continue maintenance and upgrade of facilities – painting of playing room, painting of office and new carpet
- 6.1.3 Implement a Mentor Program to assist new players transition from Beginner Lessons into regular sessions of play
- 6.1.4 Introduce new sessions to widen and improve playing opportunities of members – Social bridge session and Teams Events
- 6.1.5 Develop Publicity and Recruitment strategies to maintain and improve membership – Seniors Magazine and June Open Days
- 6.1.7 Encourage and foster better table etiquette when playing in our regular sessions
- 6.1.8 Continue to provide a range of bridge skill development opportunities