**Congress Secretary Report 2017**

Congress took place on the 7th and 8th of January at the Marrriot V&A hotel.

* There was a good attendance. In the main event there was 73 pairs and 38 teams (the best teams numbers since 2003).30 pairs attended the non-expert events.
* The increased cost of entry did not affect numbers.
* We made a profit on the event for the first time since 2003. (£279)
* We have booked the V&A for next year. (6th and 7th January). The cost for the room has increased to £1700 per day. That is a £200 increase overall. We have no plans to increase entrance fees to the event in 2018.
* We have an EBU licence for 2018 and it is advertised on the Calendar of the EBU website.
* I have asked Sarah Amos to direct again.

**Issues**

**Space**

Because of increased numbers we set out the room with tables at an angle for ease of movement. If we have similar numbers next year we will do this again. If we continue to get higher numbers we should look at other venues in the City Centre.

**Timings**

We have agreed that the Saturday break will be shortened to 2 hours. We will make the Sunday break at 45 minutes, so that players from outside Manchester can catch trains home. On the leaflet we should suggest that players either bring sandwiches or use local shops or the hotel.

Publicity

 The commercially produced leaflet will again be produced.

**Directing**

Our Congress clashes again with the West Midlands Congress in 2018. I have asked Sarah Amos to direct ours. Joan Lewis will do the Saturday non-experts, Graham Winn will do the Sunday Non-experts and Gordon Bickley will be asked to help out for the teams on Sunday.

There were complaints from a number of players in the main final about the slowness and unnecessary complexity of the movement. The TD put this down to using Barometer scoring. We agreed to do away with barometer scoring in the final and have a simpler movement. We will maintain the same format for the teams.

Irene Davies