

A. Background

In the 2012 draft strategic plan, six key result areas (KRA) were identified. One KRA was the Canberra Bridge Club (CBC) building- both the interior and exterior physical premises.

The 2012 draft strategic plan stated:

“The three-year target in this key result area is to “make the club more welcoming by bringing its appearance and facilities into the 21st century”. The club needs to ensure that facilities are disability friendly to cater for our membership, and to make it visually attractive to new members.

It is clear that efforts in this key result area depend heavily on available funds. Therefore, it is important that both required work and improvements are taken into consideration so that the club can plan ahead to achieve the best outcome.”

The plan identified priority areas for development such as an upgrading of the club’s toilets which was completed in 2020. In July 2023 the Committee commenced a process to re-examine priorities for the development of club facilities. A member survey was undertaken in October 2023 regarding possible renovations and improvements to the clubhouse.

B. Member Survey Results

Over 120 suggestions from members were received. The suggestions were grouped and ranked by the suggestion-type about the building or bridge service. Committee members also provided suggestions.

The suggestion types which ranked highest were those that impact on member comfort.

a. Heating/Cooling

There was support for improvement in the club’s heating, cooling and air circulation. Solutions offered included an upgrade of the air-conditioning system, insulation, double glazing and window treatments.

b. Storage

The comments about storage varied. In the main members want more storage for clothing, handbags, umbrellas etc. It was suggested more hanging space and storage cubes were needed. It was also suggested that areas such as the space behind the curtain (foyer) or the kitchenette could be adapted to a cloakroom so the entrance wouldn’t be cluttered with apparel. It was suggested trophy cabinets could be used for storage.

c. Décor

The suggestions in this area include:

- Better seating
- Side tables or storage cubes at playing tables
- Replacing dark coloured joinery
- Mixed views regarding Honour Boards
- Refresh internal paint work
- Mixed views regarding the Jim Murray’s paintings – grouping in the Barry Turner room or returning to the family/replacing with Canberra focused artwork

d. Lighting

There was some support for better lighting (e.g. LED lighting) in playing area. Some comments related to glare (and perceived inadequacy of vertical blinds to control glare).

e. Kitchen and kitchen services/amenities

The majority of the suggestions about the kitchen were not about structural change. The comments received were about the mugs and the need for user friendly access to hot and cold drinks.

Some mentioned a coffee service/barista. The need for a new dishwasher and hot water service were mentioned.

Comments supported existing arrangements for both kitchens but there was a suggestion to make the kitchenette more efficient.

f. External building and grounds

Of the five comments about outdoor areas two suggested electric charging stations, two suggested solar panels and one suggested updating the paint on the external walls.

There was little support from members and members of the Committee for an outdoor seating area.

Committee members noted areas for improvement include:

- Removal of graffiti from the back wall of the building
- Roof repairs
- Solar panels and battery
- Mural on the road-facing side of the building

g. Maintenance

It was suggested the club should engage a qualified engineer to check the building for faults and provide a report on what remedial and structural work is required. It was also suggested that the club should have a sinking fund to cover future maintenance and improvements, i.e. regular painting. There was also support for a paint “refresh” project.

Committee members also supported expenditure on ongoing repairs and maintenance including, as necessary, activities such as roof/gutter repairs, re-painting, replacing carpets, updating lighting, renovating the kitchens, updating the air conditioning/heating, updated furniture, and garden work.

h. Technology

Suggestions for improvements in this area included:

- An integrated computer system to facilitate small sessions in the Olive Lott room and for use with teaching sessions (with a screen);
- A ceiling mounted data projector (integrated);
- Update the televisions in the Barry Turner and Olive Lott rooms including smart technology;
- Technology to support cardless play (i.e. via tablet) including wireless device charging.

i. Sitting area

As noted earlier there was little support for an outdoor seating area, however there was some support for a sitting area possibly in space made available by combining the two kitchens.

j. Other

Other suggestions included:

- Improve entry for motorised/battery powered wheelchairs.
- Improvements to disabled player access.
- Moving from weekly to monthly newsletters.
- Eight suggestions regarding the bridge program including:
 - Two sections – open and intermediate in duplicate sessions (5);
 - Two sections on Wednesdays;
 - A session of social bridge; and
 - Increasing RealBridge options.

On balance there was little/no support for a bar or the CBC obtaining a liquor licence. Some members expressed the view that they think the club is fine as is and expressed concern that refurbishment costs would impact on fees and subsequently adversely impact on attendance and membership.

C. Considerations

The 2023-member survey may be used to develop priorities for premises and services improvement and as input to the revised CBC strategic plan.

Items (detailed in the 2012 strategic plan) which were subject to budget and further consideration, and which appear to be incomplete include:

- Change the front office layout to present a more welcoming face, particularly for people who arrive at the club for the first time. The draft plan stated that it is difficult for the people in the office or the director to acknowledge people who arrive.
- Refurbish the entrance area in order to improve the initial impression for people entering the club.
- Planned replacement of items in the kitchens
- Upgrades to the computers, monitor, sound systems, and similar equipment

These items along with higher ranked items from the CBC member survey could be considered for inclusion in the 2023-24 budget, namely:

- Upgrade ducted zoned air-conditioning with timing system for year-round comfort. Offset power costs with use of solar panels and battery.
- Replacement of strip lights with LED-lights – provided it would increase the light intensity without increasing energy costs.
- Update dark joinery in Barry Turner room with consideration of the use of bookshelves and Trophy cabinets.
- Purchase - Cups/Mugs Soap dispensers, Flyer display stand, Umbrella tub and storage to reduce clutter.

Urgent building repair/maintenance items, for example roof repairs should also be considered for completion in the 2023-24 financial year.

Consideration may be given for the 2024-5 financial year to:

- Combining both kitchens and best use of kitchenette space i.e., sitting area, cloak room.
- Computer/Audio Visual systems.
- Other improvements to internal décor.