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Asian Hornet nest located in late September 2017 near Woolacombe in North Devon
Courtesy of the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
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From APHA Eastern Region Annual Report - Page 16

Monthly Magazine of the Essex Beekeepers’ Association

Furthering the Craft of Beekeeping in Essex
Registered Charity number 1031419

www.ebka.org

Issue No. 641 May 2018
### Divisional Meetings - May and June 2018

#### Meetings in May:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 May</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Romford</td>
<td>Fun with Pollen Traps - Bob Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park RM2 5EL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 May</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Harlow</td>
<td>Queen rearing with Ted Gradosielski. Kings Church, Red Willow, Harlow CM19 5PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 May</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Saffron Walden</td>
<td>Swarm Collection - Wimbish CB10 2UY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 May</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Dengie 100 &amp; Maldon</td>
<td>Apriary meeting - Carters Apiary, Maldon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 May</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Saffron Walden</td>
<td>Managing your apiary - Great Easton CM6 2HD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Braintree</td>
<td>Essex Young Farmers Show, Boyton Hall, Roxywell CM1 4LT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Epping Forest</td>
<td>Ley Lines. Roger Patterson. Possible BBQ too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>Bumble Bees - John Taylor. The Link, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford CM1 2XB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 May</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Southend</td>
<td>Beekeeping Mistakes - Clive de Bruyn. W.I. Hall, Bellingham lane, Rayleigh SS6 7ED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 May</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Braintree</td>
<td>Apriary Meeting - Littley Green. Telephone Stuart Mitson 01376 340 683</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would each Division ensure that their meeting details - topic, venue and time are notified to the editor at dsmye@lineone.net by the 4th of the month so that a comprehensive list is available to members.

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### WHO'S WHO & HOW TO CONTACT THEM

#### EBKA Trustees:
- **President of EBKA**: Pat Allen  
  **Hon CLM**
- **Chairman**: Ian Nichols  
  **Secretary**: Chad Colby-Blake  
  **Treasurer**: Tom Keeper  
  **EBKA Trustees**: Chad Colby-Blake  
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  - **Chelmsford**: James Curtis 07940 757 831  
  - **Colchester**: Morag Chase 01206 522 576  
  - **D.H. & Maldon**: Carlie Mayes 07979 862 952  
  - **Harlow**: Nick Holmes 07730 735 752  
  - **Epping Forest**: Robin Harman 07971 237 312  
  - **Saffron Walden**: Vanessa Wilkinson 01799 542 337  
  - **Southend**: Pat Holden 01702 477 592  
  - **Braintree**: Jan French  
  - **Chelmsford**: James Curtis  
  - **Colchester**: Morag Chase  
  - **D.H. & Maldon**: Carlie Mayes  
  - **Harlow**: Nick Holmes  
  - **Epping Forest**: Robin Harman  
  - **Saffron Walden**: Vanessa Wilkinson  
  - **Southend**: Pat Holden  

#### EBKA Education Secretary:
- **Jane Ridler**: Old Barn House, 36 Walden Road, Seward End, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2LF 01799 218 023 jane.ridler@uwclub.net

#### EBKA Examinations Secretary:
- **Pat Allen**: 8 Franks Cottages, St Mary’s Lane, Upminster, Essex RM14 3NU 01708 220 897 pat.allen7@icloud.com

#### Web Site:
- **Nicholas Holmes**: webmaster@essexbeekeepers.com

#### Printed by Streamset, 12 Rose Way, Purdeys Industrial Estate, Rochford, Essex SS4 1LY

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- **Editor**: David Smye, email: dsmye@lineone.net, tel. 07710 197 078
- **Advertising**: Jean Smye, email: jsmye@sky.com, tel. 07731 856 361
- **Mailing Secretary**: Michael Elliott, email: michaelelliott55@sky.com

#### Regional Bee Inspectors for EBKA Region:
- **Epping Forest and Romford Divisions (excluding Brentwood)**:  
  Peter Folge peter.folge@apha.gsi.gov.uk, tel. 07775 119 433
  Keith Morgan keith.morgan@apha.gsi.gov.uk, tel. 01485 520 838 or 07919 004 215
The Italian experience does suggest that early detection and immediate action before SHB becomes established may enable a small localised outbreak to be eradicated and once again I would encourage all beekeepers to make themselves aware of the signs of SHB and monitoring techniques as described in the NBU leaflet, ‘The Small Hive Beetle – a serious threat to European Apiculture’. See the dedicated pages for SHB on BeeBase http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=125 for links to the leaflet, a video and much more detailed information.

There is also a new Fact Sheet on Beebase ‘Contingency Planning Procedures’ which covers Small Hive Beetle, Tropilaelaps and Asian Hornet http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=167.

Varroacides

It is perhaps worth mentioning here that there have been some additions recently to the Varroa treatments available in the UK. That list of those registered and approved for use by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is available on their web site (http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/ProductInformationDatabase/Default.aspx) together with the ‘Summary of Product Characteristics’ giving full details of use. For the full list select ‘Bees’ on the dropdown list of Species in the product search link.

Meetings in June:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 June</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>Southend</td>
<td>Honey Extraction + plant exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8.00pm</td>
<td>Harlow</td>
<td>The importance of Drones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>Romford</td>
<td>Top Bar Hives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 June</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>Saffron Walden</td>
<td>Showing your honey - tips for success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 June</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
<td>Epping Forest</td>
<td>Apiary visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 June</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>Drone laying Queens &amp; laying workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 June</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>6.00pm</td>
<td>Dengie 100 &amp; Maldon</td>
<td>Apiary meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 June</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>10 - 4</td>
<td>County Event</td>
<td>EBKA Bee Health Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 June</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>3.00pm</td>
<td>Braintree</td>
<td>Apiary meeting &amp; gardens tour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Bee Shed

Approved National Bee Supplies Stockist and Distributor
A Range of Frames and Foundation
Hives and Hive Parts, Tools and Equipment
Open by Appointment: Please call Wendy on 07764 609 803 or Email: beeshed@btinternet.com
Facebook: The Bee Shed Stock
Meepshole, Great Prestons Lane, Stock, Essex CM4 9RL
The theme of our conference is the ways in which bees enrich our lives and make a difference to our world. Bees promote biodiversity by providing essential pollination for a wide range of crops. Honey is becoming a powerful new weapon in the battle against hospital-acquired infections being around bees can raise a person's self-esteem and the educational benefits are now being recognised. Let's learn more from our three speakers.

Speakers:

Bunny Campione, Daws Hall Trust
Many of you will know Bunny from the Antiques Roadshow, but you may not be aware that she is a fellow beekeeper.

Dr. Rowena Jenkins, Swansea University Medical School, Department of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases.
Rowena is a lecturer in microbiology.

Chris Newenham, Managing Director, Wilkin & Sons Ltd
Chris will be speaking about the importance of bees as pollinators and the collaboration between beekeepers and agriculturists.

Date and venue:
Saturday 3rd November 2018
10 - 4pm
Chelmsford City Racecourse
Great Leights, CM3 1QP

Tickets £25
- Registration and view trade stands from 9am
- Three excellent speakers
- Coffee and Danish pastries on arrival.
- Buffet lunch
- Afternoon tea and cakes
- Raffle and trade stands

Payment:

By cheque payable to:
EBKA Braintree Division.
Send to: Neil Reeve, Hilly Ley, High Easter,
Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 4QZ

BACS Transfer:
Sort code 20-97-40 Account number
80089230
Reference EBKA Conference.
Send an email to neil.reeve@btinternet.com to advise transfer has been made and you will receive an e-ticket by return.

Cash:
Cash to Braintree Committee members when visiting Divisional meetings (a ticket will be given immediately)

EBKA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018
Hosted by Braintree Beekeeping Association

‘Bees and Well Being’

Isles. In Jersey a primary nest was discovered in a bee hive quite early in the year, several more nests in various stages of development have been found there and were destroyed throughout the season.

Many reports of possible sightings in the UK have been received by the Non-Native Species Secretariat (NNSS) and the NBU during the year. However, only one in late September near Woolacombe in North Devon was identified as an Asian Hornet. Once a positive confirmation was made, the NBU Contingency Plan was activated and Bee Inspectors deployed in the area. Aided by lessons learned last year during the outbreak in Tetbury, the nest was quickly discovered and destroyed. The nest wasn’t in a typical position, high up in a tree as in Tetbury, but hidden within a tall hedge [see cover photograph]. Cutting away the cover revealed a nest of about 50cms diameter. Surveillance in the area after destruction of the nest has shown no further hornet activity.

As part of our preparation for any incursion of an exotic threat e.g. SHB, Tropilaelaps or Asian Hornet, the Bee Inspectorate carry out contingency exercises. In 2017 we ran such an exercise in the Leicestershire area which lasted five days. Time was spent contacting beekeepers, arranging time slots and then sending out teams of Inspectors to carry out Exotic Pest Inspections on the colonies within a 15km radius of the initial, fictitious, incursion. The exercise was a success and it highlighted areas the inspectorate needs to concentrate on but also highlighted the importance, to the success of these situations, of beekeepers having their apiaries registered and up to date on BeeBase. If we are to stand any chance of eliminating the pest, we need full cooperation from all beekeepers.

As part of our surveillance for exotic threats we have set up a number of sentinel apiaries around the region. During the winter I will be reviewing our current sites and looking to increase the number, especially around the potential areas where we think an incursion may occur. So I will be looking for any beekeepers who may be interested in monitoring their hives and sending in floor samples, with some paperwork, twice a year. Please get in touch with either me at keith.morgan@apha.gsi.gov.uk or the seasonal bee Inspectors [listed at page 19 of this magazine] if you are willing to help.

Small Hive beetle

At the time of writing there have been a total of just 10 apiaries reported positive for Small Hive Beetle (SHB) in the province of Reggio Di Calabria in the region of Calabria, southern Italy. Two of these were in fact feral colonies and 5 others were sentinel apiaries set up by the authorities.

Surveillance inspections in Sicily (326 apiaries) and in the more northern regions of Cosenza, Crotone and Catanzaro (318 apiaries) have all been clear. This indicates that the secondary outbreaks in Sicily in 2014 and Cosenza last year (the latter due to the illegal movement of colonies) may have been eradicated.

Small Hive beetle
Foulbrood Diseases and Inspection Statistics for the Eastern Region in 2017

5,295 colonies were inspected and 1,053 apiary visits made within the region, more than last year [4,109 colonies and 753 Apiaries]

EFB in 2017:
1 case in Dedham, Essex, 2 in Cambridgeshire, 6 in Norfolk and 3 in Suffolk.

AFB in 2017:
None in Essex, Cambridgeshire or Norfolk. 4 in Suffolk.

Further details and mapping can be found on the disease incidence pages of Bee-Base at www.nationalbeeunit.com. It is recommended that these are checked regularly by beekeepers to see if there is any foulbrood disease close by their own apiary sites.

Update on Asian hornet and Small Hive Beetle in Europe

Early this year surveillance for the Asian Hornet, Vespa velutina, was resumed and enhanced trapping was carried out in Gloucestershire and North Somerset following last year’s discovery and destruction of a nest at Tetbury and individual hornets found in North Somerset.

No further hornets have been found in those areas but an insect caught flying inside a large distribution warehouse near Glasgow, Scotland in March 2017 was confirmed as an Asian Hornet. It can only be assumed that this hornet had travelled all the way from southern Europe inside a container and flew out into the warehouse when goods were unloaded. This is a stark reminder that Asian Hornet (and other exotic pests) could arrive almost anywhere in the UK given the vast volume of traffic and goods arriving in the UK from across the channel and other countries where exotic pests are endemic.

Further sightings of Asian Hornets have been confirmed this year on the Channel Isles.

Extracts from the Eastern Region Annual Report 2017

National Bee Unit

Essex Beekeepers’ Association
Minutes of the 138th Annual General meeting
held on
Saturday 24th March 2018
in room E06, Writtle College, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3RP

These minutes will be considered correct if no objection is raised in writing or by email to the General Secretary before Thursday 31st May 2018. Any point challenged will be brought before the next meeting for correction of the record.

Presiding Officer: Ian Milligan (Colchester Division)
Also present: As Attendance List, 40 people signed in.

A period of silence was observed to remember our fellow beekeepers who had died during the past year.

1 Apologies for absence were received from Mike & Sabina Barke, Barbara & Peter Dalby, Jan French, Pat Holden, David Leamonth, David McCorkindale, Danny Nicholl, Jane Ridler, Barbara Sharp, Brian Spencer, Pauline & David Tidmas.

2 The Minutes of the 137th AGM had been published in The Essex Beekeeper for review by members. No challenges to the accuracy had been received so the minutes were signed by the Presiding Officer as a true record.

3 The Report from the CEC Chairman was published in the March 2018 issue of The Essex Beekeeper and a copy was in the AGM pack distributed to members present.

4 General Treasurer’s Report and Approval of the 2017 Accounts
- Copies of the examined accounts were in the AGM pack.
- The General Treasurer said he had not found it easy getting to grips with the job in his first year and he was surprised to find that not all divisions were using the same accounts template. He mentioned the Treasurer Training Day that was held recently and this should help to get better alignment between divisions’ and EBKA central accounts.
- EBKA had run a deficit in the last three years, and while there had been a good reason for reducing the reserves, they were now no longer excessive. The reserves need to be adequate to cover any cash flow problems that might arise, for instance, when capitation has to be paid to BBKA but the income has not yet been received from divisions. The figure of £18,000 has been set and the Treasurer is now reporting to CEC on a cash flow basis to give a clearer picture. Divisions’ accounts are all healthy, but this money is not available to EBKA central accounts.
• Gift Aid has been claimed and is shown in the accounts to give a truer picture although this money has not yet been received from HMRC.

• There was once again a small deficit in 2017, which is why the Trustees have proposed an increase to the subscription for January 2019.

The accounts were approved nem con and the General Treasurer was thanked for his hard work.

5 Written reports from other members of the Central Executive Committee

• The General Secretary’s report was in the AGM pack.

• The Education Secretary’s report was in the AGM pack. Note a correction: The Basic Preparation Training Day will be on Saturday 26th May 2018 (wrong day of the week given previously).

• The Examinations Secretary’s report was in the AGM pack. Further to this, the Exams Secretary said that all 12 of the candidates booked for modules that morning had attended.

6 Election of County Officers (Trustees)

CEC Chairman: Ian Nichols was willing to continue (1 year left of maximum term) and was re-elected nem con

Proposed Pádraig Floyd, seconded Jim McNeill.

General Treasurer: Tom Keeper was willing to continue (3 years left of maximum term) and was re-elected nem con

Proposed Ian Nichols, seconded Pat Allen.

General Secretary: Michael Webb was standing down having come to the end of his term. After some persuasion, Chad Colby-Blake agreed to take on the post for one year.

Proposed by Pádraig Floyd, seconded by Nick Holmes and elected nem con.

There was a vote of thanks to Michael for his work.

7 Notification of the 2018 Divisional Voting Members (Trustees) and 2019 Presiding Officer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Braintree</td>
<td>Stuart Mitson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>Jan Tutton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colchester</td>
<td>Tony Rand</td>
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<tr>
<td>DH &amp; Maldon</td>
<td>Kate Tuerena</td>
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<tr>
<td>Epping Forest</td>
<td>Don McHale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harlow</td>
<td>Nick Holmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romford</td>
<td>Paul Wiltshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saffron Walden</td>
<td>Vanessa Wilkinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southend</td>
<td>Jean Smye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 2019 Presiding Officer will be Tony Yeats of Saffron Walden Division.

and they had drawn out ¾ of the brood box in the 3 days, so they were not fed. Their temperament was also excellent, and they were easy to handle.

Two weeks later the colony was inspected, eggs and healthy larvae where observed and with the aid of my wife, we transferred the colony into a poly hive. During the transfer we identified the queen. Now we were expecting it to be a little tricky finding the queen as it was a large swarm. In the end the queen was very quickly spotted with the aid of a bright yellow paint marking on her. I had read that getting a ready marked queen was a kind of “holy grail” but we had managed it.

The colony is, touch wood, doing fine and pollen was observed being carried in during mid-February. I am writing this as the “beast from the east” cold snap in late February 2018 is hitting us, so fingers crossed. All in all, a worthwhile experiment, very tempting to try again this year but that said, we have all the colonies we want.

Watch Out for Wax Moths

This article was first published in Country Life magazine, August 1944 and is a timely reminder that we should be checking any stored comb for trouble!

“The moth settles for a second on the alighting board and is immediately chivvied off by a sentry. She then flutters about the face of the hive and settles on it at a distance of about nine or ten inches from the entrance. A bee sentry has been watching her fluttering and alighting and pursues her up the face of the hive. The moth flutters quickly down again to the entrance and slips in. She has led the sentry from her post!

Once inside the hive, the moth must work with extraordinary rapidity. She makes straight for a far corner of the hive to find an unwatched nook. She is exceedingly nimble on her feet, although comparatively slow in the air. Once tucked away in the corner in a less frequented entrance, the moth then flutters about the face of the hive and settles on it at a distance of about nine or ten inches from the entrance. A bee sentry has been watching her fluttering and alighting and pursues her up the face of the hive. The moth flutters quickly down again to the entrance and slips in. She has led the sentry from her post!

This terrible marauder has developed a technique in self-defence, which no doubt renders life supportable and perhaps enjoyable, even in a hive of bees which, of course, is its natural home. Bees fly at it in a paroxysm of rage whenever they see it. But it has an armour-plated head impervious to stings and the rest of its repulsive body is covered with a thick layer of web which apparently it spins like a spider. Thus armed, it attacks wax and brood and young bees and honey, growing to a length of an inch or more and getting fatter and fatter, and even boring holes in the side of the hive. The mystery to me is how the young grub covers its fat little body in time to protect itself, for bees never hesitate when they see one of these crawling horrors; they pounce and try to sting. What a life! To pass the greater part of one’s existence loosely surrounded by twenty or thirty thousand remorseless enemies.

Even the last metamorphosis of the creature must be fraught with danger. Presumably the grub eventually spins its web around itself and becomes a moth, like a respectable silkworm. But even then it has to leave the hive, a difficult and dangerous exit.”

(Modified) Guildford BKA - via eBees
After reading a good number of books and forums, I came across the idea of bait hives. It seems to me, quite a poetic idea of a colony selecting my hive as home. As an urban beekeeper, it also provides a service by housing a swarm that would otherwise, most probably, select a home in the most inconvenient of places.

From my research I concluded that many people disagree with bait hives, yet the reasons given appear to be risk based and no greater than taking in a colony from a swarm collector i.e. disease, an aggressive streak, its own risk of a large quantity of bees entering the garden possibly annoying neighbours amongst others.

I have an old national hive which is fully serviceable and benefitting from a few decades of bee use, had a dash of resultant aroma. I came across as many articles debating optimal bait hive positioning as stories of bees setting up home in compost bins, empty hives and sheds, that I concluded they are not necessarily fussy.

I decided to set up my old hive at the bottom of the garden near to my other colony on a standard single hive stand; I do not have the luxury of another apiary to use as a quarantine area which would be best practice. Three already drawn, old brood frames were placed at the front of the hive orientated to the warm way. The hive was placed facing roughly south west. The only other addition was a couple of drops of Lemon Grass oil from Holland & Barrett inside and on the landing board. My trigger for setting up the bait hive was a number of bees getting trapped in the house over a few days which to me, suggested scout bees exploring as I never normally experience this; there is also a feral colony just over 300 meters away.

Wow! In the evening the hive was given a full complement of fresh undrawn foundation. My plan was to leave the colony at least 3 days before feeding so they would use up any stores they brought with them and thereby reduce the potential for diseased honey being stored in the new comb. There was a good nectar flow on the front of the hive and after a closer inspection, I could see them all walking in.

After a busy morning, about 4 days from installation, I inspected the bait hive at roughly 14:00hrs. Coming around the garden shed I was amazed to find a swarm on the front of the hive and after a closer inspection, I could see them all walking in. Wow! In the evening the hive was given a full complement of fresh undrawn foundation. My plan was to leave the colony at least 3 days before feeding so they would use up any stores they brought with them and thereby reduce the potential for diseased honey being stored in the new comb. There was a good nectar flow on the front of the hive and after a closer inspection, I could see them all walking in.
Dual Membership would be changed to Registered Member and Partner Member

Single Membership would be renamed Registered Member

Group Membership would be dropped (in reality it is Single Membership by another name).

EBKA Life Membership categories would remain unchanged; Junior and Associate categories would be unaffected. There would be no change in benefits or costs to members.

Pat Allen, Membership Secretary, spoke to clarify that Group membership does not mean group insurance, only the named representative is the registered member and has the insurance. Jim McNeill pointed out that also, at a show the group cannot enter, only the named representative. Nick Holmes asked if the registered person leaves and is replaced by another, would there need to be a fresh registration and payment? Pat said it is possible to change the name of the representative without making a new registration. Bob Manning suggested that groups could get their own insurance. Tom Keeper said it was dual memberships that cause the most problems for a treasurer. After further discussion, it was agreed to vote on the proposal as it stood but omitting the paragraph referring to Group Membership. (Group Membership was referred back to the CEC for further consideration.)

Proposed Neil Reeve, seconded Pádraig Floyd. For:19; against:5.

11.2 The full wording of this proposition was published in the March 2018 issue of The Essex Beekeeper and a copy was in the AGM pack. The essence of it is to adopt a method of keeping the subscription in line with inflation with small increases, thus avoiding the recurring deficit in the EBKA accounts or having to bring in a big jump in one year.

Tom Keeper, General Treasurer, spoke to explain why rounding to the nearest 20p was proposed. If 50p or £1 was used for rounding, then it is unlikely that the subscription would ever be increased as inflation is so low. After some discussion it was agreed to vote on the proposition as it stood. Proposed Tom Keeper, seconded Pat Allen. There was one abstention, otherwise passed nem con.

12 Report of the Governance Sub Committee

Ted Gradosielski, Chair of the Sub Committee, spoke of its work. The Sub Committee was formed by the CEC over a year ago. The report was not available at the AGM but can be provided to interested parties. The work of the Sub Committee is to prepare draft policy documents for EBKA.

EBKA is regulated with rules (last amended in 2016) but is not a corporate body. With our current structure the Trustees are personally liable in law but they are covered by indemnity insurance. EBKA must also comply with new Charity Commission rules. This means we need a set of policies a budget. Thankfully, it’s not the end of the world and you can bee-keep without using a hammer and nails and instead buy everything readymade - only it’s a costly way to proceed and there is never a bottomless pot of gold, but you may just need to have deeper pockets than your peers.

Not having basic skills or know-how has made beekeeping very difficult for me but where there is a will, there is a way. I have since learnt many new skills and know the difference between a jigsaw and a jigsaw! I have made up 50 odd brood frames, brood boxes and supers and put together my own homemade version of a steam wax extractor to date. I have gained a few more grey hairs in the process but hope to have increased my own cranial grey matter.

I went through the art of keeping bees, in reverse. Most of you will buy ONE small nucleus colony or take in a swarm and watch it grow. I bought five strong colonies and have had to watch one diminish.

Honey extraction will appear much later in your timeline but this task was one of the first things I had to do and even though this was comprehensively covered in the theory, I felt I needed to watch someone do it from start to finish (from setting up to clearing up) before going solo. This is when I found visiting other groups within EBKA to have immense value. After getting to know some of the members from another division, I was invited to attend a demonstration on it, so, when it came to extracting my own honey, I was more than prepared to go ahead with it.

Why haven’t I given up?

The bug has bitten (I wanted to say the bee has stung but it just doesn’t have the same connotation!). When I am with the bees, I am struck with awe with the way they communicate their find through the waggle dances; the way they defend their colony, selflessly sacrificing themselves for the survival of their own gene pool and showing me how a cohesive society behaves and prospers.

If I catch them right and handle them carefully they are a joy to watch and handle. I am still slow during inspections but that keeps us both calm. Calm bees are happy bees and I am happy to be sting free (on many occasions but not all). I feel we need to look after our pollinators and not just our bees but also butterflies and dare I say it, wasps, or we could end up having to hand pollinate like they do in other parts of the world. I like to think I am doing my bit for the planet in nurturing honeybees and that my reward is their reluctant offer of a little sweet treat for me.
So, it all starts back in July 2016, just after a couple of months of finishing the practical elements to the beekeeping course, I was given the chance to look after some colonies for a beekeeper who had developed an anaphylactic reaction to bee venom and was advised by his doctor to give up the hobby. He had 5 colonies tucked away in a sheltered area and had put them up for sale. Originally, I think the plan was to have three people from the beginners course to look after the colonies but for various reasons, the other two didn’t continue with beekeeping.

So, I guess, it was down to me to look after them the best I could with the help and support of various longstanding beekeepers. Needless to say, reading about the care of bees is one thing but for me, to be faced with tens of thousands of bees ON MY OWN and in my face, was quite another matter. As panic set in at that instant, everything I had learnt just disappeared in the puff of smoke I had going from my smoker. Why couldn’t I see eggs and where was the queen? Is there a Queen? OMG is she dead? Have I…… killed her? I would lift my spirits prior to each visit with renewed positivity, only to have my heart sink on closing up hive after hive. I felt that I was failing fast as a nominated caretaker and feared that I would be sacked! It was an out apiary and I was continually forgetting to take things along with me – pen, paper and notes on one occasion, a hive tool on another – and to tell you the truth, I honestly thought about giving it all up - jacking it all in. I had bees on the brain last thing before sleep and first thing on waking. The lack of sleep was seriously starting to affect my memory and performance. It was so bad that on occasions, I would make lists but misplace them; on inspections of the frames I would forget what I saw on the one before last and generally just get in a muddle to the point that my records weren’t as accurate as it should have been.

By late August, there were still no buyers. I was by now starting to get to grips with the routine inspections; it helped that the bee population in the colonies were reducing and to my relief, I was able to see eggs and queens. Finally looking after bees was beginning to become enjoyable but the whole out apiary thing was hard and just wasn’t for me. I thought I would do a much better job if I had them in my back garden and so I offered to buy all 5. Looking back, I must have been possessed at the time. I purchased everything from the colonies and hives to even his buckets and old marking pens with and without ink. I think my thinking was, “I am not sure what I am really doing but if I buy everything that the present owner holds - lock, stock and barrel - then at least I would have what I need to hand with which I could just muddle through”.

Let me start this paragraph by saying that my practical skills were non-existent (notice the past tense). I was the sort to stress then fail at anything that involved making or drawing things as a youngster. I couldn’t even make a nicely round, well risen chapati for the first 10 odd years of married life. I still won’t put up picture frames - best left to the professionals! I still get anxious whenever I consider having to make anything and I do admire carpenters, engineers and even DIY enthusiasts who fashion something out of nothing. I used to have endless, sleepless nights fretting over the prospect of making something and recycling equipment as I was on (Safeguarding, Data Protection, etc) and over the next year the Sub Committee will be putting together draft policies for consideration by the Trustees.

Rule changes will be needed, for which an EGM will be held. In drawing up these draft policies, advantage is being taken of templates available.

13 Conference 2017 Report: given by Ian Milligan

- Held at the Holiday Inn at Eight Ash Green, with 90 people attending.
- Martin Bencsik gave a fascinating talk on bee communication through resonance on wax and his recording of it was surely a first.
- Margaret Ginnman spoke about the Bee Farmers’ Apprentice Scheme which is proving successful. This is backed by the Wax Chandlers, coincidentally the source of our speaker today.
- Norman Carreck’s talk was a roam through time of publications on beekeeping and the future of IBRA.
- The buffet was excellent, as was the raffle (though embarrassment for Ian whose ticket was first out of the hat).

14 Conference 2018 Preview: given by Pat Rowland

- The Conference will be hosted by Braintree Division, on Saturday 3rd November 2018, at Chelmsford City Racecourse.
- The theme will be “Bees and Wellbeing”.
- Speakers will be Bunny Campione (Daws Hall Trust), Dr Rowena Jenkins (Dept of Microbiology & Infectious Diseases, Swansea Univ Medical School), and Chris Newenham, Managing Director, Wilkins & Sons Ltd.
- Price £25 her head.

15 Installation of 2018 Presiding Officer

Pat Rowland, Chair of Braintree Division, will be Presiding Officer for 2018. Pat read from the Book of Commemoration.

———- This concluded the AGM business. ————

Presentation by Chad Colby-Blake

Following the AGM there was a short presentation by Chad Colby-Blake, a member of the EBKA Governance Sub Committee, about the General Data Protection Requirement (GDPR) which comes into effect on 25th May 2018. This presentation was a shortened version of that given at the recent Trustee & Treasurer Training Day. Chad concentrated on personal data and explained how the GDPR will affect how EBKA collects personal data, processes it, and disposes of it.
We were running behind schedule at this stage, but Chad made sure his message was clear and complete because, as was pointed out by Mary McCulloch, this matter affects the whole of EBKA and we have no choice but to comply with the GDPR.

--- Break for refreshments kindly provided by Braintree Division ---

Presentation of Awards

BBKA and EBKA certificates were given out by the EBKA President, Pat Allen.

Recipients were: Jan French, Tom Geddes, Christine Poerschke, David Mallindine, Tom Keeper, Vanessa Wilkinson, Paul Abbott.

(Certificates for absentees were collected by an attendee from their division.)

Talk by Peter Tompkins

Deputy Master of the Wax Chandlers Company

Peter told us that the Wax Chandlers have been in existence and on the same site in Gresham Street in the City since the sixteenth century. The current building is the sixth, the previous ones having been lost to the Great Fire of London, bombing, and deterioration.

He mentioned many of the other Livery Companies and their place numbers in the ‘hierarchy’, and explained the derivation of the expressions ‘Hallmark’ (the assay mark is put on at Goldsmiths Hall) and ‘at sixes and sevens’ (two Livery Companies dispute their position, so they swap year to year, between 6 and 7).

The Wax Chandlers Company does much charity work supporting projects helping young people, and offers prizes, sponsors the National Honey Show, and much more. The Hall is used for meetings and many dinners throughout the year. Peter said that visitors are welcome and, if there is nothing else going on, the Beadle is happy to show visitors around the Hall.

--- The meeting finished at approximately 5.15pm. ---

"Due to a member of my family being taken ill the day before the 2018 AGM, I was unable to attend and I would just like to offer my sincere thanks to Pat Allen who, at very short notice, acted as secretary at the meeting. When I contacted her, Pat had no hesitation in taking on this role in spite of acting as the invigilator during the morning of the AGM for those members taking their Module exams. I understand that Pat also did a really good job at the AGM as our President handing out the certificates for those successful in their exams. Well done Pat!

The agenda papers, including the Governance Report, can be viewed on the EBKA Website.

Michael Webb"

The Trials and Tribulations of my First Year at Beekeeping

(2016-2017)

Neeta Patel

Southend-on-Sea & District Division

What would you say the difference is between beekeeping and pregnancy?

You will at some stage in life decide that you want a baby (or as beekeepers, ONE colony of bees) but you could end up with more. You will talk with and listen to experienced mums (beekeepers) who have been through it; you read books about it; you watch You-tube videos and Google search various articles pertaining to the nurturing, the health and the welfare of the baby (bees). You attend the pre- and post-natal classes (the monthly bee association meetings and courses).

You then go on to have a baby and that’s when life changes. I think it’s the same with beekeeping. In actual fact, after a year of keeping bees, I think there are more similarities than differences.

In my case, I started off the motions in the right way: I decided I wanted bees; signed up for the course and made sure I attended every session; I started to dip in and out of various books; watched online videos and researched various topics using good old Google. I had resolutely decided that I wasn’t going to jump in straight away, for at least a season or two but to continue to attend the monthly meetings; listen, learn and perhaps befriend someone who was happy for me to shadow them just until I gained enough confidence to go it alone………

"In proving foresight may be vain: The best laid schemes of mice and men (bee and woman) Go often askew, And leave us nothing but grief and pain, For promised joy!

From an extract by Robert Burns

To a Mouse, on Turning Her Up in Her Nest With the Plough

November, 1785

The well best plan did not involve having one ‘baby’, nor twins or triplets - but quintuplets, and then some with the temperament of teenage tendencies.

I remember two of my mentors saying to me (after my purchase!) about how they were chased away down the slope of rough terrain by grumpy, irate bees.