



Essex Beekeepers' Association

Minutes of the 140th Annual General Meeting

Saturday 7 March 2020

Writtle College, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3RP

*These minutes will be considered correct if no objection is raised in writing
or by email before Saturday 31st May 2020.
Any point challenged will be brought before the next meeting for amendment/
correction of the record.*

Presiding Officer: Richard Ridler (Saffron Walden Division)

Also present: As Attendance List.

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies from absence were received from: Katy Langley, Salma Attan, Ted Gradosielski (Epping); Jane Abbott, Jeff Spavin (Southend); Sue Richards (Romford); Linda Yeats, Tony Yeats (Saffron Walden); Antony Stark (Braintree); Barbara Sharpe (Colchester); Steven Fairchild, Brian Spencer (Chelmsford).

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the 139th 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. Report of the Chair of the Central Executive Committee (CEC)

The CEC Chair (Jane Ridler) had published her report for members in the March issue of *The Essex Beekeeper*. An appropriately modified version will be submitted to the Charity Commission. It had been a year of pleasing progress at the CEC and she thanked the many people who had contributed. Highlights of the year included:

- introduction of the eR2 system and its use for membership renewals;
- the move to electronic distribution of *The Essex Beekeeper*, giving divisions the option to print out the magazine for members if they prefer. Up-to-date news bulletins as email shots are planned this year.
- good progress on Governance - seven established Policies are available, which are on a cycle of review. The implications of change of EBKA status to a CIO would be addressed in due course.

The Chair thanked those retiring from their roles with EBKA: Ann Cushion and Michael Elliot for their work on *The Essex Beekeeper*; Vernon Amor, Trustee for Southend; Pauline Tidmas, Honey Show Secretary; and Paras Shah, General Treasurer. She also warmly thanked Pat Allen, who is retiring as President. Pat has held many roles within EBKA and has now offered to become our General Treasurer. Jean Smye has also fulfilled many roles within the CEC and contributed to EBKA over the years. She would be well qualified to be a new President.

Given that one key aim of EBKA is to further the craft of beekeeping, the Chair said it was disappointing that we have no Education Secretary. She encouraged interested members to get together to support Education within the County. The annual Eastern Region Forum is a recommended learning resource and she will inform members when she has a date for the event.

4. General Treasurer's Report & Approval of the 2019 Accounts

The General Treasurer (Paras Shah) offered to send his report to Members. The approved accounts were displayed in Powerpoint. Any questions about the accounts can be addressed to him.

The overall income of EBKA last year was about £35,691 (Group £109,037). By ceasing to print the magazine, we will save approx £4,000 going forward. Given the income of the Association, the Treasurer encouraged members to suggest ways of applying these funds to beekeeping.

EBKA benefits from Gift Aid. Members who are tax-paying citizens should select Gift Aid as this does not have any impact to the member but the charity receives 20p for every £1.00 received from HMRC.

The accounts were approved: For: 49; Abst: 2; Against: 0

**Proposed: Carlie Mayes
Seconded: Ian Nichols**

5. Written Reports of other members of the CEC

Reports available on the EBKA website.

The General Secretary (Tony Rand) summarised his roles as having a key responsibility for documentation, and ensuring compliance with established Association Rules and Regulations as well as with Charity Law. This year his primary focus has been converting EBKA to a CIO (more details in point 12).

The Examinations Secretary (Steph Green) encouraged members to take practical and theory exams to improve their beekeeping. The setting up of study groups for module examinations is under discussion.

Reports by the Governance Subcommittee Chair and Bee Health Secretaries were available on the website.

The Honey Show Secretary (Pauline Tidmas) reported that the County Show would take place at the Orsett Show on Saturday 5 September. She said Michael Webb would be taking over her role as Honey Show Secretary.

The ADM representative (Richard Ridler) was asked if there was to be a replacement for the BBKA Yearbook. He explained that equivalent information is available from eR2 at the request of individuals, however some officers may choose to exclude their contact details.

6. Election of County Officers (Trustees): CEC Chair, General Secretary and General Treasurer

CEC Chair: Jane Ridler was willing to continue and was re-elected: For: 49, Abstention: 2; Against: 0
Proposed: Nick Holmes
Seconded: Paul Abbott

General Secretary: Tony Rand was willing to continue and was re-elected: For: 50; Abst: 1; Against: 0
Proposed: Jean Smye
Seconded: Carlie Mayes

General Treasurer: Pat Allen was nominated and elected: For: 50; Abst: 0; Against: 1
Proposed: Jim McNeill
Seconded: Jane Ridler

7. Notification of 2020 Divisional Voting Members and 2020 Residing Officer

Braintree	Bridget Mudd
Chelmsford	Jan Tutton
Colchester	Tony Rand
DH & Maldon	Glenn Mayes
Epping Forest	Don McHale
Harlow	Nick Holmes
Romford	Jim McNeill
Saffron Walden	Vanessa Wilkinson
Southend	Chris Allen

The 2021 Presiding Officer will be Jan Tutton, Chelmsford Division.

8. Election of 2020 of County (non Trustee) Appointees

a. President: **Jean Smye** was proposed and elected: For: 46; Abst: 2; Against: 3
Proposed: Pat Allen
Seconded: Jim McNeill

b. Editor (*The Essex Beekeeper*): **Robert Silver** was re-elected *nem con*
Proposed: Carlie Mayes
Seconded: Pauline Tidmas

c. BBKA Delegate: **Richard Ridler** was re-elected. For: 50; Abst: 1; Against: 0
Proposed: Jim McNeill
Seconded: Steph Green

d. Education Secretary: no nominations

e. Examinations Secretary: **Steph Green** was re-elected *nem con*

Proposed: Carlie Mayes
Seconded: Pauline Tidmas

f. NHS Delegate: **Jim McNeill** was re-elected *nem con*

Proposed: Pauline Tidmas
Seconded: Jane Ridler

g. EBKA Show Secretary: **Michael Webb** was proposed and elected. For: 50; Abst: 1; Against: 0

Proposed: Nick Holmes
Seconded: Steph Green

h. Bee Health Secretaries: **Katy Langley** and **Salma Attan** were re-elected *nem con*

Proposed: Bridget Mudd
Seconded: Jane Ridler

9. Notification of CEC Appointees and Co-opted Members

Membership Secretary	No candidate
Chair of Governance Sub-Committee	Ted Gradosielski
Minutes Secretary	Vanessa Wilkinson
Book of Commemoration Secretary	Penny Learmonth
Webmaster	Nick Holmes
Advertising Secretary	Robert Silver
eR2 Manager	Garth Milford

10. Notification of Honorary County Life Member: Clive de Bruyn

JR announced that Clive de Bruyn would become an Honorary County Life Member in recognition of the enormous contribution that he had made to beekeeping nationally, internationally and to Essex. Clive said he was honoured to be elected. He reflected on taking over as County Beekeeping Inspector (CBI) from his predecessor Ted Hooper.

11. Confirmation of Accounts Examiner

Appointment of an accounts examiner for the forthcoming year was left to the discretion of Pat Allen as incoming treasurer.

12. Propositions

- a. That the General Secretary, on behalf of the trustees and following consultation with the membership, prepare and submit a Constitution to the Charity Commission with the objective of changing the status of EBKA to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

The General Secretary had prepared a document, CIO Key Points, for the meeting (available on the EBKA website). He briefly summarised the advantages of changing the status of EBKA to a CIO, the process of conversion, and preparation of a new Constitution. He explained that John Rhodes, Saffron Walden Division, who is a legal expert in charitable trusts, had given advice. There are

practical changes that need to be made before conversion, e.g. relating to bank accounts, and a new set of Rules will be required to define in detail how the Constitution is to be implemented.

In answer to a question about how the membership would be kept informed, the General Secretary said that updated information would be available on the website. Any questions about the CIO could be directed to him by email.

Proposed Paras Shah, seconded Don McHale. For:50; Abst: 1; Against:0

- b. That authority to set membership subscription rates be vested in the CEC and the letters 'CEC' should replace the words 'Annual General Meeting' in Rule 4 Conditions of Membership of the Rules.

Paras Shah, as General Treasurer, explained the advantage of the proposition. It would mean that trustees of the CEC could make immediate decisions about membership fees depending on current financial conditions, rather than having to wait 12 months for approval.

Michael Webb had reservations about the proposal: he was in favour of the CEC recommending subscription rates but with ratification by the membership at the AGM. In this way the membership retained the fundamental decision. However, Jan Tutton pointed out that increasing the lag time of financial decisions was undesirable, and Carlie Mayes said that divisions should be able to trust their trustees to vote appropriately at CEC meetings on this matter.

Proposed Carlie Mayes, seconded Pauline Tidmas. For: 46; Abstention: 1; Against:4.

13. EBKA Conference 2019 - given by Vanessa Wilkinson

- This was hosted by Saffron Walden Division on the theme of *The Changing Face of Beekeeping*.
- The venue was Felsted School. Tickets sold out and about 140 attended.
- Speakers included Will Messenger, on aspects of the history of beekeeping; Dr Jonas Geldman, Cambridge University, whose research includes threats to biodiversity of beekeeping in national protected areas; Prof. Steven Martin, an expert on varroa mite resistance; and Ged Marshall on his year as bee farmer
- The conference made a profit of around £300 and, in addition, the division donated the raffle prize money of about £500 to the charity Bees Abroad.

14. EBKA Conference 2020 - given by Jan Tutton on behalf of Brian Spencer

- This will be hosted by Chelmsford Division with the theme *2020 Vision*.
- It will take place on 31 October 2020 at New Hall, Boreham, with its scenic grounds and interesting historical connections.
- The day will be arranged with three speakers in the morning and a choice of seven workshops in the afternoon. Full details are available on Chelmsford Beekeepers website.
- The cost will be £25, and tickets can now be purchased online via the divisional website.

15. Installation of the 2020 Presiding Officer

Jan Tutton, Trustee for Chelmsford, will be Presiding Officer for 2020.

Jan read from the Book of Commemoration.

The AGM was formally closed

Presentation of Awards

BBKA certificates were given out by the retiring EBKA President, Pat Allen, for those members who were successful in the BBKA Module examinations. Recipients were: Maria Little, Geoff Rusby, Linda Yeats and Tony Yeats. Both Maria Little and Linda Yeats received a Ted Hooper Award for obtaining a distinction in their respective modules. (Certificates for absentees were collected by an attendee from their division).

Pat Allen, as retiring President, passed on the EBKA Chain Office to our new President, Jean Smye.

Break for refreshments kindly provided by Chelmsford Division.

AGM Talk

Following the AGM there was an excellent presentation by Abigail Lowe from the National Botanic Garden of Wales and the University of Bangor on *The Identification of Floral Resources Use by Honeybees*.

Abigail highlighted the factors causing the decline of pollinators in the UK and emphasised that understanding foraging is a key factor in pollinator conservation. The rich floral environment of the National Botanic Garden of Wales was described and the technique of DNA barcoding for pollen identification used in her research.

Results of a recent project showed that honeybees only used 11% of the floral resources available to them during April and May, with reliance on a small number of hedgerow species such as *Salix* and *Crateagus*. Native plants and their relatives were more widely used than garden plants. Similar techniques are being applied to study foraging of plants by wild pollinators such as solitary bees, hoverflies and bumble bees.

Abigail also described research from the National Botanic Garden that has led to a DNA reference library for the entire UK flora. This had allowed national comparison of species of pollen present in honey sampled in 2017 with data from a study in 1952. She highlighted results for Essex which indicated a downward shift of honey bees' reliance on *Trifolium* to a greater use of *Rubus* and *Brassica*.

The take home message for pollinator conservation was the importance of growing native plants in our gardens.

