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Essex Beekeepers’ Association AGM Minutes

Small Scale Sustainable Apiary – Update 19 April 2021

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The Essex Beekeepers’ Association

Minutes of the 141st Annual General Meeting (AGM)
Saturday 20 March 2021

The AGM was held virtually using Zoom as allowed for in the Rules of the Association

Presiding Officer: Jan Tutton (Chelmsford Division)
Also present: As Attendance List collated from the Zoom screen

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Katy Langley, (Epping Forest) and Ian Milligan, (Colchester).

2. Minutes of 140th AGM

The Minutes of the last AGM were published in The Essex Beekeeper for review by members and were on the EBKA Website. No challenges to the accuracy had been received so the Minutes were signed by the Presiding Officer as a true record.

3. Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) held on 5th January 2021

The Minutes of the EGM were published in The Essex Beekeeper and formed part of the Agenda papers on the EBKA Website. No challenges to the accuracy had been received so the Minutes were signed by the Presiding Officer as a true record.

4. Report of the Chair of the Central Executive Committee (CEC)

The CEC Chair (Jane Ridler) had published her report for members in

These minutes will be considered correct if no objection is raised in writing or by email before Saturday 31st May 2021.
Any point challenged will be brought before the next meeting for amendment/correction of the record.

EBKA Trustees

President: Jean Smye, Hon CLM (E: jsmye@sky.com)
Chair of CEC: Jane Ridler (E: jane.ridler@uwclub.net T: 01799 218023)
Treasurer: Pat Allen (E: Treasurer@ebka.org)
Braintree: Bridget Mudd (E: bridget.mudd@yahoo.com)
Chelmsford: Jan Tutton (E: cec@chelmsfordbeekeepers.com)
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Epping Forest: Simon Nicholson (E:)
Harlow: Nick Holmes (E: wwwcight@gmail.com)
Romford: Jim McNeill (E: jimandliz44@aol.co.uk)
Saffron Walden: Vanessa Wilkinson (E: swaldensec@ebka.org)
Southend: Chris Allen (E: cjallen@gmail.com)
EBKA Exams Secretary: Steph Green (E: examsec@ebka.org)

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Southend: Chris Allen (E: cjallen@gmail.com)
EBKA Exams Secretary: Steph Green (E: examsec@ebka.org)

Regional Bee Inspectors

Epping Forest and Romford Divisions (excluding Brentwood)
Peter Folge (E: peter.folge@apha.gsi.gov.uk T: 07775-119433)

All other Divisions:
Keith Morgan (E: keith.morgan@apha.gsi.gov.uk T: 01485-520838 or 07919-004215)

The Essex Beekeeper

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Saffron Walden: Vanessa Wilkinson (E: 07747-506000 T: 01702-477592)
Southend: Chris Allen (E: 01702-477592 T: 01702-477592)
Articles appearing in The Essex Beekeeper are not necessarily the views either of the Editor or the Essex Beekeepers’ Association

To ensure inclusion within the diary of county-wide events would divisions provide the editor with details of local meetings by the 4th of the previous month.

Robert Silver – robert.silver@outlook.com

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EBKA

the March issue of The Essex Beekeeper and formed part of the Agenda papers on the EBKA Website. An appropriately modified version will be submitted to the Charity Commission.

It had been an unusual year with the pandemic affecting and restricting many of our main activities. However, virtual meetings held during the year had resulted in members accessing other meetings. There had been successes such as holding the general husbandry course and making good progress on setting our governance codes including guidelines on Covid precautions during the forthcoming beekeeping season.

Further work on the Association moving towards adopting the charitable status of a CIO had raised some fundamental issues as to whether the EBKA was the type of charity that would benefit from becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. A meeting at which a member and former senior London solicitor answered questions highlighted the need for the Association to discontinue with the conversion until such time such a move would be beneficial. A Proposition adopting this stance was to be taken later at the AGM.

The change in direction has led the CEC to establish sufficient indemnity insurance for the trustees. Another issue that has arisen from the CIO exercises was the lack of understanding of the leases on land taken out by divisions, some going back many years. It was important that the EBKA codifies its position and help was needed to complete this exercise. Any member who could assist would be most welcome and should contact the Chair of the CEC.

At the BBKA Annual meeting in January it was noted that they were raising their subscription next year. However, it was for the CEC to decide on the level of the Association’s rate of subscription and this may mitigate the increase by the BBKA.

The Chair thanked those retiring from their roles with EBKA: Robert Silver for his work on The Essex Beekeeper; Don McHale, Trustee for Epping Forest; Vanessa Wilkinson, Trustee for Saffron Walden; Tony Rand, General Secretary and Trustee for Colchester; Katy Langley and Salma Attan (joint Bee Health Secretaries and AHAT Co-ordination); Ted Gradosieleski, Chair of the Governance Committee and Michael Webb who from September 2020 has been Acting Secretary following Tony Rand’s resignation.
It was disappointing that still we have no Education Secretary and members interested in this role and that of Editor of The Essex Beekeeper should contact the Chair of the CEC. Following Ted Gradosielski’s retirement as the Chair of the Governance Committee, it has been agreed by the CEC that members of the committee should elect a Chair from their membership on a rolling basis.

5. Proposition

The Presiding Officer read the proposition that was also shown on screen:

*To discontinue with the conversion of the Association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) until such time that the CEC conclude that it would be beneficial for the Association to do so*

Members were asked to vote using the listing shown on screen allowing a vote for, against or to abstain.

52 voted in favour of accepting the proposition, 1 vote against and 5 abstained. The proposition was carried.

6. General Treasurer’s Report & Approval of the 2020 Accounts

The General Treasurer (Pat Allen) reported that the examined accounts were sent to all members using the eR2 system. It had been an extraordinary year without a County Show, Conference and with few courses and virtual Member meetings. The following items in the 2020 Accounts were worthy of comment:-

• the Gift Aid income of £13,017 covering some two years.

• printing costs of £3,614 resulted from the late presentation of a 2019 invoice.

• EBKA capitation was down reflecting the decision of the CEC but this may change next year if the Trustees agree to absorb the 2022 increase in the BBKA capitation or assist Divisions with the printing costs of the magazine.

• a donation of £1,000 to help ameliorate the cost holding the virtual National Honey Show. This payment fitted in with the Association’s charitable objectives.

Meetings in May 2021

Members are more than welcome to attend another Division’s Zoom meeting. Just contact the Division and talk to the relevant co-ordinator.

Please note that all of these meetings are subject to Government COVID-19 rules that may be in place. Please check with the Division, too, to ensure that the event is running.

May 2021

06 19:30 - 20:30 - Really getting to grips with swarm control with Bob Smith NDB, Saffron Walden Division
Zoom meeting

06 20:00 – 22:00 - tba, Harlow Division

06 20:00 – 22:00 - Reading the Colony Buckfast Speakers, Romford Division
Zoom meeting

15 19:30 – 21:00 - Auction of equipment, Chelmsford Division
Address: Margaretting Village Hall, Wantz Rd, Margaretting, Ingatestone CM4 0EP

18 19:30 – 21:30 - Equipment suppliers good and bad, Chelmsford Division

26 19:30 – 21:30 - tba, Southend Division
Address: WI Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh SS6 7ED

June 2021

03 20:00 – 22:00 - Bee Health, what could possibly go wrong, Romford Division
Zoom meeting

03 20:00 – 22:00 - tba, Harlow Division

03 20:00 – 22:00 - tba, Harlow Division

03 20:00 – 22:00 - tba, Harlow Division
Health - The brood pattern was good and the larvae pearly white so no signs of disease.

Temper – The bees stayed in the box and on top of the frames. While there were a lot of bees in the air these were returning foragers and young bees orienting at the hive entrance. The bees in the box stayed in the box.

So far everything is pretty ideal, an extraordinarily strong queen right colony with an excess of nectar which will be condensed into honey. There’s a very strong possibility of the colony wanting to swarm in the not-too-distant future, but for now all is good. If the colony tries to swarm, we will at that point make our splits.

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There had been an adjustment on the Balance Sheet to show the £1 share held by each Division in BDI which previously had been shown as one share held by the EBKA.

The Divisional Treasurers and Membership Secretaries were thanked for their co-operation throughout the year and, in particular, Jan Tutton of Chelmsford Division who worked tirelessly to set up and understand eR2.

Members were asked to vote using the listing shown on screen allowing a vote for, against or to abstain.

50 voted in favour of approving the 2020 Accounts, 1 vote against and 7 abstained. The Accounts were approved and signed by the Presiding Officer subject to one minor amendment to the text.

7. Written Reports of other members of the CEC

The Examinations Secretary (Steph Green) noted that Covid 19 had prevented the BBKA offering beekeeping exams in 2020. Module exams in 2021 can be taken online using a platform called Inspera with the first online exams being held in April. There was a new process for applying for exams through eR2 with access to the BBKA Exam Portal. It was hoped that practical assessments would go ahead and members were encouraged to register their interest in taking the Basic Assessment and General Husbandry exams to improve their beekeeping.

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

The names of the appointees, the proposer and seconder were shown on the screen and read out by the Presiding Officer. The vote was by a show of hands.

CEC Chair: Jane Ridler was willing to continue and was re-elected.
Voting For: 59, Abstention: 2; Against: 0

Proposer: Jan Tutton
Seconder: Pat Allen

General Secretary: Vanessa Wilkinson - Vanessa was appointed replacing Michael Webb as Acting Secretary. Voting For: 60, Abstention: 1; Against: 0
**General Treasurer:** Pat Allen - Pat was willing to continue and was re-elected *nem con.*

**Proposer:** Michael Webb  
**Seconder:** Jane Ridler

**Proposer:** Paul Wiltshire  
**Seconder:** Pauline Tidmas

### 9. Notification of 2021 Divisional Voting Members and 2022 Presiding Officer

- Braintree: Bridget Mudd  
- Chelmsford: Jan Tutton  
- Colchester: Andrew Linley  
- DH & Maldon: Glenn Mayes  
- Epping Forest: Simon Nicholson  
- Harlow: Nick Holmes  
- Romford: Jim McNeill  
- Saffron Walden: Linda Yeats  
- Southend: Chris Allen

The 2022 Presiding Officer will be a member from Harlow Division yet to be agreed.

### 10. Election of 2021 of County (non Trustee) Appointees

The names of the appointees, the proposer and seconder were shown on the screen and read out by the Presiding Officer. The vote was by a show of hands and all County Appointees were elected *nem con.*

**President:** Jean Smye

**Proposer:** Pat Allen  
**Seconder:** Jim McNeill

**BBKA Delegate:** Richard Ridler

**Proposer:** Steph Green  
**Seconder:** Pat Holden

State – There were 4 queen cells with eggs in so not starting to swarm but thinking about it. A lot of the brood was sealed meaning that these will all emerge in the next 12 days so this needs to be considered when adding supers – these need space – one frame of brood emerging can produce bees to cover 3 super frames with bees.

Food – There wasn’t much space for nectar apart from a small amount around the brood, but I could see fresh nectar being stored and with a good weather forecast for the next few days I judged that there was enough of a flow coming in that the bees had sufficient.

Health – The brood pattern was good and the larvae pearly white so no signs of disease.

So other than marking and clipping the queen and adding more space nothing more to do for now.

**Second Inspection 13 April 2021**

The weather was not ideal at 10C but was sunny, so a quick inspection was in order.

Lifting the roof, it was evident that the bees needed the space previously added as the supers were full of bees.

Eggs – eggs were present on the first frame; I didn’t see the queen this time, but this isn’t important unless you need to find her for a manipulation.

Space – The supers were 75% full of nectar and full of bees. This reflects the number of new bees emerging since the last inspection. Two more supers added.

State – There was no sign of swarm preparations so the adding of space at the last inspection moves us down an alert level.

Food – There was little pollen being stored but plenty being brought in. The bees have sufficient nectar/honey stores not to need to worry about this now until extraction.
Small Scale Sustainable Apiary – Update 19
April 2021
By Kevin Thorne

Following on from the introduction the first inspections have now taken place.

The weather this spring has been wet and cool with temperatures a fairly constant 10C in March and April. The books tell us not to go into our hives until the temperature is 15C or warmer, but this doesn’t take into account other factors.

The weather forecasts feature temperatures based on the shade so being in the sun raises the temperature several degrees. Conversely a breeze will reduce the temperature by several degrees and you certainly don’t want to be inspecting in rain unless your issue is particularly urgent.

Another factor is the speed of your inspection – if you can inspect quickly opening the hive is less of an issue but you don’t want to be undertaking inspections of more than a few minutes until the conditions are above 15C.

First Inspection 30 March 2021
The weather was pretty ideal – Sunny, little breeze and 20C

I was incredibly surprised by the strength of the colony when opening, as you can see by the picture, there were bees in the roof cavity.

Following Hoopers 5 questions plus one of my own which I think is crucial at all inspections:

Eggs – there were eggs on the first frame, so I stopped looking at that point, once you’ve seen them you know you have a laying queen. Queen was seen so she was marked and clipped.

Space – Clearly this was an issue, the brood box was overflowing with bees. There were 10 frames of brood and one of pollen. Two supers were added.

NHS Delegate: Jim McNeil
Proposer: Jean Smye
Second: Terry Watson

Editor (The Essex Beekeeper): no nominations

Show Secretary: Michael Webb
Proposer: Norman McDonald
Second: Simon Nicholson

Education Secretary: no nominations

Examinations Secretary: Steph Green
Proposer: Jane Ridler
Second: Tony Yeats

Bee Health Secretary: Dave Garrett
Proposer: Katy Langley
Second: Salma Attan

11. Notification of CEC Appointees and Co-opted Members

Membership Secretary No candidate

Chair of Governance Sub-Committee from the amongst the committee Rolling appointment

Minutes Secretary No candidate

Book of Commemoration Secretary Penny Learmonth

Webmaster Nick Holmes

eR2 Manager Garth Milford

12. Confirmation of Accounts Examiner

The Acting Secretary reported that appointment of an accounts examiner for the forthcoming year had yet to be agreed. This year the accounts
examiner waived a fee for undertaking this task. A replacement would be appointed, reported to the CEC and subject to a fee not exceeding £500.

13. **EBKA Conference 2021 - given by Jan Tutton**

The conference preview given last year entitled 20:20 Vision would not be appropriate having had to cancel last year’s event. The Planning Committee have had to look at the current restrictions on holding events and will be meeting in mid April to review their plans for a 2021 conference. Once more concrete plans have been agreed these would be taken back to the CEC for approval as to the approach adopted this year when holding this event.

14. **Installation of the 2021 Presiding Officer**

It was agreed by the CEC and with her agreement that Jan Tutton, Trustee for Chelmsford, would be Presiding Officer for a second year.

15. **Reading from the Book of Commemoration**

Penny Learmonth reported that the entries for those members who died during the last year had not been completed due to the restrictions resulting from the Covid pandemic. Penny read the from the Book of Commemoration the passage that she said had been written many years ago and represented the very essence of our Association.

The first virtual AGM was formally closed at 2.40pm

This concluded the AGM business

**AGM Keynote Address**

Following the AGM there was an excellent virtual presentation by Tony Gunton on Solitary Bees.

It was considered a fitting subject for a Keynote Address as so many of our members have been self isolating during the past year. Tony said that there were over 250 species in the UK including Mason bees, Mining Bees, Sweat bees, Wool-Carder bees, Carpenter bees and Leaf Cutter bees. Although these are known as Solitary bees many chose to nest in sites close together. These Solitary bees have been declining in numbers principally due to a loss of suitable habitat. They were vital pollinators emerging in the Spring with the males waiting to mate with the females. In the nest the eggs hatch as larvae, feed on the pollen and nectar, pupate and emerge in the following Spring. Tony explained how materials can be used to create bee hotels and he also highlighted the many bee friendly plants that can create an environment to help these bees.

Jean Smye, the Association’s President thanked Tony for a most interesting and enlightening talk. It illustrated not only his long time interest in Solitary bees but also the importance of how we depend on these bees as pollinators.

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