

The Essex Beekeeper

Issue 672

December 2020

In this issue

Update from the CEC Chair

Notice Of EBKA Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

Dave Blackwood his bee life

Apology

Sad news

**The Healthy Brood Box Feeding your Bees and
Midwinter Varroa Treatment**

**Braintree Division Honey Show 2020 – yes, it
did go ahead!**

BBKA exams – into 2021

Monthly Magazine of the
Essex Beekeepers' Association
www.ebka.org

*Furthering the Craft of Beekeeping in Essex
Registered Charity number 1031419*



Update from the CEC Chair

By Jane Ridler



No excuses this winter! There's plenty of time for cleaning and sterilising all your bee equipment. Brood boxes should be scorched (unless polyhives!), frames and bits of frames worth reclaiming can be boiled in washing soda solution, supers and tools cleaned and mended - and don't store away your suit until it's been laundered in washing soda solution or it'll go mouldy where the honey's been. Lockdown could also be the ideal opportunity to branch out into making hive products, candles, soap and propolis tincture etc. How about the splendid wax flowers like below? – from a Honey Show of the past.



Composite classes of the Essex Honey Show from Saffron Walden and Braintree Divisions – possibly 2012?

As usual, here is an update for you on the November CEC meeting. It was so busy this time we had to complete the meeting on the next Saturday afternoon! Which gives me the opportunity to say a thank you to the Trustees and all the County Secretaries, who give up their time to keep everything up to speed – especially during these difficult times.

From the Governance sub-committee, the annual reviews/updates of the Privacy Policy and Health and Safety policies were

discussed by the trustees and agreed, along with the Accident Report Form and an Apiary Risk Assessment Form. The revised Trustees' Handbook was also presented to the committee, after two weeks' prior scrutiny, for final small changes. Thanks go to all who contributed, the Governance sub-committee and especially Vanessa Wilkinson (Saffron Walden trustee) who collated everything. The trustees voted Chris Allen (Southend trustee) to join the Governance team. The CEC members have been reading up on CIO issues (Gareth Morgan's book is being passed round locally if you're interested), and the trustees' Annual Report for 2019 to the Charity Commission has been uploaded onto their website.

The Essex AGM in March will be planned as a Zoom meeting, although there may be some hope of a real gathering. Meanwhile, this is not going to be the case for the Divisional AGMs in December and January, so virtual meetings will be organised by the Divisional committees. It'll certainly make for AGMs with a difference, but unfortunately without the get-togethers we enjoy alongside.

You will see in this edition of 'The Beekeeper', there is Notice of an EGM from Michael Webb, Acting General Secretary, to which all members are invited. From time to time, after motions have been passed at our AGMs and CEC meetings, the EBKA Rules need to be updated. The constitution states that the rules can only be changed by an EGM of members, hence your invitation to attend the Zoom meeting in January. With most other matters, the trustees of the Association (Divisional Voting Members and the County Officers) can make the decisions on behalf of all members. The upcoming motions are a mixture of decisions already made at AGMs and others dealing with obsolete clauses and roles.

The DEFRA Healthy Bees Plan 2030 (reviewed over the last 10 years and published November 2020) is now out on BeeBase. Do have a look at it. Ian Nichols, one of our Essex Seasonal Bee Inspectors (and previous CEC Chair) also sent me a few noteworthy words of wisdom from APHA - If we leave the EU without a deal all imports will be '3rd Country'. Hopefully, we will get more information on

this through BBKA and other official sources. There was an article in BBKA News in January 2019. Also - general advice that with a possible long warm and wet winter ahead, (La Nina) we may well expect to see spring starvation and varroa issues; EFB is still a widespread problem throughout the Eastern Region. Oh dear - but forewarned is forearmed!

Stay well and safe, and a Happy Christmas to you and yours – with fingers crossed that some family get togethers will be possible. 🐝

Notice Of EBKA Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

Notice is hereby given of an EGM to be held at 6.30pm on Tuesday 5th January 2021. The meeting to be held virtually via Zoom. Details of the meeting ID and passcode code to follow.

To approve an update to the Rules of the EBKA.

Details of the proposed changes to the Rules are set out below and can be found on the EBKA Website.

For members who wish to have a copy of the changes, please contact the EBKA Acting Secretary, Michael Webb

chairscebka1@virginmedia.com Tel No: 01708 250606 mobile: 0771 249 0511

Michael Webb

EBKA Acting Secretary

30 November 2020

Proposed changes to the Rules of the Essex Beekeepers'

Association to update/amend the current version amended at the EGM January 2016

Rule 3 Change Ordinary Members to Registered Members and

Change Dual Members (e.g husband and wife, or two of a family residing at the same address) to

Registered Member and Partner Member (e.g. two members residing at the same address)

Change Junior members (under 18 years of age) to

BBKA Junior and Divisional Junior members (under 18 years of age)

Rule 4 change the second bullet point from :-

- **Annual subscriptions are to be in accordance with the scale authorised by the Annual General Meeting and published on the current application form, except for Divisional Associates for which category the subscription is set by Divisions at their own AGMs. Subscriptions become due on 1st January to**
- **Authority to set the scale of Annual subscriptions is vested in the Central Executive Committee (CEC) and published on the current application form, except for Divisional categories for which category the subscription is set by Divisions at their own AGMs. Subscriptions become due on 1st January each year.**

Rule 6 Divisions of the Association

Add the following statement after the names of the Divisions:

Where a Division proposes a change of name, agreed by a majority of members at a Divisional AGM or EGM, the change should then be ratified by the CEC and agreed at the AGM.

Rule 7 c) County Appointees:

Remove the entry **Spray & Diseases Secretary** to be replaced by **Bee Health Secretary**.

Rule 7 d) CEC Appointees:

Remove the entry **Distribution Secretary**

Rule 9 The AGM and the Association Year

Change the first paragraph:

The Association Year shall end on December 31st and the AGM shall be held in Chelmsford before the following 1st April. The Trustees' Report and consolidated accounts for the CEC and all Divisions shall be presented at the AGM. to read:-

The Association Year shall end on 31st December and the AGM shall be held before the following 1st April. The CEC shall agree the venue within the County or decide on whatever format for the AGM is appropriate. The Trustees' Report and Consolidated Accounts for the CEC and all Divisions shall be presented at the AGM.

Rule 15 Financial

Change the second paragraph:

The CEC and each Division shall have a Banking Account into which all monies received by the County or relevant Divisional Treasurer must be paid at least once a month. All payments of £10 or over are to be paid only by cheque; small amounts may be paid from a Petty Cash Account kept for the purpose.

To read:-

The CEC, Show Committee and each Division shall have a Banking Account into which all monies received by the County or relevant Divisional Treasurer must be paid. Payments to be made in the most appropriate format as agreed by the

CEC and each Division; small amounts as agreed by the CEC and each Division may continue be paid from a Petty Cash Account kept for the purpose.

Rule 20 All Divisional Committees shall:

Change b)

b) Remit to the General Treasurer capitation due to the county and to the BBKA:

- **by 1st April every year for all then current members:**
- **by 1st September every year for members joining since the April capitation payment.**

The BBKA register of members shall be used as the authoritative record of membership against which the remittances will be requested by the General Treasurer.
to read:-

b) Remit to the General Treasurer capitation due to the EBKA and to the BBKA:

- **by 15th March every year for all then current members:**
- **by 15th August every year for members joining since the April capitation payment.**

The remittances generated from the eR2 Membership Database shall be used as the authoritative record of the amount due to be paid by Divisional Treasurers to the EBKA central funds.

General

The word Chairman to be changed to Chair in the five entries in Rule 7 and the one entry in Rules 16 and 18.



Meetings in December 2020

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.

01 | **EBKA General Husbandry Course**

03 | **20:00 – 22:00 - tbc, Harlow Division**
Address: tba

03 | **20:00 – 22:00 - If Heath Robinson had been a beekeeper, Graham Royle, Romford Division**
Zoom meeting

04 | **19:30 - Christmas Event: Live demo of subscription renewal and reflections on beekeeping 2020, Saffron Walden Division**
Zoom meeting

11 | **19:30 - "Mr Bee" with Celia Davis NDB, Braintree Division**
Zoom meeting

14 | **19:30 for 20:00 - Richard Noel – An Englishman in France keeping bees in the face of the Asian Hornet**
Zoom meeting (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82844255548>)

15 | **19:30 – 21:00 - Seasonal Fun, Chelmsford Division**
Zoom meeting

15 | **EBKA General Husbandry Course**

January 2021

07 | **20:00 – 22:00 - tbc, Harlow Division**
Address: tba

19 | **19:30 – 21:00 - AGM followed by Jane Ridler on Bees Abroad, Chelmsford Division**
Zoom meeting

22 | **19:30 – 21:30 - Divisional AGM and Film, Saffron Walden Division**
Address: tba

27 | **19:30 – 21:30 - tbc, Southend Division**
Address: WI Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh SS6 7ED



Dave Blackwood his bee life

By Margaret Thomas, NDB

I started beekeeping I think in 1973 when Geoff Bazin and Dave were the leading lights of the Association. Ted Hooper ran beekeeping classes at Geoff's apiary, followed by the usual tea and cake provided mainly by Geoff's wife Joan and Dave's very shy wife Betty. No wonder our kids were anxious to come with us. Dave soon took over as secretary.



David teaches microscopy, 2014

Another time that sticks in my mind was an apiary meeting in Thundersley in the apple orchard where the kids were entertained by making animals out of small June drop apples. Betty gave her first presentation of corn dolly making whilst beekeepers listened to beekeeping worthies.

This was the making of Betty and they both joined the Guild of Essex Craftsmen arranging countrywide meetings. After Betty died, Dave took on corn dollies as his other skill and though not as deft as Betty he made presentable dollies.

Dave kept up to 20 colonies. His home apiary was in a waste ground behind his house where the association often met for a garden meeting (and tea and cake naturally). Dave very bravely allowed us to see his colony when it had been diagnosed as suffering from EFB, the Disease Officer in attendance. EFB was rife in our area and he felt it was important that the members were aware of the signs.

Dave had left school at 14 to help finance his family after the death of his father. I am not sure if he went into the Print at this time, but this was his profession as a comptometer when we met him. He could nit pick any written text. Very useful to those of us

who can't see written mistakes. Dave's lack of further education bothered him and he and I attended all of Ted Hooper's classes at Writtle Agricultural College and further afield (latterly those run by Clive de Bruyn). We spent many hours in the byways of Essex, debating bees. Dave wished to further his education and hours spent pouring over books and essays written ready to go to Ted for correction. Dave gained his Intermediate Written Certificate. All this long before Modules were dreamt up. The written exams were three hours each for two papers, a herculean task for those of us who had not put pen to paper for years. He gained his Senior Practical and could therefore assess candidates for the Basic and many Essex beekeepers have him to thank for his patience during the process. He spent a Year at Cardiff University and gained his Diploma in Apiculture from there, quite an achievement. His interest in microscopy grew and he gained the Microscopy Certificate and joined the Queckett microscopy group in London. He often lectured on various topics and displayed his excellent homemade slides of bee anatomy.

Dave became skilled at rescuing bumblebee nests from uninformed public. He often displayed them at the Essex Show at Great Leighs showground. This complemented the observation hives. He made a connection between the nest box and a 'garden' of bee flowers for forage during the show. One memorable occasion the males and queens were emerging and nature was taking place in the public eye. A great attraction.



David with friends

Dave was well known out of Essex as regular attendee at the National Honey Show and Central Association, and internationally, attending Gormanston and Apimondia. Dave was secretary for Southend for years and more latterly President. His smiling youthful face lives with me, I will miss you Dave. 🐝

Apology

As editor of this magazine, I would like to apologise to the family of Bill Fildes, and to Jean Smye who wrote his obituary, for misspelling his name in the November edition of the magazine.

Robert Silver
Editor

Sad news Enid Ford 1921 – 2020

This sad message is to let members know that Romford Division's longest serving member, Enid Ford, died on 8th November 2020, aged 99.

Enid had been very active in the Division throughout her membership until recent years, in particular serving as Secretary for many years into the 1990s, and she was a regular at County events too. In the last few years Enid was confined to her bed and she died peacefully at home, as was her wish.

Rest in Peace, Enid.

Pat Allen

The Healthy Brood Box

Feeding your Bees and Midwinter Varroa Treatment

By Katy Langley and Salma Attan, Essex Bee Health Officers

In cold weather the colony clusters together to reduce the energy required to maintain body temperature. Stored honey provides the food for the [Winter bees to survive through until Spring](#). It is vital that your bees have enough stores to supply their needs and that you monitor their requirements by ‘[hefting](#)’ the [hive regularly](#) throughout Autumn, Winter and early Spring. If you can barely lift the edge of the hive off the stand with one hand, then they have enough stores; if you can lift it but it’s heavy, then more food is required. If it’s easy to lift then feed urgently!

The average colony will need around 20Kg (40lb) of honey to feed themselves until Spring forage becomes available. One full brood frame is roughly 2.5Kg/5lb, one full super frame is 1.4Kg/3lb.

If the weather is mild their energy requirements will increase since they will leave the hive to search for forage if the temperature is high enough. A sudden drop in temperature may chill the bees sufficiently that they are unable to re-form the cluster and die, or are too weak to reach stored honey. This may result in isolation starvation: you will find dead bees head first in empty cells, trying to access the last bit of honey, but too weak to move across the comb and find more.

[Fondant](#) is ideal for urgent winter or early spring feeding but must contain only sugar, glucose and water. Do not use supermarket culinary fondant since this contains additives.

As the daylight hours reduce in Winter the Queen will lay far fewer eggs, and may stop laying completely. This is most likely close to the Winter Solstice on December 21st, or after two weeks of very cold weather. When there is little brood present it is a good time to treat for Varroa, This may be done by trickling an [approved oxalic](#)

[acid product](#), Apibioxal, between the frames. This method will destroy phoretic mites but not those hiding in any sealed brood cells so it's important to keep an eye on the weather and time this treatment accordingly.

The procedure must be as rapid as possible to prevent the bees becoming chilled. You will need to dribble 5ml of Apibioxal solution onto each seam of bees. You can purchase a special bottle for this with measurements on which ensures you are adding the correct concentration and quantity. If this is the first time trying this, it's a good idea to try out your bottle with plain water over your sink to practise. When you arrive at the apiary, have your smoker lit and ready to use..... remember the bees don't want to be disturbed so be prepared.

Oxalic acid can be unpleasant if accidentally spilt onto skin so you should wear the necessary protective equipment. The solution should be warm to avoid chilling the bees, so keep the bottle in your pocket to maintain the temperature. Remember to complete your Veterinary Medicines Directive [record card](#) when treating for Varroa. For more information you may want to check this short clip <https://youtu.be/pgHmGGXRDzq>

There is also an article in the November BBKA News, Pg 391 by Professor David Evans about winter treatment which you may find interesting.



Braintree Division Honey Show 2020 – yes, it did go ahead!

By Jan French

Braintree Division held their Annual Divisional Honey Show as normally as possible under the current Covid restrictions. The show was well supported with 25 members making a total of 87 entries.

A risk assessment was undertaken and measures were put in place to keep everyone safe. A gazebo was erected at the entrance of White Notley Village Hall and everyone brought their exhibits packed up in boxes and left them on the table. The Show Secretary and two stewards affixed the show labels and took the entries into the hall. Masks were worn, hand sanitisers were provided and we adhered to the White Notley Village Hall Covid guidelines at all times.

Participants were able to purchase Thornes beekeeping equipment from our sales table and as all beekeeping trade fairs were cancelled this year it was a great success. In fact you could say that we held a mini National Honey Show in White Notley Village!

Our Show Judge was Jim McNeill, and he worked alone in the hall and left the result slips on a table in the foyer. He also left advice slips on some of the entries (wax colour poor, short weight, surface not clean so needs skimming, etc). Whilst judging took place, there was a live Awards Ceremony on Zoom organised by Stacy Cronly-Dillon. The Show Secretary relayed the results to Stacy and she entertained everyone whilst the results came in. It was rather like the Oscars with everyone dressing outrageously for the occasion. Some people enjoyed watching the spectacle from the Cross Keys pub in White Notley and others went home. After the show, the entries and prize cards were packed up by the stewards and people returned to collect their exhibits.

Jim was impressed by the quality of entries and how well-supported

the event was. Best in Show was awarded to Maria Little for two fabulous beeswax candles. Jim commented that the quality of wax was superlative, they lit easily, burnt well and relit without any problem. Maria will be presented with the Walter Gee Trophy for Braintree Division Best in Show. Full results are shown below.

Honey Shows have been a rare event across the country this year and we are proud that Braintree Division has shown what can be done under difficult circumstances. Let's hope that next year we'll be back to normal, with an activity for members whilst judging takes place followed by an Awards Ceremony, tea and cakes and lots of chatting.

CLASS	1st	2nd	3rd
Two jars light clear	Steve & Anita Horsnell	Antony Stark	Thomas & Kate Dannatt
Two jars medium clear	Bridget Mudd	Pat Rowland	Brian Greenland
Two jars dark clear	Jean Gill	Not awarded	Not awarded
Two jars set	Brian Greenland	Maurice Bacon	Jean Gill
Four jars of clear as for sale	Bridget Mudd	Elsbeth Bunting	Joyce Wells & Jean Gill
Four jars of set as for sale	Maurice Bacon	Joyce Wells & Jean Gill	Not awarded
One container of cut comb	Jan French	Henry & Eleanor Swan	Maurice Bacon
Block of beeswax	Brian Greenland	Elsbeth Bunting	Michael Madders
Two beeswax candles	Maria Little	Elsbeth Bunting	Thomas & Kate Dannatt
Photograph	Thomas & Kate Dannatt	Clive de Bruyn	Pat Rowland
Sweet mead	Not Awarded	Neil Reeve	John le Seve
Dry mead	Neil Reeve	Steve & Anita Horsnell	Not awarded
Melomel (fruit mead)	Jan French	Steve & Anita Horsnell	Jean Gill
BEST IN SHOW	Maria Little – Two beeswax candles		

BBKA exams – into 2021

By Steph Green, Essex Exam Secretary

I imagine like me many of you are using lockdown and the off-season to do some reading to top up your beekeeping knowledge. I am one of those taking part in the General Husbandry Zoom sessions being organised by Jane Ridler and enjoying it very much. Lots to think about, but it is great sharing knowledge with 30 people all with different beekeeping experience.

People learn in very different ways, but one way is to read and learn from the BBKA module syllabi. Other people prefer to learn through practise; therefore, the Husbandry exams provide another avenue to explore. All the information is available at bbka.org.uk in the member's area under 'exams and assessments'.

If you are interested in furthering your knowledge and practical beekeeping I would encourage you to think about taking the BBKA exams. Reading is one thing, but studying and then reproducing it to order is another; the latter means that the information will be more readily at your fingertips when you need it; either for your own practice or when helping others.

BBKA Exams - What's happening in 2021

This year's exams have been very much affected by Covid-19. In fact, all BBKA module and practical exams were cancelled in 2020. The BBKA has been working hard to find ways to allow examinations to go ahead amongst continued uncertainty. After research and trials the **Examinations Board has decided to offer the Module exams online in Spring 2021 using a service provider called 'Inspira'**.

The BBKA recognises that not all candidates will have the confidence or computer skills for online exams and so they intend to continue, when possible, to offer the handwritten option, albeit at a reduced number of venues.

To summarise:

- **Only online module exams will be available in spring 2021.**
- The BBKA hopes to offer some hand-written opportunities in the autumn but this will depend on the Covid situation.
- The exam papers will not change, they will have the same layout and type of questions
- **The closing dates for new entries will be January 31st 2021.** To allow more time for setting up and training.
- The exam date will be moved from March 20th to **April 24th/25th**. It may only be on the 24th, but it is possible that both days will be needed. Again, this is to allow more time for set up and training.
- People who were set to do module exams in 2020 will be contacted by me, as Local Exam Secretary, to see if they wish to do the exams online. Those who do not feel they can cope with the online exam will be transferred to November 2021.
- Candidates will be able to take a maximum of 2 modules.
- Candidates will receive training on the system and computer access will be checked beforehand.

In addition, the BBKA is working towards an online exam application process using a system called EXA which will be linked to eR2. Hopes are that the system will go live in January 2021. Local Exam secretaries will have limited access. I will know more when I have had my training.

Finally, if you have any questions about taking exams, or the new exam process please get in touch with me, Steph Green, at examsec@ebka.org and if I can't answer them I will pass them on to the new BBKA Exam Secretary Nicky Campbell. Please also send me any comments or concerns that you would like me to share with the Examinations Board.

If you want to contact the BBKA directly their new general enquiry email address is: examinations@bbka.org.uk 🐝

www.thebeeshop.co.uk

Quality Beekeeper Clothing At Affordable Prices

Full Suits, Smocks, Bee Vests & Veils

Full adult suit - £55 (with free postage)

From Somerset

Email: michaeljohnduckett@gmail.com

The Bee Shed

Local beekeeping supplies with everything you need for your honey bees

Open by Appointment: Please call Wendy on **07764 609 803** or contact via the website **www.beeshedstock.co.uk** to arrange a time on the following days:

Mon 1.30pm—5.30pm

Wed 8.30am—12.30pm

Thurs 1.30pm—5.30pm

Sat 8.30am—12.30pm

Closed on Bank Holidays

**Meepshole, Great Prestons Lane,
Stock, Essex CM4 9RL**

Approved *National Bee Supplies* Stockist and Distributor

**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

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

D.H. & Maldon Glenn Mayes

E: trustee@maldonbeekeepers.org.uk

Epping Forest Don McHale

E: donaldrmchale@gmail.com

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: cjlallen@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

Magazine & Web site

Editor & Advertising: Robert Silver

E: robert.silver@outlook.com

T: 07956-487703

Web site: Nick Holmes

E: webmaster@ebka.org

Divisional Contacts

Braintree Jan French

T: 07725-166609

Chelmsford Fiona Cutting

T: 07788-180011

Colchester Morag Chase

T: 01206-522576

D.H. & Maldon Sylvina Tate

T: 07976-669381

Harlow Carol Sissons

T: 07958 227413

Epping Forest Katy Langley

secretary@
eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Romford Sue Richardson

T: 07971-957333

Saffron Walden Vanessa Wilkinson

T: 07747-506000

Southend Pat Holden

T: 01702-477592

THORNE

