

www.thorne.co.uk
sales@thorne.co.uk
01673 858555

THORNE

HELPING BEEKEEPERS KEEP BEES FOR OVER 100 YEARS

Hives, Bees, Frames, Foundation
Hardware and Clothing
Processing, Labels, Packaging
Queen Rearing
Health and Feeding
Books, Gifts, Hive Products
Candlemaking

ORDER ONLINE OR IN STORE

RAND

Beehive Business Park, Rand
Nr Wragby, Market Rasen LN8 5NJ
sales@thorne.co.uk 01673 858555

STOCKBRIDGE

Chilbolton Down Farm
Chilbolton Down
Stockbridge
Hampshire SO20 6BU
stockbridge@thorne.co.uk
01264 810916

WINDSOR

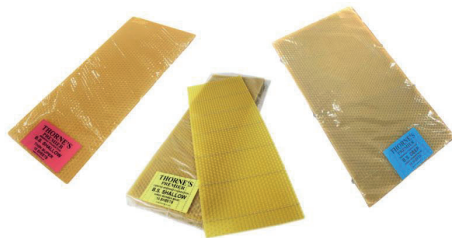
Oakley Green Farm
Oakley Green
Windsor, SL4 4PZ
windsor@thorne.co.uk
01753 830256

DEVON

Quince Honey Farm
Aller Cross
South Molton, EX36 3RD
devon@thorne.co.uk
01769 573086

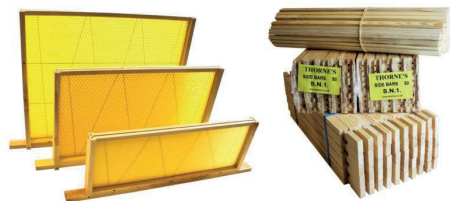
SCOTLAND

Newburgh Ind Est
Cupar Road, Newburgh
Fife, KY14 6HA
scotland@thorne.co.uk
01337 842596



Foundation

Premier or Standard grade; wired or unwired
worker or drone base, thin super for cut comb



Frames

Available ready assembled or flat packed



Hives and hive parts

W.B.C., National, Commercial, Langstroth
Dadant, Smith, Warre, Top Bar

The Essex Beekeeper

Issue 675

March 2021

In this issue

Chair Annual Report for AGM 2021

Minutes of the 140th Annual General
Meeting

Minutes of the Extraordinary
General Meeting, 5th January 2021

141st Annual General Meeting,
20 March 2021 at 2pm

EBKA 141st Annual General
Meeting held on 20 March 2021
at 2pm

A thank you from the President

Bee training webinars

Time for that first proper spring check?



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

Furthering the Craft of Beekeeping in Essex
Registered Charity number 1031419



Chair Annual Report for AGM 2021

What a difference a year makes! For many of us, I suspect, the 2020 EBKA AGM on 7th March was the last large gathering of any kind that we attended (as I write this in February). The Ted Hooper Memorial Lecture, organised for the 21st March, was the first of many Essex Beekeepers' events to fall casualty to this Covid year.

Chelmsford, as Host Division in 2020/21, began with a strict review of the Risk Assessment for the AGM at Writtle College, bearing in mind the extra hazards involved with the emerging pandemic; they provided an excellent tea alongside the hand sanitizer. With the CEC, they have agreed that they will take their responsibilities as Host Division through 2021/2022. This may be a precedent in the long history of EBKA, although it would be interesting to know what happened during the wars. I don't expect anyone has a long enough memory, but perhaps someone knows? So, Chelmsford will Chair the AGM this March on Zoom (sadly without refreshments) but will hopefully provide refreshments at the Honey Show – given that a Honey Show will take place in some form this coming September. The organisation of the 2020 Annual Conference was well in hand, so there'll be a straight transfer, again, all being well, to October 2021. Then Harlow will take on being Host Division in March 2022 and the rota continue from there. I think we will have to accept, that in these unpredictable times, it is difficult to know where we will be later in 2021, so all our flagship events may be subject to adaptation in format and possibly timing, for the coming year.

Alas, so many of our meetings, courses and exams have had to be cancelled in 2020, at Divisional, County and National level. This is in line with the various legal requirements at

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 Simon Nicholson
E: sr.nicholson@virgin.net

Harlow Nick Holmes
E: wwwcight@gmail.com

Romford Jim McNeill
E: jimandliz44@aol.co.uk

Saffron Walden Linda Yeats
E: Linda_yeats@btinternet.com

Colchester Andrew Linley
E: Andy@redmog.co.uk

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	John Le Seve	T: 07504 714134
Chelmsford	Fiona Cutting	T: 07799-180011
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

Buzz Project's activities, e.g. <https://kirklees.cityofsanctuary.org/2020/04/23/the-buzz-project> as well as a link to their [Facebook page](#).

Calling all budding editors! Can you help?

We are looking for an editor of the Essex Beekeeper as I am now stepping down after two years. Please contact me for more information via email, robert.silver@outlook.com

the time or just because it has been expedient to do so, given the demographic of our membership. Some events have taken place, with very careful risk assessments, but organising social distancing after meetings is difficult. More cautious Divisions have provided 1:1 buddying, especially for new or novice beekeepers and all have extended Beginners' Courses from last year which were curtailed. WhatsApp and other group communications have been a great asset during the season and many useful conversations were dispersed far and wide for mutual education. But it is Zoom and other virtual media platforms that have really come to the fore. There have been so many lectures from our usual local experts and from further afield, using more famous names. Some of our most experienced and qualified beekeepers have jointly presented an extended Zoom course for preparation for the BBKA General Husbandry Examination throughout the winter season for thirty Essex members. Also, we have had Zoom demonstrations and more unofficial get togethers to discuss beekeeping topics. Divisions have been able to share their meetings much more easily than when they incurred long drives across the County, so we have had a year of good mixing through EBKA. An extended Zoom licence was taken out to enable larger audiences. The CEC and Divisional committees have also been able to continue their business in the comfort of home using Zoom. This has included their AGMs, and now the EBKA one.

There has been much progress this year in the business of the EBKA at the CEC. The revised and comprehensive Trustees' Handbook has been completed and uploaded along with the Policies for the Association. We are a complex association of nine semi-autonomous divisions, but as one charity, all divisional policies must comply with these overarching documents. This also applies to all the rules of the Association.

For instance, the Divisions must comply with the Health & Safety Policy of the EBKA, including all requirements for Risk Assessment, especially in these Covid times. As a collegiate body, any relevant information or considerations should be referred by divisional committees to the trustees at the CEC who bear the responsibility.

We made considerable effort into the possible conversion of EBKA to a CIO. I refer you to my article in the February 2021 Essex Beekeeper, where there is a detailed account of the work done, decisions made and the reasons for them. The trustees voted unanimously to defer any application to the Charity Commission for CIO conversion. The effort and expense needed to convert were seen to outweigh the small benefits conferred by the new legal status.

An EGM was held in December, attended by 21 members to update the EBKA Rules. These were minor adjustments and can be viewed on the EBKA website.

The CEC welcomed one new trustee in 2020, Chris Allen, for Southend Division, and the return of Michael Webb as Acting General Secretary after the resignation of Tony Rand in July. Pat Allen also stepped up to plate again, after completing her term as President, and has taken on the role of County Treasurer. We have also welcomed Jean Smye as our new President.

This year both Don McHale and Vanessa Wilkinson have completed their terms as trustees for Epping Forest and Saffron Walden Divisions, respectively. Vanessa has also co-ordinated the compilation of the Trustee Handbook and been CEC Minutes Secretary. Salma Attan and Katy Langley are stepping down as joint Bee Health Secretaries, and Ted Gradosielski as Chair of the Governance sub-committee. All

managed by Dr Alsous himself. The escalating conflict forced the difficult decision to flee the bombings and seek safety in England, and he joined his family in Huddersfield in 2013.

On arriving in the UK, Dr Alsous reflected on how to rebuild his life, determined to overcome the adversity he was living through. Among the few possessions he had brought with him was his old smoker, a reminder of his past life and hopefully the beginning of a new.

In Huddersfield, he approached the local beekeeping community, offering his skills where needed and building new connections. He was extremely fortunate to be offered a hive of bees, which he nurtured and was eventually able to build up to a modest apiary, an act of kindness for which he is grateful to this day.

Determined to give back to the community which had helped him, and with the aid of a local steering group, Dr Alsous founded *The Buzz Project*, a charity serving local unemployed and disadvantaged people. Through the project, vulnerable people are mentored in beekeeping and, through a shared purpose, are empowered to build a sense of community and belonging. The therapeutic returns have been immense for all involved and the project has gone from strength to strength.

The Buzz Project sits within the umbrella of Sanctuary Kirklees, a charity whose goal is to create a local network of groups and organisations, which are places of safety for people seeking sanctuary, helping them integrate into their local communities.

If you would like to find out more about Sanctuary Kirklees and the commendable work they do, information can be found on their website <https://kirklees.cityofsanctuary.org>. Their home page includes links where you can read about The

Dr Ryad Alsous and The Buzz Project

Maria Little, Braintree division

With restrictions for Covid-19 curtailing all beekeeping gatherings over the last year, many divisions have organised regular Zoom presentations to try to fill the void. Braintree division have hosted a number of very interesting and entertaining speakers, covering a wide variety of topics, guaranteed to enrich the beekeeping skills and knowledge of all attendees.

The latest of our Zoom speakers was Dr Ryad Alsous, who gave a fascinating account of his beekeeping experiences, both in his homeland of Syria, and here in the UK where he has now settled.

Dr Alsous began his talk with reminiscences of his life in the beautiful city of Damascus. He had started out on his beekeeping career in 1974, perfecting his craft over many years and eventually managing over 500 colonies of the indigenous Syrian honeybee *Apis mellifera syriaca*. After founding the beekeeping programme at the University of Damascus, Syria's oldest and most prestigious university, Dr Alsous gained his PhD in Food Science and worked on a number of research projects in honey biochemistry, whilst continuing to lecture at the university and mentor student beekeepers.

However, this idyll was to end abruptly, precipitated by the breakout of civil war in 2011. As citizens fled from all over Syria, the city of Damascus became a focus for bomb strikes. Dr Alsous recounted how, as well as devastating the lives of the ordinary Syrian people, the ravages of war decimated the wildlife and livestock in the surrounding country. Over 80% of all honeybee colonies were destroyed, including all 500

have given their time generously. In particular, I must mention Ted, who has seen through the updating of the EBKA policies both at the Governance sub-committee stage and with the CEC; Katy and Salma have provided us with outstanding informative articles on bee health in the magazine, along with much other work, including the AHAT co-ordination. Thanks also to two General Secretaries, Tony Rand and Michael Webb. Tony worked hard on the CIO application earlier in the year and has been ably followed by Michael Webb, returning after completing his stint as official General Secretary a few years ago, and bringing a careers-worth of expertise to the role. Last but not least, Robert Silver is stepping down as Editor of The Essex Beekeeper. He has done a diligent and thorough job, taking the magazine smoothly through a time of great change in its production, and we are all very sorry that his other commitments now prevent him from continuing in the role. Thank you all.

Work has continued in developing the eR2 system with Divisional Treasurers, so special thanks go to Pat Allen and Jan Tutton for facilitating this. Thanks also to all the committee, especially for their extra work on the CIO; and to John Rhodes, member at Saffron Walden, for his professional guidance.

We are still short of some key roles on the CEC including a County Membership Secretary, Education Secretary and a Health & Safety Co-ordinator. The main responsibility for Health and Safety must fall to the Divisions, as that is where most of the activities are set up. We are intending to organise a Training Day to share ideas and learn more about this important statutory obligation. Finally, we need a new Editor for the Essex Beekeeper. Please volunteer!

The BBKA ADM, held as usual in January, was attended this year on Zoom by three EBKA CEC members; Richard Ridler,

the Essex ADM representative who votes on our behalf; Pat Allen, Treasurer, and I as Chair, attended as observers/reserves. I am pleased to report that the meeting format had been carefully organised so that the complex voting was run accurately and fairly. It did involve using 3 laptops chez Ridler! I mention this ADM particularly, as you will remember that during the year, the BBKA circulated two consultative documents, on the voting system and admission rules at BBKA. The first suggested that the voting system be changed so that the votes would be weighted in favour of smaller beekeeping associations. Currently, there is no weighting. This means that the bigger associations, like Essex, hold more voting power. You were asked to feed back to your trustee. Padraig Floyd wrote an article in the Essex Beekeeper against the proposal (indeed, he also ably represented this case at the ADM). The CEC decided that our delegate should vote against the change. The ADM voted to keep the status quo, but by a slim margin. The other proposal passed was that any new applications for membership of the BBKA must have a minimum of 75 members and the process be investigated by the BBKA Executive Committee following rigorous entry guidelines. Lastly, and importantly, the subs for membership of BBKA will be raised by £2 per person from January 2022. This was a controversial topic, many delegates suggesting that this was not a good time, when little was happening in person in beekeeping and many people throughout the country were under financial pressure. However, the subs have not been increased for six years and the motion was passed. Neither EBKA nor our divisions have had a high spending year. The Essex ADM delegate will, as always, present the details of the ADM to the CEC at its March meeting.

This Annual report is for our EBKA members. A relevant and compliant report for the Charity Commission will be made

dysentery and leave a tell tail faeces stains in and outside of the hive. Clean comb via a Bailey Comb Change is the recommended method to deal with it and consider re-queening if severe.

Pathogens are responsible for disease and it is highly recommended that you change comb every 2/3 years or if it is dark in colour. You may choose a regular change of several frames, a [Bailey Comb Change](#) or a Shook Swarm to do this when the weather has warmed up further and the bees are able to draw out foundation.

Room - Your first inspection may surprise you – many did for me last year so be ready to add supers, especially if there is any kind of flow (OSR?). If you have overwintered in nucs, again be ready to upgrade to a full hive, albeit a dummied down one. The rule is if they are properly on 80% of the frames during build up then they need more space. You may wish to leave out the queen excluder for a week or two if your added box is foundation.

Conversely you may have a very small colony that is on 2/3 frames. Very quickly pop it into a nuc box after checking the store levels until it has properly built up.

Stores - Colonies use up a massive amount of stores in the early spring and it is when you are most likely to lose your colony. Make sure they have sufficient stores and be ready to feed with either fondant or light syrup if warm enough. If they have a couple of frames of stores then there is no need to feed further as this may well clog up the brood nest which in turn spark swarming. It is a balancing act. Please do not feed honey as this is a conduit for EFB/AFB.

And lastly don't forget to update your record cards and check your hive details are correct on Beebase. 🐝

Disease - the spring inspection is a chance to assess your colony properly. EFB and AFB are clearly the most important and EFB is present throughout a lot of Essex. EFB affects the unsealed brood (E-Early) Your brood pattern should be uniform with the larvae plump, pearly white in colour and segmented. If larvae are contorted, brown or yellow or appear melted or dried out then EFB may be present. AFB (A-after brood is sealed) affects the sealed brood and the the cappings will likely be sunken, dark and greasy looking. Finally dark scales will be found at the bottom/side of cells affected.

To properly check for disease the bees should be gently shaken off into the hive and then the frame held at an angle of 30° from the horizontal with the sun behind you. The cells can then be properly examined. Any semi sealed cappings with jagged edges should be properly examined with the larva removed with a matchstick. Always dispose of the matchstick and larva in your smoker.

Further details and photographs are available on [Beebase here](#).

If you suspect either EFB or AFB you must contact the Regional / Seasonal Bee Inspector.

Deformed Wing Virus may be evident with bees with small shrivelled wings and shiny, hairless bodies, possibly wandering around as if drunk. This is likely to be a varroa led problem – can you also see white dust like particles in cells? Well that is likely to be varroa faeces. Many colonies fail to make it through the winter due to varroa overload so make sure you treat.

Nosema (depending its variety) may cause the bees to have

after the AGM.

We look forward to real meetings with real people and real bees in the not-too-distant future!

Jane Ridler

CEC Chair, February 2021 🐝

141st Annual General Meeting

to be held virtually on

Saturday 20 March 2021 at 2pm

By Zoom

Joining details to be made available to members later in the month

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 140th AGM held on 7th March 2020 (attached)
3. Minutes of the EGM held on 5th January 2021 (attached)
4. Report of the Chair of the Central Executive Committee (CEC) (attached)
5. Proposition:

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

6. General Treasurer's Report & Approval of the 2020 Accounts
7. Written Reports of other members of the CEC
8. Election of County Officers (Trustees)
CEC Chair,
General Treasurer, and
General Secretary
9. Notification of the 2021 Divisional Voting Members and 2022 Presiding Officer
10. Election of County (non Trustee) Appointees
President
BBKA Delegate
Editor (*The Essex Beekeeper*)
Education Secretary
Examinations Secretary
NHS Delegate
EBKA Show Secretary
Bee Health Secretary
11. Notification of CEC Appointees and Co-opted Members
12. Confirmation of the Accounts Examiner (External Auditor)
13. 2021 Conference Preview
14. Installation of the 2021 Presiding Officer
15. Reading from the Book of Commemoration

is needed, therefore larvae are likely to be present. If there are bees cruising round before entering then you may have a colony that is being robbed. A few dead bees visible outside the front is acceptable and are the winter bees dying off after their 6 month shift and being thrown out. A large pile may well be something more serious. If you have more than one hive, watch the differences between them.

So, time to open – use just a little smoke and gently remove the crown board/ekes/feeders as they are likely to well propolised down, and we do not want to upset the bees unnecessarily. Do your inspection with purpose knowing why you are doing it and what you are looking for.

So what are we looking for in the first spring inspection? The same as we normally do – Ted Hooper's five reasons, for which I use the mnemonic **QQ DRS**.

Queen – is she there, doing what she should be doing? Check for single eggs laid properly at the bottom of cells in a decent circular pattern without 'pepperpotting'? Can you see the queen? If marked previously and you cannot see her, then she may have been superseded. If you do see a new queen do not clip or mark until she is definitely laying properly. Otherwise re-mark if necessary. If your queen has failed and you have laying workers you will have little option other than to shake them out.

Queen cells – hopefully you will not see swarm cells during your first inspection but it is not unknown, so now is the time to read up on what to do with different types of cells. If you have a queen who is starting to fail you may see supersedure cells

[Read up more from Wally Shaw's book](#), There are queen cells in my hive - what should I do?, published and funded by the

or colonies into the UK. Queens are permitted provided they are declared and pass through specific Border Control Points and only Heathrow and Manchester airports are accepting invertebrates. All Queen cages together with any attendant workers must be sent to Fera Science Labs for full inspection.

Is it legal?

This means that any newly imported bees (and you can still order them over the internet for this summer) will have been brought in either by blatant flouting of the law or by exploiting a small loophole in the regulations, they will have been 'smuggled' in legally via the Northern Ireland border with the EU.

I am making this point to inform you of this practice and to encourage us all to be responsible beekeepers.

Give local bees a chance. 🐝

Time for that first proper spring check?

by Robin Harman, Epping Forest division

The beekeeping season will soon be upon us and this will mean the first real check of the year. You will of course been regularly hefting your hives and feeding if light.

By mid to late February it will be time to start considering your first inspection, so when and how should we do it?

A fine day when the temperature is at least 10°C, preferably 14°C with little or no wind or rain. The bees can help you with this – if they are flying in good numbers, then the time is right, if not: delay.

First of all spend time watching the hive from a few feet away. If you see bees flying in and out with purpose with some carrying pollen then that is good evidence that pollen

Awards and certificates to be presented at the 2021 Annual Conference

The Virtual AGM Keynote Speech:

Tony Gunton – Solitary Bees 🐝

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

EBKA 141st Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 20 March 2021 at 2pm

Following the Divisional AGMs which were held virtually this year, the Association's AGM is to use a similar format. Members will be invited to join the Zoom meeting remotely using their computer, tablet or mobile phone. Details of how to join the meeting will be available later in the month. Members will be able to join the meeting from 1.30pm on the day to register their attendance.

The Meeting's Agenda is included in this edition of the magazine as is the minutes of the 140th AGM and the EGM held on 5 January this year. The Chair of the CEC's Annual Report to Members at the AGM is also featured for members to read prior to the meeting.

The County Treasurer's Report and 2020 Accounts for approval at the meeting will be issued later in the month together with notification of the election of the County Officers and County Appointees.

As in previous years, there will be a keynote speech following the AGM. This year's virtual address by Tony Gunton, is on Solitary Bees. Tony has been observing Solitary Bees for the last 10 years, managing Cranham Marsh on behalf of the Essex Wildlife Trust where he has been a member for 30 years and chair of the Havering Wildlife project, the Borough's biodiversity partnership. It seems an appropriate topic, following a year when many of our members have experienced isolation, that Tony will talk about female bees making their own nest rather than cooperating with others to raise young like social bees. However, the lifestyle and behaviour of the 250 or so species in the UK varies enormously and is a fascinating subject to close the business of the AGM.

In the meantime, regarding importing bees, you will be aware that as the transition period of leaving the EU came to an end in December 2020, this means there have been some significant changes in the regulations regarding import and export livestock and that includes honeybees.

Below is an excerpt from the National Bee Unit (NBU) Southeast Annual report.

'EU law prohibits or restricts the import of specific goods from third countries that are deemed to present an unacceptable level of animal, plant or public health risk. These prohibitions and restrictions will be transposed into UK law at the end of the Transition Period.'

As GB and the EU are expected to be treating each other as third countries from a bee health point of view, these restrictions and prohibitions will currently prevent or restrict mutual trade in bees.

As a result, importers will only be able to import queens from the EU. Any associated packaging (including queen cages and attendant workers) will have to be sent to a designated laboratory for examination and for honey bees this is Fera Science. Importing packages or colonies will no longer be possible after the 31st December 2020. From 1st July 2021 imported queens will have to pass through a Border Control Point (BCP). Currently, only BCPs at Heathrow and Manchester airports will accept imports of invertebrates, which includes bees. The National Bee Unit will continue to carry out physical checks on consignments of queens according to risk.'

For a full update from the NBU 2020 [annual reports click here](#).

In short, as the EU and UK currently now regard each other as third countries, it is technically illegal to import package bees



Image of prehistoric honeybee, a fossil from the late Oligocene period, 23-34 million years ago.

be another ‘accidentally’ introduced invasive species, despite all the appropriate checks, regulations and procedures that will, of course have been followed correctly.

I am just asking, when will we ever learn? On behalf of our bees, that we are supposed to be responsible for and owe a duty of care, I’m pointing out

that saying sorry after such an ‘accidental’ event is a bit futile to say the least!

Not all Bees are the same

Another thing to consider when thinking about buying imported stock is, as you will know, imported bees originate from different lineage groupings that have genetically evolved in totally different ecological systems over thousands if not millions of years. They do struggle to adapt to our inclement climate and their behavioural traits are suited to completely different seasonal rhythms.

I won’t go into this subject too deeply here but I will just say that I began to fully support the approach of only raising queens from localised bees (the darker the better) when I understood that not all honeybees are the same.

As responsible beekeepers, we need to work out what sustainable beekeeping could and should actually mean.

If this is of interest to our members, we will look deeper into this subject in the future.

Leaving the EU

Michael Webb

EBKA Acting Secretary

7 February 2021 🐝

Essex Beekeepers’ Association

Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting at 6.30pm on Tuesday 5th January 2021 held virtually using Zoom

These minutes will be presented as an agenda item at the 2021 EBKA AGM as a record of the proceedings.

Chairing in the meeting, the Presiding Officer: Jan Tutton, Chelmsford Division

Those present: 21 members, their names and Division represented are shown as an appendix to the Minutes.

Notice having been given in accordance with the Rules of the EBKA, the meeting had been called to approve the updating of the Rules of the EBKA. The last time that the Rules were updated was January 2016.

The meeting opened with an address from the Presiding Officer who noted that the CEC agreed at their meeting in November 2020 to revise the Rules to include:-

- propositions agreed at previous AGMs,
- technical changes resulting from the introduction of eR2,
- changes in the title and function of recognised roles in the EBKA

- the revised timing of the remittance of capitation to the Treasurer,
- updating the Rule on the venue and format of holding AGMs,
- updating of the Rule on holding of separate bank accounts and petty cash,
- formalising the procedure to change names

A review of the proposed Rules changes were given by Michael Webb, the EBKA Acting Secretary and were as follows:-

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

procedures)

I know the Bee Inspectors are stretched and are doing the best they can.

Before you buy bees from importers, things to consider are firstly, the global trade in bees is a direct threat to biosecurity and inevitably, despite the controls, will introduce new invasive species, new pests and new diseases. Nosema ceranae and the Varroa mite are two examples from the recent past that has changed beekeeping forever.

The Asian Hornet, Tropilaelaps and Small Hive Beetle (SHB) are just waiting in the wings.

SHB in Italy

On that note, Italy is still having difficulties with trying to eradicate the Small Hive Beetle that was introduced (accidently of course) into the southern region of Calabria in the Summer of 2014.

So, if things carry on and its 'business as usual', it is only a matter of time before we will have the same suppliers selling us new Beetle Traps as an additional profit line.

It seems that money always speaks louder than common sense.

Just to be clear, I am not against commercial enterprise, and I am not saying that these invasive species will be introduced intentionally, I'm sure that everyone has good intentions, suppliers who have a single commercial interest to sell as many bees and queens as they can despite the genetic damage this practise does to our local stock, are just responding to demand.

I'm surmising that sooner or later, there will inevitably

and the NatBIP program was launched to encourage and offer support to beekeepers to raise their own bees from their own localised stock. (localised; acclimatised and locally bred bees.)

A key aim of the NatBIP initiative is to reverse the ever-growing national trend to import more and more bees and queens from abroad, a practice that prevents beekeepers from improving the bees that they already have.

Bee Imports

On the subject of purchasing imported bees from commercial suppliers, please, please think carefully before you buy. The impact on our environment and our native honeybee is truly serious.

Our native or near-native dark bees have some fantastic qualities and because new queens naturally mate openly with up to around 15 drones, we are losing their genetic inheritance through dilution and random hybridization.

Imports into the UK in last three years are: Source. [NBU Beebase](#).

	2018	2019	2020
Queens imported	15,946	20,081	21,405
Bees: Packages, nucs & colonies	2,022	2,789	2,455
Consignments imported	356	414	318
Consignments inspected	171	188	159

Please note the difference between the number of consignments imported and the number of consignments inspected; just under 50%. (these numbers are from imports that were declared and have gone through the proper

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 to be paid from a Petty Cash Account kept for the purpose.

Rule 20 All Divisional Committees shall:

Change paragraph (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:-

our members are to each other. Older members that have needed help with their bees or have been shielding have received help and support from you. They have also been helped by zoom meetings.

Sadly, a number of our beekeeping friends have died over the last year and our warmest thoughts go out to their families and friends.

We have been very fortunate in that we have our lovely bees to look after, whether they are in our garden or out in the Countryside. It gives us time to reflect on life's priorities. I hope that you will not only continue to be kind to each other but also to yourselves.

Very Best Wishes for the coming year. 🐝



Native dark bee, *Apis mellifera mellifera*
(image: Jo Widdicombe, Cornwall)

Bee training webinars

by Jonathan Brookhouse

For some winter learning, I can whole-heartedly recommend the BIBBA series of webinars, these are part of their National Bee Improvement Program, or NatBIP for

short. These webinars are freely available for anyone to view. There is already a set of 14 recorded webinars available from last year 2020, and a further 20 are planned for 2021. The webinars are graded according to beekeeping experience so you can choose which ones would suit you.

BIBBA as an organisation, is committed to the conservation of our native dark honeybees, *Apis mellifera mellifera* (Amm)

A thank you from the President

Jean Smye, EBKA President

Another year is upon us and we can only hope that this will be a better one. Having said that I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all fellow bee-keepers and to your partners and spouses. You have all worked hard over the last 12 months in so many ways making sure that you stay connected to members. Not just in your own Division but throughout EBKA and nationally. This has been possible with Zoom and Webinar meetings. I have attended a number of such meetings and very much enjoyed them.



Within the County there have been socially distanced honey tastings and amazingly, a Divisional Honey Show. A great deal of work went into those events ensuring that everyone involved stayed safe. These events must have been a great morale booster.

I have to say that it has been very weird not fulfilling my job description as President by not having the pleasure of giving out any prizes. Historically, the President is expected to attend CEC meetings, with or without portfolio. The CEC is an amazing group of people who are rarely fazed by difficult issues and when the chair asks for a volunteer, a hand will go up or some-one will say "I'll do it", and so the wheels keep turning.

I have been very much aware over this last year of how kind

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 six entries in **Rule 7** and the one entry in **Rules 16 and 18**.

At the request of the Presiding Officer, those members present voted unanimously to accept all the changes set out above.

The Secretary reported that the agreed changes to the Rules dated January 2021 would be made with a copy being sent to the Charity Commissioners and the BBKA. The revised Rules would appear on the EBKA Website. Some paper copies would be printed for record purposes.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7pm.

Appendix of those members who attended the meeting and voted

Braintree and District

Bridget Mudd

Chelmsford

Fiona Cutting

Brian Spencer

Jan Tutton **Presiding Officer**

Colchester

Tom Geddes

Dengie Hundred, Maldon and District

Glenn Mayes

Epping Forest

Salma Attan

Katy Langley

Simon Nicholson

Romford

Pat Allen

Jim McNeill

Terry Watson

Michael Webb Acting Secretary

Saffron Walden

Stephanie Green

Jane Ridler

Richard Ridler

Robert Silver

Vanessa Wilkinson

Antony Yeats

Linda Yeats

Southend-on-Sea and District

Jean Smye 🐝

25

**15:00 - Apiary meeting,
Braintree Division**

*Address: Daws Hall Trust,
Henny Road, Bures, CO8 5EX*

28

**15:00 - tbc, Southend
Division**

*Address: WI Hall, Bellingham
Lane, Rayleigh SS6 7ED*

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

Meetings in February 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.

March 2021

04 20:00 – 22:00 - tbc, Harlow Division

Address: tba

04 20:00 - Using mini nucs, by Pat Allen, Romford Division

Address: tbc

16 20:00 – 21:30 - Cooking with Honey, Chelmsford Division

Zoom meeting

17 19:30 for 20:00 - Swarming made simple, with Eric Beaumont, Maldon Division

Zoom meeting

20 14:00 - EBKA AGM via Zoom

Zoom meeting

24 19:30 – 21:30 - tbc, Southend Division

Address: tba

26 19:30- 'We'll meet again'. Post-covid social gathering with buffet (Covid rules permitting). Or a Zoom special, Braintree Division

Address: White Notley Village Hall

Exact date tbc - First hive inspection of 2021, with Jane and Richard Ridler

Zoom meeting

April 2021

01 20:00 – 22:00 - tbc, Harlow Division

Address: tba

07 19:30 - Reading your Bees with Robert Pickford, Saffron Walde Division

Zoom - Q&A and discussion

20 19:30 – 21:00 - Comb Changing - The full Monty, Chelmsford Division

Address: tba

21 19:30 for 20:00 - Keep it clean –Brood comb replacement, with Bob Smith, Maldon Division

Zoom

24 BBKA Module Exams online

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 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

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. 🐝

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

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 Crataegus. 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

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

- 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

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

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.