

ESSEX BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION - ROMFORD DIVISION

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 11th July 2024, 7.30 pm

Via Zoom

Present: Pat Allen (PA), Garry Furnell (GF), Rob Hyde (RobH), Norman McDonald (NMCD), Rose McCarthy (RMCC), Jim McNeill (JMcN), Filippo Negri (FN), Sue Richardson (SR), Alan Sansford (AS), Terry Watson (TW), John Whittard (JW).

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Doyland (DD Dawn), Roger Honey (RogerH), Angela Mander (AM), Julie Mugglestone (JM), Lorna Pattle (LP), Paul Wiltshire (PW).
2. **Minutes of previous meeting 16.5.24:** Minutes agreed and to be signed.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda:** none.
4. **Correspondence not otherwise on agenda:** SR received an invitation from Carol Edwards at Eastbrookend to have a stand at their Bee and Butterfly Bonanza day on Wednesday 31st July. An email was sent out to members asking for volunteers. Unfortunately, only 3 people have replied, and it was decided that this was not enough as the gazebo and table are heavy. SR to email Carol Edwards to say we are unable to attend. **Action SR.**

5. Regular Reports

5.1 Trustee/DVM: Points of interest from the CEC meeting that took place on 2nd July 2024:

Items from other Divisions:

Chelmsford - They are active on visiting societies and schools to deliver talks. Practical training complete. The trainees visited 5 different apiaries so as to experience different hives and colonies.

Southend - Bee inspector visited on 21 May, all hives clear.

Braintree -40 Swarms collected so far, 2nd of 2 day microscopy course completed.

Maldon & Dengie -A few talks given to schools.

Saffron Waldon - Bees wax candle making workshop completed and 2 day basic assessment course done. Apikel feed moved to new site and on sale. £983 honey sales.

Colchester - Wax day in June Tendering Show on 13th July. Does anyone know a Mr Gunn as he has EBKA medals to donate but no one at Colchester knows any history of this gentleman?

Essex Honey Show- Committee met and all going well. Should be a mail shot going out soon.

Guidance on making a publication has been drawn up. There was discussion on how far reaching the guidance would be applied and it was agreed this would only be for information published outside of the EBKA. The document will be available on the website soon.

Membership Secretary- Total membership across Essex as 1140. The Essex County Primary Schools Writtle Food and Farm day went well.

Exam Report - none

Treasurers Report - CEC General funds held are £49.3k. Spends this month were £956 on the Ted Hooper lecture, £900 on the Audit fee and £719 on divisional grant. Income was £660 from bank interest, £7041 on gift aid and £1,564 capitation.

Assets still available - Items that have been returned from Harlow following their shut down, are all still available to divisions to take what they want.

Note from PA: PA is still handling bank payments for EBKA despite having retired from treasurer, as the CAF bank has still not changed the mandates.

5.2 Chair: not present.

5.3 Secretary:

SR sent out an email to members asking why they had not entered last year's honey show. Also asking for any feedback. Only one reply received! So no further forward with reasons why members did not enter or attend the harvest supper.

5.4 Treasurer:

Latest accounts to be emailed to the committee. The division has just over £20,656 in the bank. We have received £776 for conference tickets. A good start. **Action RMcC.**

5.5 Show Secretary: Date for this year's show has been changed to Saturday 19th October as Claire O'Brien was not available for 12th October. Addition of new class –Aroma of Honey - members enter a jar of any type of honey, everyone tastes it and votes for their favourite and highest number of votes wins. Bring jars in with honey show entries, tasting to take place as soon as members arrive at the supper? Will be time to count votes before supper? Committee did not come up with any other classes. Show schedule needs to be done.

5.6 Apiary Wardens

5.6.1 Havering: There are lots of blackberries and nettles. Otherwise all OK. We will need a working party over there, December? When bees are not so active.

5.6.2 Hornchurch: There are 11 active hives. Will need a working party – December or beginning of 2025.

5.6.3 The Chase and Bee Garden: All OK. Dada has an empty hive in situ, but no bees.

5.6.4 Teaching Apiary: there are 6 colonies, 2 of these nucs. Not all are queen right as they are replacing their queens. PA will visit tomorrow, 12th July, to decide which colonies to use for Sunday's taster course, and to prepare the observation hive for the stall at the fete on the green on Saturday 13th. Will need to decide which colonies to take into winter. FN said there were lots of flowers in the centre meadow area and he will cut the grass next week. FN has collected the apiary mower from Jilly Speakman- Bell, but the grass collection box is missing, she is going to look for it. GF opened the large colony at the taster session on Saturday 6th July; it has 5 supers on it. A good strong colony. **Action PA, FN.**

6. Programme 2024:

DD not present but message received – no other topics/ speakers booked for meetings after August so any suggestions gratefully received. August – Honey show preparation. Discussion – September – Dave Garret from Chelmsford on Asian Hornet updates?

7. Courses 2024:

Beginners' Course: finished.

Taster Sessions: Saturday 6th July - 8 people attended and GF said that 2 of the attendees have shown an interest in the 2025 beginners course. Thanks to PW who came all the way in to bring the projector; Thames Chase were unable to provide one, but did not inform us. Sunday 14th July – 4 people booked in. We need to vacate the education room after the talk, as on 6th we had to leave belongings in there whilst in the apiary due to the rain, and got a ticking off from Thames Chase staff!

8. Asian Hornet Team: TW said that there is poor communication between the BBKA and AH coordinators. 4 hornets have been found in East Sussex, and 2 nests in St Margarets Bay, Kent. There are 76 AH groups but oddly not one for Essex? Discussion as to how to update BBKA AH co-ordinator map – via eR2. TW needs to be AH coordinator on BBKA website. PA looked on eR2 and found drop downs to add members as “beekeeper verifier” PA will update as appropriate. Hopefully this will update the map. Updating of swarm collecting list is ongoing. GF should be on Romford Division's swarm collection list, he is on the WhatsApp group. Website page needs updating, also with change of postcodes for a couple of beekeepers. Zak Bickhan has requested confirmation from PA for update. **Action PA, SR.**

9. **EBKA Conference 2024:** *message received from JM* - The conference is moving along nicely. We have launched the sale of tickets, as we have our 3 speakers and venue booked. IT equipment all booked. More raffle prizes needed. Planning and fine tuning for the actual day – who does what. We set a target to launch mid- June and we were not far off from that target. Happy days, we can breathe! RH said that name badges were needed. JMcN has put wildflower seeds into envelopes. **Action JM.**
10. **Bulk Buys 2024:** PA and AS to chat about choice of varroa treatments. AS to do order form and email to members. NMCD asked whether it would be a good idea to do a bulk buy of sugar as the cost has risen so much. It was discussed and thought that the logistics of storing a bulk buy might be difficult. Maybe if someone sees sugar at a good price they could alert committee and then members could be informed? **Action AS.**
11. **AOB:** NMCD asked whether Jilly Speakman-Bell had stepped down from taking notes at monthly meetings, PA confirmed that DD took notes when Jilly was not at the meetings.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 12th September – via Zoom

Meeting finished at 9.15 pm.

Chaired by Sue Richardson

Minutes - Sue Richardson