

# ACU EASTERN

(AFILIATED TO THE Auto Cycle Union)

Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the Board held Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2017 at Stanway Village Hall in the presence of

President	Mr A Penny
Chairman	Mr R G (Jack) Hearn
Vice Chairman	Mr A Foskew
Vice Chairman	Mr G Brace
Treasurer	Mr A Hay
Centre Secretary	Ms L Berwick

C Ralph	Woodbridge	P Tomlin	TOMCC
A R Chaplin	Sudbury/VP	G Garrod	Halstead
J Read	Woodbridge	Y Smith	ESSA
T Smith	Essex and Suffolk	G Garrod	Halstead
K Doherty	ECMC	R Greengrass	Lowestoft Invaders
A Brace	Chelmsford/VP	E Wass	Braintree
Mrs Y Smith	ESSA	A Kenny	Harwich
V Hearn	Stowmarket	K Weavers	Halstead
R Drane	Braintree	Mrs D Blyth	Woodbridge
		Mrs M Mellish	VP/Hon Life Member

1. Mr Hearn opened the meeting and welcomed all present.  
Apologies were accepted from: Mr P Ranson; Mrs M Armes; Mr D Clampin; Mr A Adams: Mr J Blyth: Mr P Sewter: Mr E Hood: Mr R Sayer: Mr D Slaughter.  
Mr Hearn gave the sad news of the loss of Derek York who had been a many times Grass Track champion (from 1953 to 1966) and riding in the Isle of Mann TT (1954 to 1974). Mr York was a well-respected figure within ACU Eastern. Funeral details will be published as they become available.
2. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2016 were proposed for approval by A Kenny 2<sup>nd</sup> R Chaplin. (amendments – should read 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting, and apologies are incorrect)
3. Matters Arising:  
Mr Kenny sought clarification on the amount agreed to be donated to the Centre Function following the last Board – it was confirmed that £500 had been agreed upon.  
D Blyth – asked if the date for online entries wording could be altered slightly to say NOT before the first of the month (amend to “in line with the Gazette date or subsequent to 4<sup>th</sup> of the month)  
K Weavers – enquired when there would be a Grass Track seminar – advised that it had been arranged this week – to be held on March 25<sup>th</sup> at Gt Blakenham Parish Rooms commencing at 10.30am. Information had been sent to Gazette editor and webmaster and all clubs had been circulated with the date.
4. Correspondence:  
Trials – Foreign Riders start permission/FIM Cover. G Thompson had sent an email stating that if foreign riders entered without the correct paperwork, clubs should charge an extra £20 to cover insurance/repatriation costs.  
Threat to UK Motorsport- email from Gary Thompson asking members to sign an online petition. A Kenny had signed the petition but had taken the time to investigate this further. In his view, the ACU have overreacted. The instigation for this had been a farm incident in Slovenia. He suggested that if anyone wanted to read about this, clauses 37-42 were the relevant parts of the directive.  
A Penny commented that it could affect, if it was enforced, any motor cycle whether road or off road used for any purpose, including competition.

Norfolk and Suffolk Juniors MCC – Ms Berwick had received an email from Donna Secker advising that new people had come forward to take over some of the positions therefore the club would be continuing. D Secker is now the club treasurer. She will advise of the names of the new personnel.

5. Financial Report: Mr A Hay reported that the Centre has returned an estimated surplus of £698. This has been achieved despite a significant drop in income, about £1400 less than budgeted. Less basic permitted events caused a drop in income of £550. Insurance commission received fell short of the £800 budget.

The surplus has been achieved by savings and underspending from the expenditure budget, the major underspend being the Inter Team Fund Budget as there were no events held in 2016.

Mr Hay had prepared a draft budget for 2017 which was specified on a spreadsheet for all present.

MX Account – as this runs from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> October, the only income has been from the reserved numbers scheme, currently £1380.00. Unreserved numbers go on sale on 4<sup>th</sup> February.

Timekeeping costs of £250 per event have been held ever since its introduction in 2012. This includes travel expenses incurred by the Timing Team. The income has fallen as there are less events to time and reliance on hire to N&SJMCC is uncertain. After consultation with Paul Sewter, it has been recommended that £2000 per annum needs to be retained to cover upgrades and insurance. This could mean that there would only be a £200 surplus. Any reduction in costs to clubs is welcome, but £200 is insufficient to allow for any reduction in providing timing services. Therefore, Mr Hay recommended that the Board awaits the final income fees for transponder hire during 2017 and if there is a reasonable surplus of at least £700, this money be added to the sponsorship monies and distributed to the organising clubs.

Mr Hay invited questions and comments:

A Kenny asked if Centre income was determined by the number of events/riders? Mr Hay responded that this is the case.

At the last Competitions Committee, the Trials section representatives had been upset that the trials riders seemed to be paying more into Centre funds than any other discipline. Mr hay had explained how the refunds of permit fees were returned (£50) but not until the end of each year. There is also to be a refund, retrospective to January 2016, of £25 per event. It is expected that this will be refunded during February.

Mr Kenny commented that the Board/Centre should support all disciplines.

Treasurers Recommendation: Mr Hay asked the Board to consider the following:

The Centre Board notes the provisional accounts for the financial year 2016, which are subject to final reconciliation.

That the Board extends the exemption of levies for low entry events which attract less than 30 entries, for a further 12 months.

The Centre Board adopts the draft budgets for 2017.

Proposed A Kenny 2<sup>nd</sup> A Foskew.

Mr Kenny proposed a vote of thanks to Mr A Hay.

6. Land Fund Update:

P Armes reported that he had not yet been able to call a subcommittee meeting but the following personnel will form such subcommittee: P Armes; E Wass; C Dopson; A Hay. Agreed by all present that this is acceptable. E Wass had been tasked to cost some equipment. Mr Armes will keep the Board updated as thing progress.

7. Competitions Committee Report:

Mr P Armes sought approval for the adoption on the minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> Competitions Meeting. Proposed K Weavers. 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs Y Smith.

Transponder – Mr Hay updated that the transponder had not been returned and that court proceedings have been instigated. He failed to file a defence so it looks as if judgement will be made for the centre. Mr Hay reported that despite Mr R Maclaren being placed on the stop list since June, he had ridden at Canada Height using another riders name and licence. Subsequently this came to light when Mr

Maclaren was injured and had to give his correct name to the medics. He and the other rider have to attend a court of inquiry at Rugby. The transponder from C Heights was also not returned.

Mr Armes referred to the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting (not circulated as not yet approved minutes).

Sponsorship: Mr Ralph reported that Paul Bickers of Bickers Lifting has agreed sponsorship of £2000. This will include free entry for Max Bickers for all 7 rounds. Monies to be shared between organising clubs. Mr Ralph will visit Mr Bickers to discuss advertising, feather flags, banners etc. Mrs D Blyth asked if the cost would come out of the sponsorship money – Mr Armes responded that the cost is usually met by the sponsor.

A new sponsor has come forward for the Holeshoot. HRM Boiler from Attleborough will fund this for £1000 and the top three experts and top three juniors will share the money at the end of the season.

John Chambers has funded this for the last two years but as his son is now taking up sidecar racing, he will help with that. He has been thanked on behalf of the Centre.

Vacancies on the competitions committee – Mr Armes reported that despite advertising this on the website and in the Gazette, no-one has come forward. Mr Armes asked if anyone showed an interest, they be referred to him.

Mr Armes has spoken to Paul Sewter regarding the website. Mr Sewter had circulated a document asking for approval to update and change the website as visits had been going down slowly. He suggested that he would like to integrate Facebook and twitter feeds to club sites. Mr Sewter intimated that he is happy to assist clubs with this. Mr Hay reported that this had already taken place for Norwich Vikings and was working well. Mr Greengrass commented that he had read the report that he did not want to be involved with Social Media. Mr Armes responded that it would not be compulsory. All present agreed that Mr Sewter's proposal should be approved.

Mr Armes reported that at a competitions committee it had been flagged up that there is a Facebook page entitled eastern centre Trials – Mr Armes has spoken to the person who controls this and asked him to rename the page as it gives a false impression that is it centre led.

D Blyth asked why the Centre could not have a Facebook Page of its own – A Hay responded that the Centre should be careful and the previous Forum page that was taken down was mentioned. Mr Hay also reported that the idea of a FB page had been discussed at Rugby and had been refused.

P Armes agreed to have a look at and liaise with Mr Hearn about finding a way to protect the Eastern Centre name.

Mr Kenny asked about the steward's report from Mr Mills which mentioned a 'serious incident' at Gt Hockham. It was confirmed that this had been a fatal accident.

#### 8. Access and Rights of Way report:

Mr R Drane reported that All Essex County Councillors who had previously been involved were no longer in that role and were now only used in advisory capacity, and that the tender had been awarded to Ringway Jacobs.

Mr Drane had attended a meeting last week and met with the project manager from Ringway Jacobs.

Mr Drane reported that there are three groups of closures to consider, the first group has now been finalised after an 18-month trial period and are now permanently closed, Group 2 has another winter to go and Group 3 is in its first winter closure period.

There had been 21 objections and there is a legal challenge in place by Essex trials Riders against Essex County Council.

Mr Drane had visited some of the lanes and reported that it was obvious that damage had not been caused by motorcycles. Mr Drane does send his complaints in as our Rights of Way Officer and stated that the rules are not being adhered to by either the Police or ECC. A Defra investigation previously had deemed that motorcycles were not detrimental to the environment. Mr Drane pointed out that byeways cannot be closed for one reason only, and this is where the flora and fauna issues come in. Mr Kenny asked if Mr Drane was aware that cycling groups have been requesting lanes to be opened up? He was aware.

Mr Drane stated that it would be useful in the Braintree Long Distance Trial date could be put back to the end of Summer towards November- Mr Armes agreed to speak with Mr C Cook regarding this.

Mr Drane commented that it would be beneficial if Clubs and their members could add their voices to his as it does affect several local clubs. Ms Berwick agreed to contact the Clubs with this request.

Environmental Report: Mr Wass had nothing to report but stated that he is awaiting the outcome from the ACU and the three lawyers in Luxembourg regarding the insurance issues.

#### 9. Eastern Centre Gazette Report:

Editor: P Armes reported that all is going well and that he has been receiving photographs to use as he requested. He has been sent one of a granddad and grandson taking part in the Laurie Bird Trial which he will use on the front cover of the next Gazette.

Distribution Officer: Mr R Greengrass reported that the surplus for the year (2016) was £1010.46. Some advertising has been lost and sales have reduced slightly (normal for this time of year). Mr Greengrass predicts that there will be a surplus in 2017.

£10,000 to transfer as previously agreed, Mr Greengrass will check if this has been completed.

Mr Greengrass proposed that a donation of £250 from Gazette funds to be made to the ACU Benevolent Fund – 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr C Ralph and agreed by all present.

Mr Greengrass thanked clubs for their prompt payment – only two invoices are outstanding. P Armes to forward cheques for regs to R Greengrass.

10. Benevolent Fund. Mr Cross was not present. Ms Berwick updated the Board on the latest figures which she had obtained from Rugby. Mr Kenny expressed concern that the Board does not receive information from Mr Cross, our Benevolent Fund Officer and feels that it is not satisfactory. Mr Ralph commented that perhaps Mr Cross could be asked to provide a written report prior to each Board meeting. Mr Hearn proposed that Ms Berwick should contact Mr Cross and ask Mr Cross to do so. Agreed by all present. Ms Berwick will contact Mr Cross via email.

#### 11. Centre Function:

Ms Berwick and Mrs Hearn reported that this was in hand, venue booked, menu set and that ticket sales were going well. All winners had been invited.

#### 12. Any Other Business:

The cost of hall hire was discussed. Stanway is £80 per session on a Sunday. Mr Hearn and Ms Berwick has been looking at other options of venues. Capel St Mary - £15 per hour. Mr Kenny proposed that we change to there for 2018. Mr Weavers suggested that we try to hire for the July Board. Ms Berwick will make enquiries and report back to the April Board.

Mr Hearn – proposed that the January Board date be kept free from events, mainly to encourage better attendance. Following due discussion this was NOT agreed.

Mr Drane, mentioned Derek York – as he was not present when Mr York's death was discussed. Funeral arrangements to be announced, the venue will be Sible Hedingham Church. When details are known, an announcement will be placed on the Centre website.

R Greengrass- had received an email from G Thompson regarding the repayment of £25 for each permit issued from Jan 2016. He reminded those present that clubs need to register their bank details with Rugby for the refunds. It is expected that these refunds will be made during February.

Mr Greengrass had spoken with Mr R Snowden to discuss the possibility on using online entries. He has costed out that at 3% per rider to the ACU, it would cost marginally more than his current 35p per cheque. He was advised by Mrs D Blyth that refunds online are made direct by the ACU when club secretaries confirm a legitimate refund is due. Mrs Blyth stated that is also reduces nonstarters, as they have already paid their money and reduces bounced cheques. Mr Chaplin stated that Sudbury now use on-line entry system, and finds it works well. His only concern was that there is no actual entry form, Mr Armes responded that the rider ticks a box to confirm acceptance of the conditions of entry.

Mrs M Mellish – concerned that the November Board and November NMC dates caused a problem regarding voting for the Board of Directors and Sporting Committees. The NMC was the day before our Board. The secretary had had to rely on circulation of emails where she had asked delegates to advise her of their preferences. It looks as though this could happen again in 2017. Ms Berwick was asked to write to Rugby to see if they would consider changing the date of the NMC meeting.

P Armes – Norfolk County Council have a casualty reduction committee which has produced a magazine called Norfolk and Suffolk Biker which is distributed to all motor cycle dealers (2000 copies have been produced. Mr Armes is a member of this group and has managed to get a full page on off-road motor cycle sport in an edition.

A Penny – reminder to delegates to take back to clubs that there are still vacancies on the competitions committee.

Trials and Enduro seminar booked for 4<sup>th</sup> February, 11am at Christchurch Hall Needham Market.

Mr Penny has publicity available on the National Rally 1-2<sup>nd</sup> July.

Ms Berwick had received a letter of thanks from Mr Roy Bannister regarding his appointment as a life member of ACU Eastern.

C Ralph – asked if fixture lists and handbooks were available – Mr Armes responded that they would be ready at the end of the month. Order forms were to be emailed out.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.20pm.

Date and time of the next meeting:

**WEDNESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> APRIL AT GT BLAKENHAM PARISH ROOMS COMMENCING AT 7.45PM**