

# ACU EASTERN

(AFILIATED TO THE Auto Cycle Union)

Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the Board 2019 held Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2019 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
General Secretary	Mrs L Ralph

C Ralph	Woodbridge	P Tomlin	TOMCC
A R Chaplin	Sudbury/VP	K Doherty	ECMC
J Read	Woodbridge	Mrs Y Smith	ESSA
P Nash	Southend	E Wass	Braintree
A Brace	Chelmsford/VP	A Kenny	Harwich
Mrs V Hearn	Stowmarket	K Weavers	Halstead
P Sewter	Norwich Vikings	Mrs D Blyth	Woodbridge
C Keeble	Norfolk and Suffolk Group	J Blyth	Woodbridge
P Armes	Watton	Mrs J Nash	Southend
A Wright	Halstead	C Cook	Braintree

1. Mr Hearn opened the meeting and welcomed all present.  
Apologies for absence were received from: Mrs Margaret Mellish, Mr E Hood; Mr and Mrs R Bannister: Mr P Fenn: Mr R Greengrass: Mrs M Armes
2. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019 were proposed for approval by; Roger Chaplin  
2<sup>nd</sup> Keith Weavers
3. **Matters Arising:**  
Mr Kenny commented that in his opinion, the Centre did the correct thing regarding Item 6 on the July minutes (issue of permit to a Non-Territorial Club clashing with a MX Centre Championship) and that he had been disappointed in the attitude of the ACU Chairman.
4. **To receive a report from Mr P Armes Competitions Committee Chair:**  
Mr Armes stated that Item 7 and Item 9 on the minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> Competitions committee were due to be discussed as a separate item on the Agenda and sought a proposer for adoption of the 4<sup>th</sup> Minutes of July 24th.  
Proposed C Ralph 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs D Blyth.
5. **Election of Competition Committee members:**  
**Nominees: P Armes: E Wass; A Foskew**  
Mr Foskew withdrew his nomination as he had been elected as Vice Chairman and would be a ex-officio member of the competitions committee.  
Mrs Ralph announced that there had been insufficient nominees and all present agreed to elect Mr Armes and Mr Wass. Mr C Cook intimated that he would like to serve on the competitions committee and his nomination was accepted from the floor and approved by all present.
6. **To select the recipient of the Dick Williams (Lifetime Award) and Bill Spurrell Awards for 2019.**  
**Dick Williams: Nominees: Alan Penny: Keith Weavers: Phil Armes**  
**Bill Spurrell Nominees: Malcolm Stevens: Phil Armes: Charlie Garrod: Alex Wright.**  
Following a paper vote Alan Penny was awarded the Dick Williams Trophy (13 votes) and Phil Armes was awarded the Bill Spurrell Trophy (12 Votes). The winners will be invited to receive their trophies at the Awards Presentation on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

Mr Kenny had recently attended a Castle Club dinner where Dick Williams daughter was present. He has also found some interesting stories including one from 1947 where the Castle Club were summoned before the Board for running a Grass track Meeting on a football field, while a football match was also taking place.

#### **7. To confirm the appointment of the Environmental Officer:**

Mr E Wass confirmed that he was willing to carry on in this role. Mr Kenny commented that ACU Eastern certainly needs such a person. J Hearn thanked Mr Wass for his hard work. Mr Wass has been unwell and all present wished him well in his recovery.

#### **8. Treasurers Report:**

Mr Hay had circulated his report and a balance sheet with a summary of income and expenditure for the year 2019 to 29<sup>th</sup> October highlighting the performance against approved budgets.

Income is likely to fall marginally short of the budget approved for the current year. Permit fees will meet the budget, affiliations are £330 short of the estimate and the basic insurance contribution from the ACU is £190 lower than estimated. The income from Centre levies is unlikely to reach the estimate, approx. £300-£400 short.

Expenditure: the approved budget of £500 for Promotional Activities has only a limited spend of £150 to date, but orders have been placed for pull ups and flags. A trophy budget of £1000 was provided but the actual spend was £830, a saving of £170.

The annual Centre Function shows a loss of £490, well within the budget of £1000. It is likely that the admin/telephone costs and travel budget will again be lower than estimated and this will be reviewed for the 2020 draft budget.

Much of the Centre's expenditure occurs during the final quarter of the year, this explains why there is a relatively low spend against some of the approved budgets.

It is now policy to pay honoraria at the end of the year rather than in January and Mr Hay sought approval to make these payments to Officers:

Centre Secretary £500; Secretary to the Competitions Committee £250; Centre Treasurer £500; Permit Secretary £500 making a total of £1,750.

Motocross Account: This has now been operating for 8 years. During 2019 the daily hire of transponders has fallen short of the budgeted amount by £465 due to two major motocross events being cancelled due to bad weather. Had these events run it is likely that at least £800 would have been taken.

The reserved number scheme together with a £200 top up from the general account donations budget has brought in an income of £3,750 which has enabled donations of £1,250 to be made to the three nominated charities. There is an estimated surplus of income in 2019 of £1,116.

Proposed replacement of equipment: The Mylaps Decoder used for the timing system from July 2019 is no longer supported or repaired by Mylaps and there are no spares available. The Orbits 4 software that is in use is no longer being supported from December 2019. Having discussed this with Paul Sewter and other timekeepers, it is considered that it would be prudent to replace the decoder and upgrade to Orbits 5 now rather than risk a problem mid-season.

The two laptops are now 8 years old and running Windows 7. Paul Sewter and Mr Hay consider that it is appropriate to replace these at the same time. Present price is £329 each. Mylaps are running an offer until 1<sup>st</sup> December where they will exchange the old decoder for a new X2 decoder and server plus an upgrade to Orbits 5 software (normally 2,726.45 euros) for 2,230.58 euro plus VAT and delivery. For the past two financial years a £2000 provision has been made for equipment upgrades, so there is currently £4000 available to fund the proposed upgrade. It is likely to come in well under that figure.

Recommendation:

1. The Centre Board notes the current levels of income and expenditure for 2019.
2. The Centre Board considers, and if thought fit, approves payment of honoraria to the 2019 Centre Officers as previously set out.
3. The Centre Board approves a budget of up to £4,000 for the purchase of a replacement Mylaps X2 decoder and server, Orbits 5 software and 2 Windows 10 laptops.

Proposed: A Kenny; 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs Y Smith – carried unanimously. Mr Hearn thanked Mr Hay for all his hard work.

#### **9. Report from the Facilities Fund – P Armes:**

Firstly, Mr Armes thanked those present for voting for him for the Bill Spurrell Award.

Mr Armes referred back to the set up of the Facilities Fund where it had been agreed to review the Fund annually at the November Board Meeting. There had been one grant approved to Norwich New Stars.

Mr Armes has taken legal advice regarding ACU Eastern furnishing loans. To do this legally, the Centre would have to adhere to the FCA regulations and be approved to do so. Therefore, the rules will need revisiting with a view to dealing only with grants. P Armes will progress this a report back to the next Board meeting.

Mr Armes proposed that any issues relating to loans should be suspended temporarily. 2<sup>nd</sup> A Foskew and unanimously agreed by those present.

This year an application has come in on behalf of the Halstead Club which Mr Armes put before the delegates as follows: In July 2019, a request for a grant of £5000 was received by Mrs Ralph as Centre Secretary. Initially a Facilities Fund meeting had been planned but subsequently cancelled as fund committee members has responded to Mr Armes with a list of questions and it was felt that answers to these were required prior to any decision taken. The Club was advised of this but a letter came in, having crossed in the post, then requesting £10,000 which immediately needed to be referred to the Board as it was above the remit of the Facility Fund by virtue of the amount.

The Facilities Fund Committee then requested further information detailed with responses below:

1. To confirm the amount required is now £10, 000. Club confirmed.
2. An itemised list of items required – This was received and the total spend came to £35,300.
3. Timescale of the items listed – response sooner rather than later. The Club informed Mr Armes that they pay £10,000 per year for their lease which leaves little for running costs.
4. Mr Armes requested the Club accounts which he will not make public. The members of the Facilities Fund do have copies.
5. The Club were informed that the Centre would require some kind of security. The Halstead Club agreed that they would concur with this.

Mrs D Blyth asked if payment could be made retrospectively for purchases already made. This is allowable.

6. The current make-up of the Halstead Committee was requested and received but just the title of positions with no names disclosed.

Mr Armes is in receipt of a letter from the landowner of Wakes Colne circuit regarding the length of tenure which expires in 2022 with a view to a further 5 years if the Club puts the improvements he has requested in place. The letter states that he has no plans to deny a renewal and that he is keen to see the circuit restored to its former glory.

Mr Armes had also sought assurance regarding the relationship with the EASCC Non-Territorial Club. Martin Beadle informed Mr Armes that he is standing down as Chair of the EASCC this year and that EASCC hire Wakes Colne, the same as any other Club, and assures Mr Armes that the money requested is solely for use by Halstead MCC.

Mr Armes asked Mr Weavers if the rumour regarding Enduros at Wakes Colne had any substance. Mr Weavers responded that it is still under discussion.

Mr Armes is of the opinion that the Halstead Club are trying to do the right thing. Mr C Ralph stated that historically Halstead had been a strong club and that it would be a great shame if it was lost.

Mr P Nash asked if Halstead would have to pay interest – Mr Armes responded that it would be a grant with no repayment required and that there are rules in place to repossess items should it prove necessary.

Questions were asked to Mr Weavers regarding the equipment owned and its uses which he explained. The water bowser is top priority and tractors needs attention/replacing.

Mr Armes disclosed that 2017 and 2018 had not been good years for the Halstead Club financially and there had been a lot of spending on the premises but that 2019 had looked better.

Mr Kenny asked how the money would be released if agreed, i.e., on production of invoices or in one lump. C Cook stated he would prefer the method of release of funds on invoice.

Mr Armes informed those present that the grant, if agreed, would have the terms agreed by a solicitor.

Having fully discussed this item, Mr Armes proposed that the grant of £10,000 be approved and the delegates voted unanimously in agreement.

Mr Armes was thanked by Mr Hearn for all his efforts in bringing this proposal before the Board.

#### **10. Report on the National Management Council by Mrs V Hearn.**

The recent NMC Meeting was held at Rugby on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

The following items were discussed:

There should be no increases in insurance as very few claims had been received.

There will be a Forestry Safety Officers meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December. Safety Officer seminars will be coming out to Centres and a licence will be issued for Safety Officers.

Phil Wilkinson is taking over as Forestry Safety Officer for the ACU.

Changes to the ACU Handbook must be sent to Rugby by 20<sup>th</sup> November. Mrs Ralph has this in hand.

Officials names and details are to be removed from the Handbook and will only be available online.

There will be a review of the handbook with a view to splitting it down to disciplines for ease of use. Anyone with a strong view on this, please contact Neil Doctor who is now the General Secretary. Gary Thompson no longer holds that role.

ACU will be providing free First Aid Training to those Centres who request this. Centres just need to provide a location. Mrs Ralph to contact Neil Doctor to ask if Centres can have more than one seminar if required.

ACU Events will show a profit now Milton Masor will not be used.

TT 2020 should be televised live. The TT Zero race has been shelved for a period of two years. Riders in TT races will now have one warm up lap. The name reverts to the Manx TT and Classic TT.

The ACU acknowledges that the sport needs to evolve and Gary Thompson will be looking into this with the help of the Board.

#### **11. To discuss updates of the Centre Byelaws including devolvement of Sub- Committees:**

A document prepared by Mr Armes had been sent to delegates for perusal prior to the Board.

Part 1 deals with the changes to the frequency of Board meeting (Para 3) and satisfies what is required followed discussions at the July Board.

Part 2: A brief introduction paper had been also sent out informing that in 2013, David Smith, at the time Competitions Chair, was detailed to write a document of devolution but this document was not published. Mr Dopson had read out the last in process version of a document that he and Mr Hay had been working on, a copy of which was forwarded to the Centre Secretary for records subsequent to the Board meeting.

From 2014 onwards, The Trials discipline had, initially as a pilot run as a fully devolved committee in accordance with the outline objectives of that original document, with the Trials Committee Chairman attending, and reporting to the Competitions Committee meetings. As can be seen from the original document it was always intended that motocross would be devolved, and that a definitive paper would be presented for approval by the Board.

This document has now been presented to the Board today with proposed changes to devolution and the byelaws together with Discipline Devolution Terms of Reference.

Mr Armes had communicated with Mr Kenny regarding the correct method of this and Mr Kenny had reported that a precedent had been set in the past which allows for this to be dealt with today by a Resolution.

Mr Armes then put a motion forward proposing a Resolution to adopt the circulated document. This was approved unanimously by all delegates present.

Mr G Brace, Vice Chair commented that although he may attend all committees of the Board, he did not know when they were. It was agreed that discipline secretaries would ensure Mr Brace was invited in future.

#### **12. Report from ACU Eastern Gazette Editor – Mr P Armes:**

Mr Armes reported that all was going well although he would be pleased to receive more items, stories, photographs for the Gazette to make it more interesting. He asked that when Clubs were uploading their stories onto their social media sites, perhaps that could copy this to the ACU Eastern website as well.

Report from the ACU Eastern Distribution Officer:

Mr Greengrass was not present but had provided a balance sheet for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

Deficit for the period of £612.42. Current Account stands at £20,352.49. Reward Account balance of £36,988.78.

#### **13. Report on ACU Eastern website – Mr P Sewter:**

Mr Sewter had produced a written report which stated that 2019 had seen a reduction in the number of visitors on the previous year. Mr Sewter believes that some of this is due to less events running and also an increase in Clubs having their own Facebook page and websites.

Mr Sewter questioned both the purpose and the necessity for a Centre website. The data on the server log shows most visits are to access the online version of the Gazette, results and the event calendar and he has concentrated his efforts in those areas.

Mr Sewter stated that most clubs are vigilant in supplying results but often is asked why the Championship standings are not kept up to date. The motocross has the luxury of the championships being updated from the electronic timing but other disciplines need to provide those manually. Mr Sewter would be more than happy to work with discipline recorders to set up online spreadsheets that they could keep updated themselves if this would help.

Mr Sewter also notes that this year, for the first time, visits from mobile devices such as tablets and phones outnumbered those from computers.

Mr Hearn thanked Mr Sewter on behalf of the centre for his hard work.

#### 14. Access, Environment and Rights of Way Matters:

Mr Wass had nothing to report.

Mr Kenny took the opportunity to bring to the attention of the Board the following:

“The Eastern Centre (or Region) is coming up to its Centenary. A great deal has gone on within its territory during that time. Countless events, with so many clubs and people involved. It adds up to a great history as well as a record of tremendous amount of work - for no motorcycle event ever took place without someone to organise it. The official full story is told in the archives, which are, in basic terms, the required records which the law demands any club, association, council, or business must keep. It is in the minutes of thousands of meetings, reports and directives. These are the essential elements needed to build up a narrative of any organisation. They must be kept and maintained – certainly for a minimum time as stipulated by law – but they are also to the benefit, information and interest for Centre members and other parties to inspect, follow and hopefully, learn.

Our Centre records in the eighteen years up to the Second World War, are at best, sketchy. However, it was very fortunate when the Centre was reformed in 1946, that Bill Swann from the Ilford club, took on the role as Centre Secretary – a position he held for nearly forty years. He instilled a definite discipline in the way the Centre was run - Mr Swann`s bench marks have been largely followed by all our secretaries ever since. –We run our meetings – both sporting and business - in a fit and proper manner - and accordingly, we keep our records.

I am the first archivist of the Centre and I was not quite sure at first what I had to do other than collect a hell of a lot of paper. Which is exactly what has happened.

At first, I got the “bread and butter” stuff of meetings: comprising of the main Board and committee meetings, but just occasionally, I received other material as well – either from clubs or individuals. The method of storage has changed with the times. The books, files and photos are added to by modern methods of storage – first on disc and then later on, memory stick. As time went by, I felt that the obituaries of Centre riders, officials and well-regarded helpers (such, as say, Chick Garrod) should be included in the archive. You can see it grows and grows and long may it do so. In many ways, it is all our history.

Who uses or needs the archives? A surprising number of people as it happens. I`ve been called out of the blue by people who want to know a certain championship won in which year or by people who wanted to know the origin of a particular club or where its H.Q was. Oddly, I had requests for information on the Tigers Greys MCC and Ford Sports MCC on different occasions – not so far in location from each other. Most members will not nowadays even be aware the Ford car factory ever had a motorcycle club - but it`s in the archive. Authors have requested various pieces of information – the most recent being Ian Berry, who was researching his book on Dave Bickers. The call for archive information is less so on matters of business – though I have had queries on the Gazette – and the Land Fund – now the Facilities fund. The ACU itself wanted information on all sporting venues ever used and when – and here, I was able to furnish this. But being the archivist does not mean I am an editor. And as the material comes in – still quite a lot in paper form, I ask myself: “Do we really need all this?” There are boxes and boxes of former meetings and other items which do not add much – if anything – to our efficiency and proper operation and nothing to our history. Like a gold-digger searching for every nugget, I do read each paper that I receive and I find many now out of date as regards their application or their present-day relevance.

Example: Attendance records of early meetings where most of the delegates are now dead. Or ACU information sheets on instructions which have been since replaced through updates in policy or rules. I am talking of items decades old and not now in keeping to our current activities. On the other hand, I recently received an old press cutting with a picture of a pre-war scramble at Polstead and took the judgement to include it. At one time we had great interest in Road Racing with Snetterton under our control but that has been no longer the case for many years. Now - I am not suggesting we remove all or anything like all references to Road Racing – it`s a big part of our history – but there are examples of paperwork there which I do not think relevant nowadays. I am telling you all this because I am seeking some official guidance from the Board on archive policy. There are items within it which I feel should be now removed and disposed of and I am asking the Board for the authority to start to do this editing work based on my thoughts which I have just shared with you. I might add that I am more than happy to continue in the job; to store and when asked, search and dig out information as requested. What I am asking for it the ability to trim it up and remove some of the floss which is not now relevant – and add items which add to our history.”

Legal requirement for Business records = 6year (Suggest All to be held minimum of 12 years).

as stated, - “Retention” period, Companies Act 2006

Directors meetings 10years

Annual accounts permanently. (Inc Assets)

As per Freedom of Information Act 2000 Section 46 Clause 43 (Disposal)

Data Protection Act 1998

Records Act 1958.

Following discussion, Mr Armes suggested that Mr Kenny considers scanning documents to a separate hard drive and that way reduces paper held. Mr Kenny agreed with this suggestion and will begin the process at his convenience.

A discussion over the Centenary took place and how it should be acknowledged. A Centenary Dinner celebration will be discussed at a future time when a definitive date may be confirmed.

**15. ACU Benevolent Fund: To receive a report from Mr M Cross:**

Mrs Ralph had received the following from Mr Cross:

"I have been Eastern Centre Benevolent Fund Officer for over 12 years and as you know it is run as a Charity, and I decided last year not to continue in the future. The tasks undertaken can be varied depending on the circumstances but the identity and circumstances of all claimants is confidential to the Officer, the Ben Fund Secretary and the Trustees. The fund is managed by the Trustees who have regular meetings. Claimants from the Centre have been, for example, a youngster breaking a leg in America with an enormous medical bill, a decorator who could not work anymore, a fractured hip and many many broken bones. The message from me is " Ride safely" and don't make Debbie work too hard."

Mrs D Blyth will take on the role of Benevolent Fund Officer from today and she was thanked by Mr Hearn for taking on this role.

Mrs Ralph informed the delegates of the latest income to the Ben Fund and that one member of ACU Eastern is currently in receipt of benefits.

Mrs Ralph will write to Mr Cross thanking him for his 12 years of service on behalf of ACU Eastern.

**16. Centre Function update:**

Mrs Ralph reported that the new venue of Needham Market Community Centre seems ideal although will need some decoration, plenty of room and plenty of parking. Catering has been arranged (Mrs Tammy Hubbard), tickets have been printed. Cost held for guests at £12.50, the same as last year. Invitations to prize winners will be sent in due course. Help setting up would be appreciated. Mrs Ralph reminded those present that trophies will need collecting.

**17. Any Other Business:**

Dates Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> November at Gt Blakenham Parish Rooms.

Mrs Ralph had received an email from Neil Doctor, sent of behalf of the Trials and Enduro Committee detailing concerns on the numbers of Youth riders. Following the Bike Show where several enquiries had been received asking where children could try 'Trials', he is seeking information as to what Centres are doing to encourage children. Mrs Ralph agreed to write to Neil Doctor advising him of the Braintree Clubs initiative and Southend efforts also. Mr Penny said that Braintree is recognised by the FIM for their work with youth.

Mrs Hearn – reported that the new General Secretary, Neil Doctor, commented that we are a 'lively' Centre.

There being no further business, Mr Hearn thanked everyone for their attendance and wished all a Happy Christmas and a Happy new Year. Meeting closed at 4.03pm.

**The next meeting will be Wednesday March 18<sup>th</sup> at Gt Blakenham Parish Rooms commencing at 7.45pm.**