

ESSEX FIELD CLUB ANNUAL REPORT for 2021-22

General Introduction and Administration

The Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic continued to affect the Club's activities this year. A vaccination program allowed most restrictions on meeting indoors and outdoors to be lifted in June 2021, however uncertainty as to what might happen in the future led to the Natural History Show and the Exhibition and Social both being cancelled for 2021. Council met 5 times: 2 in person, and 3 online using John Cooke's Zoom account; while not all Council members were able to participate online, they made their views known via email.

The EFC Spring Meeting and AGM went ahead on 27th March 2021, via Zoom. Understanding that some members would be unable to attend virtually, the Club's Annual Report, Accounts, Independent Examiner's Report and a voting form were sent to all members, by email or post, in early March. The Zoom AGM was attended by 30 people, and another 13 who were unable to attend on the day voted beforehand. Neil Phillips then gave an interesting talk on "The Wildlife of Daws Hall Nature Reserve", with many beautiful photos.

New Ordinary members of Council (and thus Trustees) were Daniel Blyton and Graham Ekins; many thanks to Peter Allen, who stepped down this year; Bill George replaced Simon Taylor as President, but Simon remains on Council as a Past President; Neil Harvey replaced Martin Heywood as Vice-President. John Cooke reluctantly decided to stand down as Programme Secretary in August, but was later co-opted as an Ordinary Member of Council.

Sadly the Club lost 2 outstanding entomologists this year, Del Smith (county Diptera recorder) and Peter Hammond (county Coleoptera recorder) both dying after long illnesses. Phil Collins was appointed as new county Diptera recorder, and Roger Payne as Coleoptera recorder.

Membership

We currently have 297 members of which (as of 31/01/2022) 70 have yet to pay for 2022. 3 Institutional members have declined to renew, and 2 have been lapsed due to not answering communications.

Meetings

All meetings proceeded under Covid-19 restrictions. Simon Taylor, county recorder for Mollusca, ran a field course on slugs and snails. General field meetings to the Wilderness Foundation at Chatham Green, Little Belhus Country Park, Middlewick Ranges local wildlife site, Lofts Farm, Havering

Country Park, and Daws Hall Nature Reserve (joint with Colchester Natural History Society) went ahead, as did fungal group field meetings to Havering Country Park, Canvey Wick, Warley Place and Fryerning Churchyard, and some moth group meetings.

Green Centre Activities

While the Club's interactions with the public at the Green Centre have remained suspended, the Office and Archive have been in regular use on Wednesdays by some Council members, and have been available for visits on a pre-booked basis.

Publications

Essex Naturalist

The 2020/2021 Essex Naturalist comprised 348 pages with 40 articles and many colour illustrations. An excellent effort by editor Peter Harvey and the Editorial Team.

The EFC Newsletter

There were the usual 3 issues of the Newsletter, with colour illustrations and many interesting articles as well as wildlife updates, reports of some meetings that had taken place, and listings of forthcoming meetings. Many thanks to editor Peter Harvey and everyone who contributed articles.

Collections

An exercise, which began in 2020, to refreeze items in the collections which were last frozen before 2016 has now been completed. A catalogue of the egg collections made by Colin Plant in 1983 was digitised by Fiona Hutchings in 2018. It has now been type checked. Several enquiries concerning bird specimens in our collections were received and answered. Four old and incomplete Vickers microscopes were given to the Quekett Microscopical Club in return for a donation to Field Club funds. A block of shelly sandstone from the Oldhaven Beds at the excavations for the A13/M25 junction was donated by Gerald Lucy and will make an attractive display item. Graham Ward has donated his geological collection to the Club. It consists of seven cabinets of excellently curated minerals and a quantity of other material from sites in Essex, which adds to the material collected by Graham when working at the Passmore Edwards Museum and which is already in our collections. Mike Daniels passed away in September and the non-avian component of his fossil collection has been donated to the Club. N.B. the avian fossils were bequeathed to the

National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh. We are greatly indebted to the knowledgeable help of Bill George in dealing with these last two donations. As a result of continuing donations the archive is becoming increasingly congested. We are therefore grateful that Graham Ekins has begun a review of the bird specimens with recommendations as to their future. It is hoped that this will enable us to responsibly pass on or dispose of specimens unwanted by ourselves under our Disposal Policy.

Library and Archives

Dr. Roger Hewitt continued to use the library and archive on a regular basis, producing articles for our publications. Our email enquiry service continued uninterrupted. Biographical queries were answered, and images supplied for research, publication and display. We acted as a clearing house for book donations. Books, maps, images and manuscripts were also kindly donated by several individuals including Del Smith, Peter Allen, Howard Mendel and Terry Lilley. Details of exchange journals and book reviews were submitted for publication in our Newsletter and posted on our Facebook Group. Council kindly agreed to the purchase of a scanner for use at the Green Centre. This is being used to scan some images from our archive, including photographs, magic lantern slides and glass negatives which have been shared on Facebook.

Website

Since the Teknica-designed website went live in 2007 there have been over 591,172 sessions and 2,769,473 page views from 361,887 unique visitors and 205 countries (at January 2022), the majority from the United Kingdom, Europe and United States, but a substantial number from many other countries in the World.

The maps on the Species Account pages are automatically updated with data uploaded to the Club's Records database table and these pages currently provide ecological and phenological information from 1,867,530 records on 9,230 species. Following a request from the new County Recorder, beetles have been included in these but with the warning that the data are incomplete with many records for the county not yet available. As has always been the case, logged-on County Recorders can add and update text on these pages and provide recorders with access to the details of the records behind the dots on the maps.

Logged-on members can now generate pdf taxon reports in the Species Account pages which demonstrate the value of structured recording data in understanding the autecology of a species. This script developed by Peter Harvey has also been extended to enable whole atlases to be generated from the species data held on the website for any of our county recorder taxon groups so that in theory up-to-date pdf atlases can be generated at the click of a button.

Where present for a taxon this can include species text, photos, identification difficulty ratings, and other resources could be added to these atlases, such as coverage and diversity maps, advice for groups, etc.

Due to some issues with the server towards the end of 2021 and warnings from the hosting company that the server dating from April 2014 was getting very old, Council agreed to the move to a new server. This eventually took place in February after all the issues resulting from the change to the latest server software versions had been ironed out.

Datasearch System

Our Datasearch System continues to provide comprehensive coverage of county records as an Essex Local Record Centre Service and we also provide information on sites relevant to nature conservation contained in national datasets, together with information on geological sites which are of county and local importance. Following the closure on 30 September 2021 of the Essex Wildlife Trust BRC, our Datasearch System is now the only source of desk study information to companies and ecological consultancies to support planning applications in the county. Whilst always subject to wide variations from week to week and month to month, following the closure of the EWT BRC, use of the system has increased substantially with many new customers, and it seems likely the Club will have to register for VAT in the foreseeable future.

We have been provided with Local Wildlife Site (LoWS) polygon GIS by Essex County Council and Essex Wildlife Trust which are provided as maps in the pdf report output, and will also soon be able to include the relevant citations.

There are now 4,409,486 records for 15,093 species in the database (at January 2022) in a very wide variety of taxonomic groups on our website, all for use by the on-line Datasearch System.

Important Invertebrate Areas (IIAs) are nationally or internationally significant places for the conservation of invertebrates and the habitats upon which they rely. Buglife has provided us with the Important Invertebrate Areas (IIA) GIS and these have been added to the Datasearch System outputs. In the county IIAs principally affect the Essex coast, the Thames estuary and the Lee Valley.

The Essex Recorders partnership

Covid-19 lockdown once again prevented Steering Group meetings in March and November from taking place, but updates were sent out and decisions made by email.

Our data partners have provided data updates. Commercial use of the Datasearch System continues to provide income at a comparable rate to previous years, all of which is used to support the Club, our partner county data-providing organisations and made available for grant applications which support recording in the county.

Planning

The emerging Colchester Local Plan is currently subject to examination by the Inspectorate and the Essex Field Club has responded on each occasion to the public consultation process since 2017 in relation to the extraordinary inclusion by CBC of the Local Wildlife Site **Middlewick Ranges** in its housing allocation where we have consistently made clear that the site warrants a Site of Special Scientific Interest designation. With very limited recent data available for the site, we held 4 field meetings there in 2021 (effectively at most three days, with 2 half days due to rain and none in favourable weather conditions) and recorded 548 invertebrate species. This includes modern records of previously recorded species, new county records, a number of rare and scarce species and a male Near Threatened Nationally Rare pipunculid fly *Tomosvaryella minima* which is the only confirmed record in Britain for the last 50 years (1977 to 1996), with none at all in the last 25 years. Natural England's Chief Scientist Directorate invertebrate specialist has looked at these limited data and states the site has merit in being considered as an extension of the existing SSSI. We await the outcome of the Inspectorate's examination.

Publicity

A small group of Council members have started to write a monthly wildlife article for Essex Life Magazine, including the Club's name and so giving us publicity.

Online Social Media

Facebook

The Club's Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/essexfieldclub>) had 823 members as of 13th February 2022, increased from 689 last year.

Twitter

The Club's Twitter account (@EssexFieldClub) had 382 followers at 13th February 2022, up from 286 last year, and is mainly used to publicise Club events and to share interesting wildlife tweets.

Finance

After another pandemic year the financial status of the Essex Field Club remains strong with appreciable increases in both income and expenditure. Datasearch reports remain our major income source, significantly increased on 2020. This increase has continued into 2022 and has recently taken the Club over the VAT threshold. Interest from bank accounts has, unsurprisingly, decreased a little while both donations and subscriptions have increased. The

Club is very grateful for all donations.

Overheads have apparently increased to pre-pandemic levels. However, much of this increase is accounted for by two items. Firstly, some Essex Recorders partnership payments were deferred from 2020 to 2021 and secondly, the Club made a large grant towards the publication of a new and much expanded and improved edition of Essex Rock which will be published shortly. Increase in Green Centre overheads reflect additions to the geological collection and 2022 first quarter rent paid in December.

Essex Recorders partnership funds are included in the accounts. These are income from data provision restricted for use to support the partnership. £10,000 is treated as partnership reserve and other funds are used to support the data providers of the partnership while some is available to provide grants for projects which support recording in the county.

This Annual Report has been prepared with due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

ESSEX FIELD CLUB
YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	<u>31/12/2021</u>	<u>31/12/2020</u>
INCOME		
Subscriptions	4,703.21	4,165.81
Publications and postage	166.22	162.48
Interest receivable	3,445.83	3,666.34
Donations	2,424.40	2,062.74
Data provision	73,975.58	67,207.25
	<u>84,715.24</u>	<u>77,264.62</u>
OVERHEADS		
Essex Naturalist	8,094.12	8,614.00
Newsletters	3,334.64	3,987.12
Postage and telephone	82.15	10.50
Hire of halls	65.35	517.44
Insurance	518.81	487.04
Printing, postage and stationery	34.90	-
Legal and professional costs	1,620.00	1,920.00
Mapmate	184.50	180.00
Website	977.31	1,142.08
Sundry	9,000.00	7.00
Travel	-	48.60
EFC Centre	6,623.94	3,857.92
Essex Natural History Show	-	-
Essex Recorders' partnership	34,829.50	14,988.70
Catering	-	805.20
	<u>65,365.22</u>	<u>36,565.60</u>
SURPLUS/LOSS FOR THE YEAR	<u>19,350.02</u>	<u>40,699.02</u>
RETAINED SURPLUS BFW	<u>347,225.42</u>	<u>306,526.40</u>
RETAINED SURPLUS CFWD	<u>366,575.44</u>	<u>347,225.42</u>

ESSEX FIELD CLUB
YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2019
BALANCE SHEET

	<u>31/12/2021</u>	<u>31/12/2020</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Lloyds Term Investment	30,678.87	30,590.62
Lloyds Business Investment account	24,937.02	24,934.75
Lloyds Internet account	114,858.57	99,426.05
Lloyds Treasurers account	1,635.15	1,163.48
Lloyds 32 Day Notice account	30,149.62	30,140.72
Cambridge & Counties bank 2 yr	83,227.53	81,595.62
Hampshire Trust bank 2 yr	83,357.68	81,643.18
Cash	1.00	1.00
	<u>368,845.44</u>	<u>349,495.42</u>
 CURRENT LIABILITIES: WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Accruals	1,920.00	1,920.00
	<u>1,920.00</u>	<u>1,920.00</u>
 NET ASSETS	<u>366,925.44</u>	<u>347,575.42</u>
 FINANCED BY CAPITAL FUNDS		
Income & Expenditure Account	366,575.44	-
Museum Fund	350.00	350.00
	<u>366,925.44</u>	<u>350.00</u>

Note

Sundry payments for 2021 consist of a grant towards Essex Rock

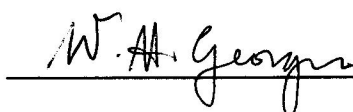
Some funds of the Club are restricted.

Income from Data Searches supports and funds projects of the Essex Recorders partnership.



R. Parsons

Treasurer



W. George

President



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Essex Field Club

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2021

**Charity no
(if any)**

1113963

Set out on pages

1-2

page of

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/12/2021**.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

D Bradford

Date: 24/02/2022

Name:

Mr Daniel Bradford

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

MAAT – Association of Accounting Technicians

Address:

Flat 10, Rosslyn Court, Runnymede Road, Stanford le Hope, Essex SS17 0NR

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

Restricted funds committed in 2021 EFC accounts:

£71,797.91 (£18,398.97 + £18,398.94 to be paid to support partners, £10,000 ERp core, £25,000.00 for grant applications.

2020 £67,031.50

2021 £71,797.91

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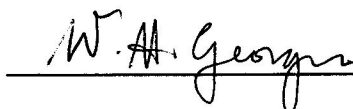
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