

ESSEX REPEATER GROUP
MINUTES OF THE 2016 AGM

Date: 13th October 2016, 20:00hrs
Venue: Danbury Village Hall



1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Bob Cheverall M0DTA, Alan Radley G0TTM, Roy Knight 2E0KWG, Tom Humphries 2E0TNC

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM

Acceptance of the draft 2015 AGM minutes was proposed and were approved for placement on the ERG website

3 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This year has seen a lot of work done by the Essex Repeater Group Team. We had to find new sites for GB7ZP, MB7IDA and the X Band Beacon GB3CMS and do some work the on GB3DB's antenna tower as well as replace GB3DA when it developed a PA fault. Everybody on the committee has worked hard giving up their free time to keep the repeaters going and I would like to thank all committee members for their hard work.

Luckily we have found a site that is on the outskirts of Chelmsford for ZP, IDA and CMS but sadly not as high as the ridge at Danbury:-

- First we had to get permission to install the equipment and then Murray had to get all the licences transferred and approved for the new site, with a problem or two on the way.
- Next we had to get decent speed broadband laid on to the new location as IDA and ZP rely on a robust internet connection.
- And finally we need to install all the equipment and antennas, and this is where we are now.

So let's take a look at each repeater and review its status...

GB3DA - the 2m FM repeater is still our most used repeater, other than a dry joint in the PA earlier this year which resulted in us swapping the repeater for the spare unit, all has been well. For the future a new box has been built, known to the committee DA3, and it is currently being commissioned.

GB3ER – the 70cm FM repeater is currently working without issues, but it could do with more users. Coverage is nearly as good as DA so why not give it a try.

GB3DB – this year time has been spent on reducing the chances of a lightning strike damaging the repeater. This is what rather effectively happened a few years ago when the cavities were damaged. These were repaired last year at great cost, so we don't want it happen again. Norman, Tom and Graham have installed an earth system on the antenna tower and raised the antenna to full height. The next thing to do is investigate if local interference is de-sensing the receiver.

GB7ZP – 70cm D-Star: ZP was returned to air this week - all be it with a temporary antenna. Over the next week or so the new antenna will be installed and the main work on ZP will be complete. At this point the committee would welcome reports on ZP's performance but remember that the site is not as good as the ridge and performance in some directions maybe worse than it was a year ago. See the ERG Web page for ZP's status.

MB7IDA – 2m Echolink: A lot of work has been done to get it IDA packaged in a way that is acceptable for the new site. The individual parts, transceiver, power supply and interface have been packaged in a 19" rack 2U tray and the aging computer replaced with a more modern 19" rack 1U computer running Windows 7. Currently we are working on interfacing the new computer with the Echolink box. Once again we would expect this to be back on air within the next few weeks and when this happens performance reports would be appreciated.

GB3CMS – X Band beacon: Again a lot of work has been carried out on this unit to bring it up to an acceptable standard. The transmit power has been doubled to 100mW and the last job to do is waterproof the antenna before it can be installed on the site; I hope this can be done before Christmas or shortly after.

Finally...

I have to say goodbye to two of our longstanding committee members who have decided not to stand again this year due to changes in commitments. Thank-you to both Norman and Tom for their sterling efforts over the last 2-3 years.

With Norman and Tom leaving the committee we now have two vacancies, so if you have an interest in helping ERG keep the repeaters running, have some spare time, and are maybe (but not necessarily) technically minded you may be the person we are looking for.....

Norman then commented on his time as membership secretary, the importance of keeping your contact info up to date and asked that the group be supported and wished it well for the future.

4 HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Honorary Secretary gave the following report to those present:

Good evening and Thank you. Many thanks for attending and supporting the group. As you will see we will be having a change in membership secretary so do please help us and let us know if you do change your callsign/email address so that calling notices reach you. We often use our Twitter account for small updates /photos too

This time last year we were just feeling the impact of the loss of Clive as Chairman and his nice location on Danbury Hill which had GB7ZP, GB3CMS and his own Echolink system MB7IDA

Whilst Andy has been particularly busy with the hardware, the first part of the period was obviously dealing with the consequences.

I am grateful for the various help from Clive's family, colleagues and local groups, first on the Silent Key clearance (which results in a very generous donation) and then on the site approvals and re-licensing by Ofcom. The other kind donations I should mention includes those we have had from SEARS at Canvey and at TAARC after a repeater talk – all very much appreciated. All these large Donations have been a key factor in our ability to cover the recent capital outlay of ~£600 in the past month or so (not all of which is in the end-of-September accounts)

We have been encouraged by the performance of GB7ZP (even on its interim antenna). The Echolink system has been substantially rebuilt by Andy and is also now licensed under the direct care of ERG.

The ZP test and earlier DA changeover means that some of you have missed my 'rare' callsign on air a few times now along with the Group's G7GAN call – so you never know!

The other aspect I have been assisting with is IT so as the systems appear our ability to remotely monitor, control and update some systems is getting better. The PayPal system has also saved us quite a bit of effort as our Membership Sec and Treasurer both see the incoming together.

Following tonight we are fairly sure that the next event will be Sat Dec-10 at W&S for the Xmas Open Day – and of course we are planning to be at the 2017 Canvey Rally

By then we will be in a better position to update our ERG presentation slides too.

Murray G6JYB, Hon Secretary

5 HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

Evening! You should have a copy of this year's statement of accounts on your chair - if not please share with your neighbour. As you see most is self-explanatory however I will itemise a few of the larger figures for clarification.

As you can see from this yearly statement the books stand at a healthy increase in comparison to last year. This is largely due to £570 raised from the sale of various items of our friend the late Clive Ward G1EUC. There was also a very generous donation from SEARs at this year's Canvey Rally of £100. Along with donations from TAARC, TARG and members donations, it has raised the bank balance nicely - so many thanks!

Expenditure is down from last year as the repair of GB3DB's Cavities took a sizable chunk out of Funds in 2014/15. This year has seen

- Fans for ZP @£17.30
- Earth clamps & rods @£6.31
- Guy ropes @35.00 - *these are for the GB3DB antenna which is located at Bob M0DTAs qth*

This year we have also decided to utilise the PayPal account when making necessary purchases for the ERG. These amounted to:-

- Diamond X-30 @£51.90 *new ZP antenna*
- Switch Mode Power Supply @£86.96 *for the re-packaged MB7IDA (Echolink)*
- AGM Raffle Prizes @ £44.78

Other Income

With respect to interest on our bank accounts:-

- Community account carries no interest
- Business account which has up till now earned us a grand total of 72p a year will sadly be less this coming year as interest rates have fallen!

Should anyone wish to view the Accounts please ask and I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

This concludes my report for this past year.

Ann M6INE, Hon Treasurer

6 ELECTION OF NEW COMMITTEE

The old committee stood down. Murray first asked for any other nominations for Chairman. There being none, Andy was re-elected. Following this a block vote was then taken for the new committee as per the original AGM calling notice. This was unanimously approved as follows:-

Post	Candidate	Proposed	Seconded
Chairman	Andrew Tyler G1GKN	Murray G6JYB	Bob M0DTA
Hon. Secretary	Murray Niman G6JYB	Kristian 2E0SSX	Andy G1GKN
Hon. Treasurer	Ann Tyler M6INE	Joel G0URK	Graham G7JYD
Ordinary Members	Joel Alderman G0URK	Bob M0DTA	Ann M6INE
	Kristian Baker 2E0SSX	Roy 2E0KWG	Murray G6JYB
	Bob Cheverall M0DTA	Andy G1GKN	Roy 2E0KWG
	Roy Knight 2E0KWG	Graham G7JYD	Kristian 2E0SSX
	Graham Leggett G7JYD	Ann M6INE	Joel G0URK

All as per AGM Calling notice

7 ELECTION OF THE AUDITOR

Although absent, Tony Day G6OXQ was re-nominated

8 SUBSCRIPTION RATE FOR 2016/17

The Treasurer commented that the current £12 subscription rate (with a default option of £15 if donations are added) was proving successful and that increases might be counter-productive. Thus the proposal was to maintain the current level of £12pa

This was warmly welcomed by all present and passed unanimously

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Meeting closed, followed by raffle, socialising and refreshments.

Next AGM is on Thu Oct-19 2017 (7:30 for 8pm) at Danbury Village Hall.