# East Anglia Branch AGM Agenda

**12/10/21**

Virtual - Zoom

# Introduction and welcome

Welcome and thank you very much for coming along to our event today. My name is Natalie and I am the Chair of the East Anglia Branch. This last year has been a year of change and our branch, as well as the wider RSB, have been evolving to adapt to this new change. Clearly the biscuits this year are underwhelming but thank you for joining us anyway, today, for our AGM and meet the committee event.

Let’s do a bit of housekeeping before we say hello to everyone. There is a chat function at the bottom of the screen so you can also use this to ask questions. You are able to enable or disable your video, depending on your preference.

So, now that that’s done, let’s begin by meeting the committee. As I mentioned my name is Natalie Lamb and I have been Chair of this branch now since 2015. I plan many events for the branch as a volunteer.

I joined the RSB committee because I love being able to explain my research to people and I thought it would be a great opportunity to organise some events in my field. I intended to put myself forwards as a committee member to engage with younger people and universities but I was elected as chair because of my previous experience establishing a biology society at my undergraduate university.

The opportunities from my involvement with the RSB have been great, from grants (successful grant applications are an excellent addition to an academic CV- the money helps too!) to getting all sorts of experience in the wider field of biology by attending events that I never would have had access to, without the society.

My role as chair involves: supporting other committee members, ensuring the branch is hitting its targets, being present as a face of the branch, preparing and delivering a yearly speech at the AGM and planning events. One thing I really love about the role is hearing about events that people would love to attend and then making it a reality for them. I like to try and plan events that are a bit new, a bit different from lectures, to get a wider range of people coming to the events and engaging with the RSB.

Overall, it's a great way to meet people, get more involved with the RSB and give something back to biology.

Introduce other members, including Professor Nigel Brown, Chair of the College of Individual Members.

# Apologies for absence

* + Available on request

# Review of committee roles

We currently have plentiful open committee roles but the current candidates that have stood for a vacant position are the only candidates to come forwards for those roles, meaning that no vote needs to take place, unless any serious objections are raised by other branch members. I will now give members time to voice any serious objectives for the election of the following new committee members

# Elect new committee members

The first position is Secretary. Penny Maplestone. I will now give some time for you to write your serious objections in the chat box.

The second position is Chair. Natalie Lamb. I will now give some time for you to write your serious objections in the chat box.

We have had no others come forwards for a formal committee position but we do have valuable committee members that take part and run some great events.

# Chair’s report

As I mentioned, this is the sixth year I have been lucky enough to represent this branch and deliver this speech to you all. It really is an honor to be able to do so and thank you for coming along and for listening to me. I hope you feel we have been listening to you, too. We have tried our best to take on your feedback and we would love to hear more from you, especially about the events that we have ran this year and intend to run in future, especially with events we can run in a virtual capacity.

Our years run October-October. This year, we’ve planned 4 events as a branch

* + Richard Bowater organised “Using writing skills to build your biosciences career”, an online CPD-accredited training event which discussed the wealth of opportunities that are available to use written media to engage with all levels of biosciences learners.
  + We had another CPD-accredited event this time ran by the company Viadynamics. This one was a virtual training event “Connecting and networking - online”, focusing on how to pitch ideas and opportunities to companies, while working in the online world.
  + Most recently the East Anglia Branch had a tantalising Tasting Adventure with Hotel Chocolat at our Virtual Chocolate Tasting Experience, titled “A little bit of science and more than a little bit of chocolate”.
  + And finally, today’s AGM and online escape room event.

We also had some events that have been postponed from last year, a visit to Bowthorpe Oak Tree, one of the top 10 oldest trees in the UK, and a talk from an expert in the National Trust, a bat hunting punt on the River Cam in Cambridge as well as Bourne SciFest, a local science festival in Bourne in Lincolnshire.

We are hoping this coming year will be the beginning of things starting to open up again. But as a branch we are committed to ensuring the safety of our members comes first. As we have shown in these past couple of years, virtual events do work and we will have done a great job at adapt our event planning to make these work. One real positive is how accessible virtual events are. We are a relatively large region in the UK but by having these events online, anyone from any area can join us.

Continuing with the online theme, our social media presence is still holding strong. We have our Facebook page, which can be found by searching for @RSBEastAnglia, as well as our Twitter account @RSB\_EastAnglia, ran by Penny. This increasing use of social media is giving us the freedom to share content with you directly and will be of vital importance to us this year. We will definitely still be posting our report and events in The Biologist but it’s just a little extra we are doing too.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our current committee, the volunteers who are busy working in the background to turn your ideas into actual events. So thank you to Penny Maplestone, our secretary, as well as setting up and single-handedly running our East Anglia Twitter, thank you to Richard for holding our first event of the year. And thank you, too, to our other committee members, Arun Prasad Pandurangan, David Harper, Denise Dear, John Cassidy, Lidia Feher and Liliya Serazetdinova.

I’d also like to thank Beth from Head Office, who always tries her best to join our meetings and keep us updated with what is going on in the wider society. Bethany Morgan has now moved onto another role, which we cannot congratulate her enough about. We wish her all the best. We are excited to meet the new team member joining the Head Office Team.Without these people these amazing events and this branch, of which we are very proud, would not be here today.

But most of all I just want to say thank you very much for being here today. Thank you for coming to our events, supporting us and choosing to be here today. You are always welcome to participate in any way, whether that is an email, a social media post, coming to an event or joining our committee. Thank you for your contribution.

# Treasurer’s report

# AGM AOB

Update from RSB council (Professor Nigel Brown)

**“The Missing” escape room**

That brings an end to the formal AGM section of the meeting, as well as a look at what we do as a branch. I will now be sharing my screen to go through our escape room experience.

Four missing people have disappeared in mysterious circumstances. Our team must find out what happened to them whilst avoiding suffering the same fate. Escape will involve a series of puzzles and riddles players need to crack to escape the room.