

**ECC AGM (1)**  
**Chairman's Report**  
**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

**Chairman's Report/Address:**

Welcome to this, our first AGM, although 2 years old now, it was felt the ECC didn't need an AGM last year, due to the lockdowns and everything else holding us back.

*A brief history of ECC.*

We started in September 2019 and just 6 months later we had to shut down due to covid. We used Zoom to keep a "core" of the chorus going, with themed quizzes and even the odd lesson thrown in. We did 45 Zoom meetings. Without that, I believe that ECC would have quietly melted away.

When we could start back last September, albeit outside, we were lucky enough that Damon at the Boot, let us use the Garden of the pub, and eventually, the marquee. Then came the second lockdown and all rehearsals had to stop again, until May this year, when we could rehearse with restrictions, in this hall, our new, hopefully permanent venue.

With the lifting of restrictions in July, it was all systems go and back to rehearsals, It was inevitable that we would lose some members, and changing the venue probably played a part in that too. We used to meet at The Red Lion in Manningtree and as we had the upstairs room for free, and we didn't feel the need to charge anything as we didn't have any expenses. Since changing to Freston Village Hall, we are paying £20 a session, therefore we implemented a pay as you go fee of £2 per session.

At the beginning people were throwing in an extra pound here and there just to have enough money to pay the hall. Anything over 10 people attending will put us "In profit" for that evening... But if we have a quiet week, we will have to eat into that profit to enable us to pay the hall. I shall cover the money in the financial report. I think we can all agree that Freston Village Hall is a great place to hold our rehearsals, and indeed any event that we want to put on. I have no intention of looking for another venue at this time.

Moving forward, I have agreed in principle that ECC will become part of Ipswich Barbershop Harmony Club... What does that mean, well it means that we are associated with the VIPs, The VIPs are under Ipswich Barbershop Harmony Club, it is kinda like an umbrella company, each subsidiary of the harmony club, being left to its own devices, but with the ability to call upon each other at times.

ECC will have a few benefits and NO drawbacks, a couple of the benefits include copyright of music, we will have access to all songs that The VIPs do, we will have access to the risers. The VIPs are in the process of getting a top-quality recording device, to record rehearsals etc, we will have access to that too, and for a chorus to be considered to join BABS there are certain hoops and hurdles that have to be negotiated before being accepted, being part of Ipswich Barbershop Harmony Club, with all their hoops and hurdles taken care of for The VIPs to join BABS, ECC will have a much easier route "IN" when the time comes. The VIPs will have no say in what we do, where we do it or have any involvement or influence in our chorus.