



Guildford Beekeepers

Chairmans end of year Report for SBKA.

November 2022

It's difficult to give a report about this year without mentioning the weather.

Again, it has been another record-breaking year with the flowering season reduced by heatwaves and then drought creating difficult foraging conditions for bees and all insects.

Events

As the preliminary information about **RSH Wisley Lecture** with Dave Goulson was mentioned in last year's report, before it actually happened, a brief mention here of just how successful it was is appropriate. The event was fully attended, with over 200 guests, the evening was a huge accomplishment for the Association. The content of the lecture itself still has a strong resonance for us and is influencing how we, as an Association, look ahead towards our beekeeping future. A big thanks to all 20 members that made up the various teams led by **Pauline Lane** that made it such a success.

In **May** we had a eventful **Open Day** in Birtley Gardens that was well attended.

A strong Events Team, again led by Pauline made that happen so smoothly. The children's pollinator trail, winding around the flowerbeds throughout the whole of the gardens was a great children's activity, and they loved the little pot of honey they received from Pauline on completion of the trail.

Mel Robertson and **Mary Jones**, our budding Plants Team, organised and ran a successful **Pollinator Plants** sales tent which brought in a sizeable and welcomed revenue. Thank you to all the members who donated the hundreds of plants and cuttings.

Thanks go to the catering team for organising and serving the cream teas with all the homemade cakes. This also brought in a very welcome contribution, despite the team not actually charging for them. People were very generous in showing their appreciation by making substantial donations instead.

In **June** we did a presentation at the **Guildford in Bloom for Schools** awards ceremony and the overall Best in Competition School, were awarded a class invitation to come and see live bees at our apiary at Birtley.

In the middle of the heatwave, in **July**, our esteemed member, **Malcolm Clarke** found himself standing out in the sun for the **BBC One, Bargain Hunt** Program at the Losely Park Antiques Fair. His task was to explain to the nation the pros and cons of Skep beekeeping. (Bargain Hunt, Series 63, Guildford 21)

During **August**, we attended the **Peaslake Village Fete** for the first time. There was a huge number of visitors. As usual, we had a live observation hive as well as children's activities and the day flew by with constant conversations with an interested public. Huge thanks to Pauline, Mel, Geoff, Peter Smith and Dave Bennet for making the events so enjoyable.

in **September** we took part in our biggest summer event, the **Surrey Hills Wood Fair** which was a two-day, weekend event attracting a huge number of visitors.

In addition to the usual activities of observation hive, honey sales and children's activities at the stand, Pauline gave periodic educational talks throughout the two days inside the main 'Making Space for Nature' Marquee.

Again, a huge thanks to **Pauline and the Events Team** for organising this and thanks to all those members that found the time to assist at the stand and support the Association.

Teaching Apiary

I would like to thank the Apiary Teaching Team, and the Apiary Maintenance Team who work throughout year delivering the theory and the practical courses as well as looking after the maintenance of the grounds, the Barn, the equipment and of course the bees at the Apiary

These are:

Ian Carmichael, Jacqueline Tolley, Mel, Sara, Angela Massie, Dave Bennett, Alastair Heslop, Peter and Mary Jones and of course, Pauline and Geoff Lane.

A special thanks goes to **Susan Kimber** the Apiary Team Lead, the Apiary Team is the beating heart of the Association, the beginning, the middle and the end of what we do.

During **August** we held an interesting Bee Health Day with the Bee inspector, **Stuart Westsmith**. And thanks go to **Gillie Muir** for organising this.

I would also like to thank **Gary Grant** for stepping up to redo our Website. We are very optimistic that this will be up and running by the beginning of next year.

A special thanks also to **Peter Jones**, our **Newsletter Editor** who manages each month to pull together all the contents and get it out to us.

The Newsletter is the link that holds us all together, it's the golden thread and connects us.

Peter also hosts the WhatsApp Group.

I would also like to give a particular thanks to **Peter Smith**, on behalf of the Association, for quietly getting on with putting the message out there, that Pollinators are Important.

Peter enjoys giving talks about pollinators and has given about 5 talks throughout the last season, including Protecting our Pollinators, the Business of Bees and the Secret World of Moths.

He also leads weekly 'Moth Mornings' at the Rosamund Community Garden and is also involved with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust's 'Bee Walks' Scheme, designed to collect data for the trust on the quantity and distribution of our native Bumblebees.

AGM

We held our **AGM** on the 16th November at Jacobs Well Village Hall.

This was the first AGM we have had face to face following the pandemic.

2023 will see a few changes on the committee; **Lou Major** chose not to stand for re-election this year, following many years of service and supporting the committee, latterly managing the foundation courses and the registration of new beekeepers.

We were delighted to welcome **David Bennett** as the new Membership Secretary. He will be taking over the role from **David Reeve** who, has worked hard over the years to steadily improve the membership management process, making it more efficient for both the members and the Association's procedures.

We were equally delighted to welcome **Geoff Lane** as the Accounts Examiner for the year ending 2023 and further.

Malcolm Clark remains as the divisional trustee to SBKA.

BBKA exams

It was a pleasure to hand out 7 BBKA Basic certificates this year to **Peter and Mary Jones, Peter Smith, Gary Grant, Graham Chedzoy, Sara Cannell, and Colin Marshall.**

It was also a delight to hand out 7 certificates to **Jacqueline Tolley** for passing the BBKA modules, 1,2,3,6 & 7, the Intermediate Certificate and the Honeybee Health Practical.

The AGM was followed by a fascinating and educational talk given by **Gill Perkins**, the CEO of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, about the plight of the Bumblebee.

Jonathan Brookhouse

November 2022