



## **Surrey Beekeepers Association AGM 3rd December 2022** **2022 Surrey County Show Report**

Once again there was no county show at Stoke Park, Guildford but that did not deter us. Mike Axford our Chief Steward and the Surrey Show committee staged our own county honey show for the second time without the umbrella of the SCAS show. We are grateful to the chairman and committee of Reigate BKA for allowing us to stage the show at their Henfold Lane apiary.

The response from Surrey BKA members was fantastic. The show bench looked splendid with a staggering 219 entries, well over double the 100 required to make us a 'Blue Ribbon' event. As usual, all ran smoothly thanks to Mike Axford's planning and very efficient organisation by our Show Bench Secretary Daphne Thomas. Our judges this year were Mike and Liz Duffin with Judges Stewards Jacqueline Tolley, David Reeve and Peter Smith from Guildford division. The opportunity to be a Judges Steward is a great learning experience. We share this opportunity around the divisions and in 2023 it will be the turn of lucky members from Kingston BKA. Janine Sparkes (Farnham) won the Blue Ribbon for the best exhibit in the show, Trevor Keast (Reigate) won the Composite Cup for the individual member with the most points in show and Adam Leitch (Reigate) won the Ken Reed Memorial Cup for wax. David Parker (Weybridge) won the Colman Cup for cut comb. That's Colman as in mustard. Sir Jeremiah Colman was once our chairman. Barry Wood (Kingston) won the Golder Memorial Trophy for novice entrants and with it, the novice certificate for entry to the 2023 National Honey Show. The Vincent Challenge Cup for the division with most points in show was won by Reigate BKA. For many years the Vincent Cup has been a two-horse race between Guildford and Farnham. Last year (after a 43 year wait!) Reigate won the trophy and they made it a double this year. Will they be able to hold on to it in 2023? What will our other divisions do about this!

Do encourage your division to raise your number of entries in 2023. All you need to do is delegate one member to bring all your division entries to stage on Friday afternoon or first thing on Saturday morning and another to collect them at 5pm. You don't all have to get up early!

There is not going to be another Surrey County Agricultural Society show at Stoke Park, Guildford. We have been in regular touch with SCAS for some time and we were promised an update before the end of 2021. That never happened. Early this year I called and a multiple choice answerphone message told me all their operatives were busy and I should leave a message. I was eventually called back by a SCAS employee who told me she was the last employee in the office and she would be leaving in a few months. I arranged with her to collect our show equipment from their store on the Stoke Park site before she left. We assembled a crack team of Surrey members – thank you all – and collected our show kit. It wasn't easy. We had to climb to first floor level by ladder – no stairs. Then we had to climb 10 feet high piles of stock fencing and work our way over them to the back of the store. Our kit was at ground level behind all that so we had to get down to it and set up a human chain to pass everything back to the entrance and load it into a van. All our show kit is now safely stored in one of the Reigate containers. Thank you Reigate for helping with this.

I asked the SCAS employee for a contact with the SCAS trustees. She told me she would have a think about which trustees would actually respond to me! She never sent a contact. I understand that there



is not enough money in the SCAS bank account to stage another show – but there is money there. I for one will be interested to know how this money will be allocated. SCAS is a registered charity.

Our honey show usually pays the bills by running a straw draw, taste of honey, candle rolling and taking a small commission on the sale of members' honey. With no public visitors to our honey show this source of income vanished. With this in mind, on 9<sup>th</sup> July the show team put together a splendid display for the public at the Claygate Flower Show. This raised enough money to almost break even on the costs of running our honey show and ticked our box for educational outreach to the public. Well done to all who took part. It was a lot of work for the team.

It's clear that a significant number of our members are keen to participate in a county honey show. With that in mind, I think it's unreasonable to ask our show team to make a huge effort to raise money to pay for the show on top of the huge effort they make in actually running the event. I would like to ask each division to contribute a small amount – say £100 – to the show funds. With that we can continue to offer a splendid county show for our members and look after our hard-working show team. I hope you will support that.

Whatever happens, in 2023 we will have another great show.

**Bob Maurer**

Chairman – Surrey Beekeepers Association Show Committee

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