

GBKA Report for SBKA AGM 2024

Before I go into the chairman's report, I would just like to thank you all for the privilege of allowing me to chair the Association over the last three years.

As I mentioned in our brilliant newsletter, it's been an interesting, enlightening and very often fun role, and I can honestly say that getting to know the committee and the many volunteers that make GBKA such a thriving Association has been a real privilege. None of what we have achieved would have been possible without the commitment, the effort and the expertise of your committee, and of course, the support, the contribution and the energy of our regular volunteers.

Events and Talks

I would like to acknowledge the hard work that has been put into Events and Talks this year.

As a charity our message; '**To promote the craft of beekeeping and to raise awareness about the economic and environmental importance of bees and biodiversity**' has been beautifully conveyed to the public by our speakers and our many helpers.

Under **Pauline Lane's** leadership, we had a stand at 5 local events, some with a footfall of thousands of visitors.

On top of that, talks were given to **13 different adult clubs and societies**, and structured talks were given to **14 different schools**. In all, reaching approximately **1000** children and **370** adults.

A huge achievement!

For the Talks, thanks go to the main speakers: **Pauline Lane and Geoff Lane, Peter Jones, Peter Smith, Jacqueline Tolley, Mel Robertson, Greg Reeve and Sharon Campbell**.

For the Events, a big thanks go to all the volunteers who find the time to spend a couple of hours to help out on our stand, speaking to the public about beekeeping, showing live bees, and informing them about threat of the Asian Hornet.

As always, a special thanks goes to **John Robertson**, Mel's husband who despite a dodgy knee, always finds time to help us move equipment to and from the Events with his van.

Apiary

As mentioned in the Apiary report, the colonies came through the winter well, and at the end of the year we had a surplus of about 120lbs of Honey. At the same time the Apiary successfully trained another 20 new trainees this year.

The Apiary is the backbone of the Association, and I'd like to thank the whole **Apiary team** led by **Susan Kimber**.

Members Equipment store.

As seen in the accounts report by **Helen Boughton** how the Beekeeping Equipment Store is also steadily growing in its usefulness to our members. A big thanks goes to **Peter Jones** for carrying this forward. And thank you Peter for **editing and producing the newsletter** so skilfully.

Website and Membership.

A big thanks goes to **Greg Reeve** for taking on the role of Webmaster working quietly behind the scenes, keeping the Website up to date and functioning as planned.

It is really appreciated when **membership renewals** come in on time, a big thanks goes to all those that renewed on time.

And many thanks go to **David Bennet** and **Helen Boughton**, who keep the ship on track.

Asian Hornet.

The threat of Asian Hornet is still with us, this year so far, there have been around 44 confirmed sightings with the total number of nests destroyed is 23.

Be aware, that one of these nests was in Ardingly, West Sussex, (9 September) and last year, 2 nests were found in Oxted Surrey.

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, the new **Asian Hornet Lead** next year will be **Rebecca Davis** and she will be our main contact going forward.

All beekeepers should at the very least, have the equipment and know how to set up a monitoring station at home.

Next year, we will be doing workshops on this and will be handing out monitoring equipment and bait.

At the county level we have organised a small budget for this activity.

Please put yourselves forward to be on the AHAT monitoring team list, so that you know what is going on and be an extra pair of eyes in an organised way.

At some stage in this activity, we will need to include the public to help as well.

BBKA exams.

I would like to congratulate all 7 members that have taken BBKA exams and passed. They are: **Kevin Roke, Patsi Bucknall, Gregory Reeve, Ali Pilkington, Albert Clogston, Val Holdich** and **Angie Cogbill**.

I'm also delighted to announce that two extra certificates go to **Jacqueline Tolley** for passing **General Certificate in Beekeeping Husbandry**, which means that she is now a **BBKA Qualified Beekeeper**

I would like to thank the Apiary team who make sure the colonies are in good order for the actual exam day and a special thanks goes **Geoff Lane** who has tirelessly given extra mentoring time to guide the candidates through to success.

Jonathan Brookhouse

Chair. November 2024

AGM 2024 at Jacobs Well Village Hall on 13th November.

Changes in Committee:

Jonathan Brookhouse stood down as Chair, due to other commitments.

As there is no replacement yet, the Committee will alternate in chairing meetings as they see fit. Jonathan will continue to be involved with the Association's activities when possible.

Pauline Lane stood down as Secretary, due to other commitments.

As there is no replacement Secretary yet, the committee will collectively manage the secretary role.

Pauline will continue to be involved with Talks and Events.

Officers voted in.

Treasurer: - Helen Boughton

Membership Secretary: - David Bennett

Apiary Manager: - Susan Kimber

Divisional Trustee to SBKA - Malcolm Clark

Steve Cotney - Committee Member

New Committee Members were elected, and all were voted in unanimously

Peter Jones - Committee Member

Val Holditch - Committee Member

Angie Cogbill - Committee Member

Accounts Examiner.

Geoff Lane – *elected unanimously*

As the **Secretary and Chairman** are standing down and no replacements yet found, the committee will rotate the chairing of meetings.

The AGM meeting was followed by a talk by **Peter Smith** entitled '**Everything about Honey**' followed by a Q&A on honey with **Peter Dawson** and **Jacqueline Tolley**, chaired by **Geoff Lane**.

Supporting notes for GBKA Report - SBKA AGM 2024

Membership

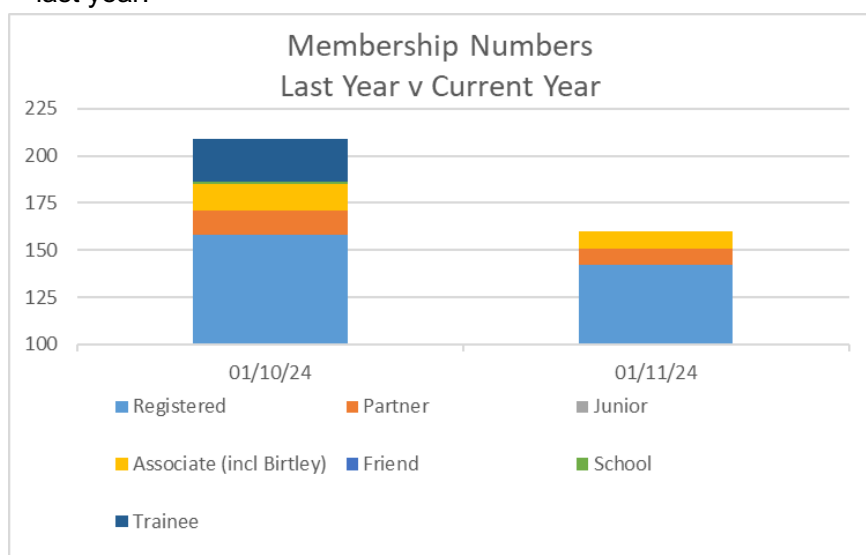
The 2023-24 membership year ended in September with a total GBKA membership of 210 members, including the trainees. The trainees are given complimentary GBKA membership with their course fees.

The total membership for 2024/25 currently stands at 160. This does not include 2024 trainees, who will join GBKA in January, approximately 12 have signed up so far.

11 members have decided not to renew their memberships due to giving up bee keeping or moving away.

Approximately 25 responses to the renewal request and its reminder email, remain outstanding. It is pleasing to welcome 10 of last year's trainees who have taken up GBKA membership this year. A further 4 new members have also joined this year.

The total membership number is very similar to the total number at the same time in November last year.



David Bennett

(GBKA Membership Secretary)

Treasurer Report

for the Financial Year ended 30th September 2024

Overview

I am pleased to report that the association generated a surplus on its activities to 30th Sept 2024 of £6,488 increasing the total unrestricted funds held by the association.

Income

Subscription income was in line with the previous year.

Over the past 3 years this figure has remained between £9,500 and £10,000 per annum.

Other income increased by over £2,500 in the year driven by an increase in sales from our member's store. Income from the store grew from £3,492 in 2023 to £8,002 in 2024.

I am pleased that this initiative is proving so valuable to members, and I would like to express my thanks to **Peter Jones** for his impeccable record keeping.

Donations

This was a strong year for **donations** and I would like to thank all those who provided donations themselves, and those whose efforts raised donations from others. These especially came from the excellent talks organised this year to a wide range of audiences, from members of the public assisted by our swarm collections, and from two members who arranged corporate donations.

Thank you!

Costs

Voluntary Income Costs

These increased by just over £1000 from 2023 reflecting slightly higher membership fees to BBKA plus a small increase in expenditure on promotional materials.

Fundraising Costs

These costs increased by £3,234 almost entirely due to the increase in the spend on supplies for our members store. As you can see in the financial year to 30th Sept 2024 the store generated a financial surplus of £1,755 whilst at the same time delivering substantial savings for members who only want to purchase small quantities of equipment. I think that is called a win - win for everyone.

Charitable Activities.

The main item of cost in this category is the apiary at Birtley. This costs the association £3,560 in running costs and renovations of which £2,600 is rent and insurance but it generated over £6,100 in training fees and honey sales, so you can see that apiary produced a very healthy surplus in 2023/24.

Helen Boughton
(GBKA Treasurer)

Apiary Report 2023/2024

The colonies came through the winter 23/24 well with minimal losses and continued to develop well until the inclement weather of late spring/early summer. With the resultant reduced opportunities for foraging the colonies quickly used up any stores and in late May/June we were feeding many colonies. When the main summer flow started there was still a deficit of stores in these hives and, as we only take any supers excess to the colony needs for extraction, the honey crops this year was considerably lower than the previous two years.

Various splits were made and some nucs were set up for later sale, although it was noticeable that the early ones struggled to get established probably due to poorly mated queens.

The colonies remained healthy throughout the year, there was no evidence of the chronic bee paralysis virus that caused losses last year and we are going into the winter months with ten colonies.

A honey extraction morning was held in early August, and, with good advance planning and preparation in the barn, all supers were removed from the four productive colonies, frames extracted and returned to their rightful owners by lunchtime.

Most of the resultant honey, approximately 120lb, was sold at later events although some was set aside for the National Honey Show.

Beginners Theory Course,

with twenty trainees, was again a hybrid course, with sessions held on Zoom and at the Apiary during January and February. The Beginners Practical Course commenced as planned in April, with twenty trainees attending the eight weekly sessions at the Apiary. Many of the trainees continued to attend the apiary throughout the summer, thus gaining invaluable experience of the beekeeping year.

BBKA Assessments

Two days of BBKA Assessments took place at the end of June and beginning of July, seven candidates taking the BBKA Basic Assessment. Providing the required number of queen right colonies to the BBKA standard set up was achieved with just days to go and the feedback on the colonies and facilities, given by the external assessors, was gratefully received. Thanks must go to **Geoff Lane**, who steered these candidates through the revision sessions, the practical sessions taking place at the Apiary.

Taster Day

A successful Taster Session was also held in early July with twenty members of the public attending the Apiary for an afternoon during which the participants were able to have an insight into the life of a honeybee, the work of a beekeeper during the year and see a hive inspection.

The observation hive was set up for four events this year, the **GBKA Open Day at Birtley**, **Cranleigh Carnival**, **Peaslake Fete** and finally the **Surrey Hills Wood Fair** in early September.

Social and Themed Sessions

The Apiary year ended with the now annual Autumn 'Spring' Clean and Barbecue in mid-September. This was well attended as were most of the sessions throughout the year, the number of GBKA members attending increasing year on year. The programme of monthly 'themed' sessions during the winter months also proved popular with topics ranging from Frames, Forage (nectar and pollen), Asian Hornet Track and Trace, Swarm Control – Demaree



and Snelgrove methods, and finally 'Sweets for My Sweet, Sugar for my Honey'. **Malcolm Clarke, Jacqueline Tolley, Jonathan Brookhouse, Mel Robertson and Ally Pilkington** must be thanked for taking these informal sessions which were enjoyed by all those present.

Our Team

The apiary would not run without the support from many members of the Association who turn up and help with the training sessions, the maintenance of the colonies, nucs and equipment throughout the year, especially **Alastair Heslop, Angela Massie, Ian Carmichael, Geoff Lane, Pauline Lane, Mel Robertson, Sara Cannell, Gillie Muir, Peter and Mary Jones, Angie Cogbill and Val Holditch.**

Susan Kimber
(GBKA Apiary Manager)