

## 2014 RESOLUTIONS

### 4/2014 Surrey BKA

That the BBKA Executive Committee set up a working party to examine and reconsider the timing of key events in the BBKA's annual cycle as determined by the BBKA constitution, with a view to improving clarity and transparency in the running of BBKA and its interaction with its member associations; the Executive Committee to present their findings and recommendations to the membership not later than the 2015 Annual Delegate Meeting.

This report summarises the results of discussions held between members of the Executive, a Past President and representatives from a number of BBKA Member Associations as well as discussions held on the Chairman's Day.

The report also makes recommendations for Members to consider and a proposed timetable assuming the delegates are in favour of adopting the recommendations.

#### Concerns

During the discussions it became clear that the major concern expressed by the membership revolved around financial aspects of the BBKA's activities and the timeliness and transparency of budgeting and its financial status with respect to its performance against budget. This also included the way in which the accounts and proposed budget were presented.

The general theme of improving communications was relevant to all beekeeping associations as well as communication between the BBKA and Member Association and the membership at large.

There was clearly a need to refresh the understanding of the roles of Trustees and the ADM delegates at the ADM; the actual management of the charity's activities and the ways in which communication about the future path of the charity took place.

#### Recommendations

The BBKA Financial Year remains from the 1st of October to the 30<sup>th</sup> of September.

The ADM is held in mid-late June.

At the ADM *inter alia*

The Delegates 'receive' the approved Accounts for the previous year.

The Executive presents

- An update of the BBKA Strategy
- A Budget for the ensuing year (the budget vote would incorporate the vote on the Capitation fee necessary to deliver the proposed budget. There would be no change in the collection arrangements for the capitation). This would also enable at least a 6 month YTD comparison of the financial position of the BBKA with the approved budget.
- A financial projection for the following 2 years.

A Special Delegates Meeting is held mid-late June 2015

- In order to consider the YTD financial performance of BBKA and
- To consider the budget proposition for the year September 2015 to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 and a financial projection for the following year.
- To implement the timetable for an ADM in June 2016

## Preparations for the ADM

The relative time periods for the various processes which are to be adhered to, in order to ensure efficient and effective preparations for the ADM, were considered satisfactory.

## Implications for the Constitution

These recommendations if instituted as set out above would mean little change is required to the Constitution other than removal of the need of a separate vote for capitation fee changes as the budget to be approved will be predicated on the disclosure of the capitation fees used to establish the budget.

## **6/2014 Yorkshire BKA**

That the BBKA introduces a Corporate or Institutional grade of membership suitable for schools and educational bodies who are keeping bees and using bees in the curriculum.

*BBKA has institutional membership in place already and a special membership package has been presented to those in attendance at the Special Interest Day held in 2014. A full response is awaited from those who formed part of the working party to take this forward. Bees in the curriculum is in the final stages of upgrade at the time of writing.*

## **9/2014 Devon BKA**

That the BBKA launch active lobbying of Government to end or significantly reduce the practice of levying Value Added Tax (VAT) at the full rate of 20% on all beekeeping equipment. This will enable more people of limited means to take up the craft, which will increase the environmental benefits of beekeeping. Given the unprecedented levels of public concern about the decline of honey bee populations and the recent high-profile media coverage of beekeeping, there has never been a better time to challenge this imposition

Devon BKA are driving this proposition supported by the BBKAA meeting has taken place with Neil Parish MP for Tiverton & Honiton who was well versed on the content of the paper and suggested that this issue would only be applicable to Amateur Beekeepers i.e. up to 39 hives. Above 39 hives it was assumed that they would be members of The Bee Farmers Association and would be dealing with VAT as a business.

Suggested way forward by Mr Parish-

- BBKA need to make it into a campaign with all Associations contacting their MP's
- Mr P will arrange for a meeting with the Treasury Minister responsible for beekeeping equipment maximum - 3 or 4 people to attend

The meeting ended on a positive note with Mr Parish saying that he was fully supportive of this paper and would do all he could to help get it through the Treasury.

## ANNUAL REPORTS

### **BBKA Executive Report Annual Delegate Meeting**

Initial reports from the Associations suggest that overall this has been a good year for beekeeping. Honey yields are up and the fine and dry weather has been good for the honey bee. A downside is that the NBU Inspectors have reported higher rates of infestation of varroa. This is probably due to the relatively benign winter of 2013/14 and the long dry spell experienced in much of the country during the year.

The Annual Honey Survey shows that the average yield per colony is up from 24.7lb in 2013 to 32.9lb in 2014 with the highest yield in the East (37.7lb up from 28.7lb).

The BBKA Trustees have been busy during the year starting off with a new venture for 2014. Three Special Interest Days (SIDs) were held soon after the ADM 2014. In spite of the relatively short notice for these they were well attended and there was much discussion and many good ideas for future development came out of them. The following SIDs were held: Schools and Young People - 1 February 2014; Forage and the Landscape - 15 February 2014; Varroa - 8 March 2014

At the ADM 2014 the Executive Committee (EC) was tasked with a number of Propositions, the potentially most far reaching being Proposition 4/2014 (otherwise known as the Surrey Proposition). This stated:

*“That the BBKA Executive Committee set up a working party to examine and reconsider the timing of key events in the BBKA’s annual cycle as determined by the BBKA constitution, with a view to improving clarity and transparency in the running of BBKA and its interaction with its member associations; the Executive Committee to present their findings and recommendations to the membership not later than the 2015 Annual Delegate Meeting.”*

A significant amount of work has been carried out to identify how the schedule of meetings can be re-arranged to accomplish the intent of this proposition without the necessity of changing the Constitution. This included a meeting with representatives of a number of member Associations. We believe we have identified how this can be achieved and will present the findings at the ADM 2015.

Representatives of the BBKA have been to meetings of the Bee Health Advisory Forum, of which we are a member, and have been active in the development of the National Pollinator Strategy.

The Member Database was moved into the office at Stoneleigh after the capitation round in April with Ivor and Jan Davis providing support in the background. This was accomplished successfully. Jan and Ivor are now enjoying some new found time and we thank them for all the work they have put in over the years.

A lot has been accomplished to move the BBKA forward and to improve our communications with Member Associations and with the general membership. Much more remains to be done and your EC will be pressing forward to accomplish even more in 2015.

**Doug Brown, BBKA Chairman.**

## **BBKA NEWS**

Firstly, warm thanks to our Editor Sharon Blake and her Deputy, Christine Knott for their hard work keeping BBKA News full of interesting articles. We lost our ad sales manager Julia O’Gorman in June but we have been pleased to welcome Sally Carter into the role. Advertising revenue is important for BBKA News, helping to reduce the cost to members of producing and distributing the publication by almost 50%. At a net cost of just over £4 per member for 12 monthly issues we believe BBKA News offers excellent value. Postage is a major element in the BBKA News budget and we are currently finalising a Down Stream Agency agreement which should save up to £1,000 per issue in postage.

We surveyed members in 2013; respondents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the publication; we have been weaving-in improvements over the year. However we will shortly be introducing some more substantial changes in design and layout to enhance readability and freshen-up the overall ‘feel’ of the publication. The British Bee Journal was used to carry the Insect Pollinators Initiative reports after the Spring Convention event and we propose further use of this title to carry more scientifically orientated articles in the future.

***Tim Lovett, BBKA News Publisher***

## **EDUCATION AND HUSBANDRY**

An update on our activities since the last ADM.

We have had four major initiatives part-funded by DEFRA this year, all arising from the BBKA Strategy.

Training for those beekeepers leading study groups took place between November 2013 and February 2014. The target was 60 trainees; in fact nearly 90 people took part in the workshops.

The General Husbandry (GH) project has proved very popular, reflecting the demand for beekeeping training at this middle level. The target was 120 trainees but so far more than 300 people have undergone training towards this level. The number of people passing the GH Assessment has risen accordingly, and, although the pass rate generally has not risen, the pass rate among those having done the training is higher. Our aim is to make this level of training available to members in every area, and we have made substantial progress towards this. We expect about 200 further beekeepers to pass through this training in the next year.

A course preparing beekeepers for the Advanced Husbandry Assessment was trialed. Twenty people took part, and feedback was very positive - again, there is an obvious thirst for help with preparation for this demanding assessment. Our plan is to offer this course to around 40 people in 2015, thus bringing the preparation forward so that people are undergoing the training a year before the prospective assessment. This will give them time to undertake ameliorative action on the weaknesses that are exposed.

The training website, now called ARK, is now in operation. This is intended to be an interactive support for beekeepers who want to learn more about their craft and improve their skills. Starting with a diagnostic page, ARK will flag up appropriate training opportunities and put the member in touch with training providers.

This year we are planning a new nationwide initiative aimed at improving beekeeping skills. This will be publicised via the network of Education Co-ordinators. As with all training, we can provide an impetus from the centre, but the success of the scheme depends on the reception at Branch level. Effectiveness is vastly improved where a Branch has an Education Co-ordinator who liaises with David Blower, the BBKA Training Co-ordinator.

The first film funded largely by Rowse Honey should be marketed in time for Christmas. This is aimed largely at the non-beekeeping public - to educate them about where honey comes from. Two more films aimed at beekeepers and providing chapters with practical beekeeping tips will be on the way by the time of the ADM.

Work continues on the apiary site. A plan of work has been produced to trim trees and shrubs and make the site more usable. A maintenance plan is also in place. The shed has been moved and successfully rebuilt, and a second shed acquired for the gardening equipment. A wildflower meadow is planned for the first section of the site, and up to twenty hives are the target for the apiary proper. The apiary was used for several training and assessment sessions during the year.

Our understanding of the needs of Associations working with young people or school-groups was much enhanced by the Special Interest Day in January. Young people are showing more and more interest in beekeeping and this has to be a growth area in our work. We are working on guidelines for Associations working with young people. "Bees in the Curriculum" has been re-issued as a web-based resource for schools. The International Meeting of Young Beekeepers (IMYB) took place in Poland this year and saw a team from England achieve fourth place overall – a tremendous achievement for the three young people and those who prepared and accompanied them. The five young people who put themselves forward for the team were a credit to their Associations. We hope to build on this success next year, and we are being pressured to host the event at some time in the future. The IMYB should be used as a means of encouraging young people to develop their beekeeping.

We have tried to update the list of speakers in the Yearbook, but have had little support, and indeed some resistance, from Associations. We will continue to try to provide a useful service here, but feedback from Associations about speakers is an essential element. This is an area where Associations can help each other: we at national level only act as co-ordinators.

We are working together with the Examinations Board and the National Honey Show to encourage more people to put themselves forward as Honey Show judges, and to enhance the training and support available for them. We hope there will be a workshop on this at the Spring Convention.

"Bee Health Month" was a modest success this year, and we are planning to repeat the exercise next year. The use of microscopy is a particular theme this time, and Small Hive Beetle will figure. Publicity and guidance for this has already been extensive. Once again, the aim is simple – to encourage each Branch/Division to hold at least one disease inspection demonstration during May with the simple message that each beekeeper should inspect the brood in their hives.

We are grateful for external funding for much of the above work. As well as the DEFRA funding already mentioned, the Training Co-ordinator is part-funded by the Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers.

***Peter Sutcliffe, Education & Husbandry Committee Chairman***

## **General Secretary & Operations Director**

2013/14 has been a very mixed year with a very full calendar, in the drive to take the organisation forward in a long and active season, none of which would have been possible without the dedication and hard work of the administration team, based at Stoneleigh Park offices, and the volunteer network who support both them and the BBKA at large.

In February and March we held three *Special Interest Days* which focused on Schools and Young People, Landscape & Forage and finally Varroa. These initiatives were quite well attended and I thank those who took time to join the various debates.

*Schools & Young People* – An enthusiastic meeting with presentations from schools and associations on the initiatives currently being undertaken across the country. As a consequence of the meeting and the input from our young beekeepers, we have at their request launched a dedicated social media channel that they manage, with administrative assistance. Plus in 2015 we will endeavour to run some regional meetings to enable this to flourish; however, association support will be required.

*Landscape and Forage* - There was a lot of idea exchange and it is over the current winter period that we will try to have many of the suggestions implemented for Associations to benefit from for the season in 2015, in order to promote planting for honey bees. As a consequence of this meeting we have, through our partners, been able to provide more sites for hives for BBKA members, a welcome initiative. In 2014 we continued to partner with British Association of Landscape Industries (BALI), to inform and raise awareness of the benefits of planting for honeybees, to the horticultural sector. We encouraged our corporate members to undertake planting initiatives throughout 2014 and beyond.

We are, with invaluable Volunteer support, practicing what we preach through the positive planting of the relocated BBKA Apiary throughout this winter and the forthcoming Spring which we hope will be enjoyed by visitors, users and Stoneleigh Park employees as well as the bees.

*Varroa* – This meeting indicated that Varroa is still the primary problem that honey bees and beekeepers face but that improved education on IPM and disease identification was of paramount importance. As a consequence the Bee Health initiative and Friends of the Honey Bee are in support of these outcomes.

These interactive membership meetings were continued throughout the year with the *Chairman's Day* meeting. The focus of this was how the organisation could/should move forward in the future of which the Surrey Proposition was an element. It was agreed that this is a meeting that should be undertaken annually.

Our final consultative meeting was the annual **BBKA Forum**, in September. A very well attended, highly constructive meeting with good debate on a number of issues and concerns raised by both member Associations and the BBKA. The overwhelming offer of support from attendees at the meeting was welcomed and I take this opportunity to thank those for voicing their willingness to assist me in the challenges that I face, it is appreciated.

Beekeepers throughout the country experienced a long and busy swarm season, as did the administration team. On average the incoming call levels were 750 per week plus messages on

the answerphone of over 1,100 a week. Our experience was no different to yours with the majority being about bumblebees. I echo the comments of the OPMS report, that we have doubled the number of lines into the BBKA offices with dedicated numbers for members and volunteers. However this does not solve the problem.

The level of public interest in bees is reflected in the BBKA website traffic as detailed below, representing an increase of 146%:

Period	Unique Visitors	Swarm Page Direct
1 <sup>st</sup> April – 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2013	190,306	40,400
1 <sup>st</sup> April – 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2014	322,758	99,600

As I write this report we are focusing our efforts on educating local and regional councils, while seeking to improve communication and information within the Pest Control Associations. We are also investigating other opportunities in the development of a long-term solution to meeting the interest levels in bees whilst also providing support to our members.

In support of the membership we are implementing changes wherever possible to improve efficiency and to adapt to the technological changes that have overtaken the BBKA systems, with a view to easing the pressures on the volunteer officers throughout the country. In April 2014 the BBKA Membership register transferred from the voluntary management of Ivor and Jan Davis to the BBKA, since its transfer we have been able to identify and understand more clearly the capability of the system and, with consultation, the needs of our member associations and we have been considering the options for improvement. The current system, has served us well and is a reflection of the long serving efforts of its managers. Valerie Sylvester is the current primary operator of the register with the rest of the administration team being in support.

As part of our membership service provision all new members are sent a welcome pack which incorporates their membership card and Membership Handbook; the latter is subject to review for the forthcoming season. The Membership Handbook is available to long standing members via their Association, at 75p should they wish to provide to those who have not yet received a copy.

Additional Membership Benefits outside of beekeeping are negotiated annually and in 2014 those increased to offers from River Cottage, BeeGood, Jean Luc Colombo, Planetbee Wines - which complement those offered from HMCA (special rates on personal insurances) Your Rewards (money savings and offers). All of these enhance the beekeeping insurance that this year has resulted in reduced excess on Third Party property claims and a continuation of the All Risks insurance option.

As part of the ongoing administration we support the Examination Board in the processing of assessment applications and as required elsewhere. We also support the Education Co-ordinator in the course administration, bookings and ARK.

In 2013/14 we have supported the attendance of events and disseminated literature that promotes aspects of beekeeping, association membership, planting for pollinators etc. This has been made available to and used by both area and local associations at no charge beyond

that of postage and packing costs. Our website has been accessed 720,819 times between 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013 and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014 because it is a good information resource, which we will continue to add to.

**The Pollen Basket**, the BBKA web shop is administered by myself and support staff. We endeavour to provide a range of appropriate gifts, products and educational materials with a beekeeping/ honey bee related nature, in line with the BBKA Enterprises Board directive. In the year 2013/14 we have sought to reduce the purchasing of stock and fulfillment charges. Additional services are now provided through the Pollen Basket and serviced by the administration team. We are supported by the volunteer web team and our service provider, Whiteroom. The Pollen Basket is in constant use for the selling of product, Education Courses, Spring Convention tickets, Adopt a Beehive, Individual Membership and Friends of the honey bee and is therefore in a constant state of management and revision.

**Communication** with our members is important at every level. From the feedback received at the various events/meetings we have undertaken to improve sharing the information via the Members Area of [www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk), which will continue.

In February the Worker Bee was started, an e newsletter, sent directly to those registered in the Members Area to receive direct communication. However, despite encouragement to communicate directly at the September 2013 Forum, many association secretaries complained that we had communicated in this manner. While the Trustees worked with me to resolve the issue when the next edition was circulated to Association Secretaries for dissemination the feedback from members via Social Media was that they had not received it. Unfortunately due to the volume of work this publication has only made an appearance irregularly in 2014. The intention is that the Worker Bee will be circulated to those registered within the Members Area and to Association Secretaries for circulation to the wider membership at least four times in 2015 with the hope that it will have a greater frequency. The Worker Bee has never been intended to replace BBKA News; it is a short e-newsletter with news directly from the General Secretary & Operations Director.

The BBKA Strategy is an ongoing element of my role that I have had offers of assistance from members to work with me on, which I have accepted. Due to the recent staff changes and the consequences of additional administrative duties surrounding the SDM and ADM this has unfortunately been stalled but will resume as soon as possible.

### **Income Generation**

In my capacity of General Secretary & Operations Director I also have the responsibility of fundraising, although this is not my sole function, I am the only fundraiser at the BBKA. What must be made clear at this juncture is that I do not raise funds from FERA or the Wax Chandlers which has been undertaken by the Education and Husbandry team to fulfill their educational objectives.

As you are no doubt aware the BBKA is a registered charity and has been registered with the Charities Commission since 1962. Our charitable objects are to promote and further the craft of beekeeping and advance the education of the public in the importance of bees in the environment.

In order to achieve the second of these objects, which enables us to enjoy the benefits of charitable status, we must deliver projects and elements that support this aspect of our purpose. Delivery of these requires us to have support and engagement with member associations and members at all levels.

Without identifiable projects against which to fundraise we are reliant upon the current schemes in place, which are outlined below and therefore it is hard to project exactly what the income will be. Unless investment is made in the promotion of schemes either through member support or advertising they will not succeed. The opportunity to raise funds against the public interest is the most viable proposition as that is where the broad appeal from fund sources lies and this is an area of project development that needs to be delivered by each area of the BBKA.

We have benefitted from various fundraising initiatives from our public supporters such as weddings to a Great Wall of China Walk; these activities have raised in excess of £2,000 over the last year and is something that we will continue to encourage in 2014/15. I have undertaken a series of public coffee morning talks over the last 12 months raising funds for the honey bee and research yielding over £2,500 for bees.

**Adopt a Beehive** was initiated in 2010 and launched to meet the needs of the BBKA and to deliver sponsor objectives. At the time of the launch the BBKA was not in a position to administer the scheme. Beekeeper, Nicky Smith of Twelve PR offered to do this on our behalf at a mix of volunteer time and reduced costs. The scheme has come under much member criticism due to the high costs in delivery. However, the benefits of Adopt a Beehive are easily overlooked.

- 50% of all Adopt a Beehive profits are shared equally between Education and Research
- Adopt a Beehive currently has 6,418 followers on Facebook, enabling us to inform the public about the importance of the honey bee and beekeepers
- Without the Adopt a Beehive we would not have had the support from companies such as Rowse, who has supported the BBKA for three years
- Other businesses are locked into providing donations to the BBKA as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility objectives such as 2B Scientific
- The annual Honey Survey
- Maintained an external public facing profile through the media in support of the Public Affairs activity

Since my joining the BBKA we have adjusted the scheme costs and operations as follows:

- Reduced the order fulfilment costs
- Altered the gift offering to reduce cost but maintain value
- Reduced the number of paid days from Twelve PR
- Reduced external service provision such as renewals
- Implement a full gift aid recovery programme

Year	Income	Costs
2013/14	64,385	49,439
2012/13	62,415	54342

The scheme is obliged through its contractual agreement with primary sponsor Burts Bees to run until at least 2017.

I take this opportunity to thank all past and present volunteer Adopt a Beehive Beekeepers who are/have been actively involved through the provision of beekeeper reports, media attendance and scheme promotion. In addition I thank Nicky and her team at Twelve PR, who contribute approximately three volunteer days per month to BBKA via Adopt a Beehive.

**Corporate Membership** has to date been the most obvious fundraising option and was already in place when I joined in December 2010. Each of our Corporate Members have their own motivations for becoming a member of the BBKA and therefore expectations have to be managed and deliverables undertaken on time and on budget. In many cases the benefits of our corporate members is to our members with the financial rewards being attributed to the BBKA. Partnerships/memberships to date include the following with primary activities listed. None of these memberships is a quick action and they often evolve over a period of time.

<b>Member</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Barratt Homes *	All new developments now being planted for honey bees Schools presentations and planting
BeeGood *	Membership discount and competition promotions – event support
Belectric *	All solar farms planted for honey bees and secure sites for hives for the benefit of associations and individuals
Hive Energy	Solar farm planting and sites for Hives
Gazeley	Purposely created Association Apiary for North Bucks planted for honey bees and secure sites for Hives nationally.
Jean Luc Colombo	Membership discount on wine
EMG	Farm plant research
Suttons Seeds *	Specially selected seeds promoting Adopt & FOHB with a donation per pack
National Grid**	Secure Sites for Hives

\* Possible renewal 2014/15 \*\*new for 2014/15

All corporate members require a level of key account management in order to fulfill the mutual needs of both parties, which is all undertaken by the General Secretary/Operations Director.

It should be noted that we are yet to receive dividends on the Suttons Seed sales from the season 2013/14 due to their financial year and their business practices. Revenue from these seed sales will be incoming in 2014/15.

**Friends of the Honey Bee** is a public supporter scheme to promote the importance of the honey bee and its needs in relation to their lifecycle and to raise funds for varroa research.

To date it has little/no commercial promotion to the public. However, support from Associations is growing and we will have more materials available for promotion of the

scheme available for the 2015 season. There may be some skepticism about whether or not the scheme is justifiable based on the income versus expenditure to date:

Year	Income £	Costs £
2013/14	3,625	8,590
2012/13	1,566	6,384

I understand that this may at its current cost level be deemed unviable. However, although the scheme has currently lost £9,783, it has proved to be an attractive vehicle for business. To date the costs of scheme set up and activity surrounding the sales process have been attributed in 2012/13 and 2013/14, the income for the scheme is to be realised in 2014/15 from the following companies:

Planetbee Wines (£20K), Planetbee Cider, BeMighty Fine, Rosie & Twine, Joules Clothing (re-signed for 2015), Jub Bulbs, TickTock Teas and others that are currently in negotiation. All of these partnerships provide ongoing income against product sales and present us with the opportunity to secure longer-term income and marketing partnerships.

**Gift Aid** - As a registered charity we are entitled to claim gift aid from members and it is our intention to continue to do so wherever possible. It has been an item of discussion by both the Finance Committee and EC since 2011 and has been put into effect in the year 2013/14 and was noted in the budget for 2013/14. Due to the nature of processing, I am at this time unable to accurately forecast what the return on these claims will be.

**Legacies** are part of the BBKA long term strategic income plans. The scheme requires management and input and is an avenue of fundraising that we will be undertaking. This year we have been the grateful recipients of £245,000, to date, this legacy is currently held in a dedicated reserve fund. A legacy for the BBKA will help honey bees to thrive, enabling us to keep the hives alive.

**Mini WBC Collection Boxes** – The objective of the WBC collection boxes is to raise funds for the BBKA with the profits being shared between the BBKA research and education funds equally. However, although we have disseminated 147 boxes and 13,050 pocket guides that hold a suggested donation of £1 each we have only had returns from 62 associations totaling £5675.63 revenue. A National Hive prize is to be awarded to the association that has raised the most funds returned to the BBKA at a non BBKA assisted event.

It should be noted that donations and support for bees is being sought by more charitable organisations than ever before and include those with much greater resources than the BBKA. As can be seen from the accounts, voluntary income in the form of grants and donations was down by £10K this year. I do not perceive the fundraising challenge ahead to be an easy one.

Looking forward, I am pleased to advise you that I now have a volunteer to support and assist me with this area of BBKA business. This year the budget projections have had my 100% input, unlike in previous years and I will do my utmost to achieve them. I take this opportunity to ask for Association support in the promotion of the supporter schemes in place through the dissemination of promotional literature but also from the wider membership for fundraisers to assist in the sale of the supporter schemes.

**Jane Moseley, BBKA General Secretary & Operations Director**

## **Governance**

Governance Committee met twice this year and the items under discussion at both of the meetings were primarily the ADM. The first being a review of the 2014 meeting, items raised and actions required; as well as the running of the meeting with a view to improving the event for all participants and attendees. The second being to not only to review all incoming propositions and nominations, but to finalise the Standing Orders for both the ADM and SDM.

Governance will undertake to change the current Trustee Induction pack into a Trustees and Officers Handbook which will be distributed to both incoming and existing Trustees & officers at the first meeting in January 2015.

**Doug Brown, Governance Committee Chairman**

## **OPERATIONS & MEMBERSHIP SERVICES (OPMS)**

The day to day running of the BBKA is vested in the hands of the General Secretary/Operations Director who is responsible specifically to the BBKA Chairman and ultimately to the Trustees. OPMS exists to support, oversee and provide continuity to the work of the General Secretary/Operations Director and the administration team as necessary for its areas of responsibility.

This year, OPMS was newly constituted with a large number of Trustees which I believe demonstrates the Trustees' view of the importance of this area of BBKA activities and we are moving forward and working to examine various issues making the best use of the time where it can be best expended.

Therefore, I do not have vast list of activities and achievements to report from the OPMS Committee but what I can report is that the whole of the Committee is determined to and is addressing all aspects of what the BBKA does and why for the areas for which it is responsible; I believe that the presence of so many Trustees on the Committee demonstrates the Trustees' view of the importance of this aspect of the BBKA's work on behalf of the BBKA membership.

I can report for the following areas:

### **Membership Services**

- The 2014 BBKA Year Book was improved but revision work is still ongoing
- The Members' Database is now in-house at Stoneleigh and the BBKA is very grateful for the ongoing support and assistance from Jan and Ivor Davis.

### **BBKA Website**

- That the BBKA website will continue to be developed to provide additional facilities for members but we do welcome any suggestions or offers for help from the members with the task of ensuring that the BBKA website is always "fresh" and useful to members
- That the work to develop a BBKA News website is continuing and it is hoped to be completed within this financial year
- Managing the BBKA Swarm List is not easy but this facility has proved to be very popular and exceedingly useful to members and the public but we still need more members to submit their names for inclusion on the list. I must reiterate that the BBKA Swarm List is another facility and does not seek to replace any existing local systems. However, we do need to ensure that this happens in a more timely manner and to that end we will be looking to having discussions with Associations in advance of the season as to how that can be jointly achieved.
- Bumblebees have been a particular problem for all beekeepers this year and whilst attempts have been made to get the Bumblebee Conservation Trust involved in joint activities, these have been unsuccessful.
- The BBKA website is now a fully responsive website capable of being used on mobile devices as well as on PCs and work has been undertaken to improve the BBKA online shop.

### **BBKA Facilities**

- The BBKA telephone system has been upgraded to improve communications and make it more economic; actions have been taken to ensure that at peak times - particularly during the swarming season - Associations are able to contact the BBKA Office.
- The interior main room of the National Beekeeping Centre (NBC) has been upgraded to ensure that it is now fit for purpose.
- Storage facilities within the NBC are limited so local additional storage has been obtained to relieve the congestion previously caused within the NBC

### **BBKA Staff**

- Hellos and Goodbyes - I am happy for Jan Alcock (BBKA Office Manager) but sorry to report that she has left our employment for pastures new. Thanks are due to her and the rest of the team for providing such an excellent service to members and we give her our best wishes for her future. In her place we welcome Nicky Morris as our new Office Manager.

### **Public Understanding**

- Whilst many activities undertaken to support bees and beekeeping take place, we want to take that task further to identify, develop and benefit from:
  - Other income generation areas
  - Working partners in sympathetic areas to beekeeping
  - Continuance of Adopt a Beehive and other support schemes
  - The increased interest from organisations and individuals in environmental issues in general and beekeeping in particular
- Management of the swarm helpline within the office has proved very useful but work is still ongoing to improve it and reduce the mass of calls experienced in the office during the swarm season.
- Supporting show attendance – BBKA and Associations to better inform the public and swell the ranks of the beekeeping fraternity.

We are always looking for volunteers to help with all of the areas of work of OPMS so if you think you (or one of your members) has a skill to offer contact me:

david.teasdale@bbka.org.uk. They don't have to be a Trustee, a local official or even a beekeeper to be able to contribute and help all of us to take forward the craft that we all enjoy.

***David Teasdale, OPMS Committee Chairman***

## **PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

The key pro-active media initiatives for the BBKA are the Winter Survival Survey results which we put out in June/July and the Honey Survey which is released in October or November each year. This year's Winter Survival Survey was a 'good news' story and guess what, largely failed to get the traction we hoped for, though it gained a second life in August, when we used it to counter stories of major bee losses. The honey survey released in October 2013 again had a strong 'good news' element but was picked-up well by the media.

The public affairs group embodies the President, Chairman of the Executive, Press Officer, General Secretary and Public Affairs Director, plus others who advise on specific issues. There is a steady demand for comment, media 'appearances' and we have enjoyed a great deal of air-time on BBC local radio, Radio 2 and 5-live plus the all important 'Today' programme, on Radio 4. Issues covered over the year were wide-ranging from deaths through bee stings, bee rustling and the importance of bees. However the live issues of pesticides and neonicotinoids and the National Pollinator Strategy continue to occupy the team and will no doubt do so going forward. I thank all those who have contributed and fronted issue not forgetting Gill Maclean's hard work keeping us in the media's focus.

***Tim Lovett, BBKA Public Affairs Director***

## SHOWS

The reasons for beekeepers being involved in shows and events is multiple ranging from better educating the public about bees and beekeeping to attracting people now and future to the craft or simply selling honey.

Whatever the reasons for attending and whatever the size of the show/event everything helps bees and beekeeping and keeps the subject in the forefront of the public's mind. These are the reasons why the Shows Committee exists and why similar committees exist within all Associations.

This year, the BBKA directly represented beekeeping at several major events namely:

- BBC Gardeners' World – NEC
- Stoneleigh Show
- Bath and West Show
- RHS Tatton Park Show
- Ecobuild
- Grand Designs NEC
- National Honey Show

A special mention must be made of Cheshire BKA who attended the RHS Tatton Park Show and received a major award for their magnificent work.

It is very difficult to quantify the value and benefit to Associations resulting from attending this type of event but if the "footfall" on the stand is any sort of measure, these were a tremendous success for beekeeping.

### Two slight downsides in 2014 were:

- After several successful years of attending the RHS Hampton Court Show, in 2014, neither the BBKA nor any other organisation involved with bees/insects was invited to attend which is disappointing and does nothing to improve the public's understanding our craft.
- The Edible Gardening Show was taking place in London at the Alexandra Palace and whilst efforts were made to try and attend the event by working with local Associations, this year it was not to be but we have learnt from the experience and it will not prevent future attempts to cooperate and work with local Associations in order to attend shows/events.

To remind everyone that the BBKA Stoneleigh Shows Committee has gained vast experience in organising and managing attendances at shows and has created a resources bank and a wealth of expertise which can be used or called upon for similar events but the Committee would welcome any member who would like to get involved in its activities.

Attending shows or events is hard work but I still believe that meeting and talking to the public is an effective method of publicising honey bees, beekeeping, Associations and the BBKA and thanks must be given to all of the many volunteers who made the attendances at events

possible and freely gave of their time. Simply talking to the public can set the beekeeping seed into people's heads which might or might not germinate in years to come. Beekeeping (as with all other crafts, hobbies, professions etc.) needs a flow of new people to replace those that cease beekeeping for any reason and events/shows are a good way of spreading the word which is why I do believe that these events are still worthy of the continued support of the yourselves and the BBKA.

***David Teasdale, Shows Committee Responsible Trustee***

## **SPRING CONVENTION**

The 2014 event was a great success again. The major innovation for 2014 was the use of the Eventbrite site for booking and sale of workshops, courses, accommodation and meals. If there were difficulties, they were mainly linked to purchasing entry tickets via the BBKA website, which we are obliged to use in order to check membership validity and send out wrist bands.

Accommodation and meals sold well with record numbers at the dinners and staying on campus. Many workshops and courses sold-out or were fully booked well in advance of the event, so the message is to book early as soon as the tickets are made available on the website in January.

The Insect Pollinators Initiative event was well attended as were all other lectures. The trade exhibition was further enhanced by siting Speakers Corner in the trade hall together with the scientific posters. The trade exhibition was open on Friday afternoon as well as all day Saturday, with revised timings to help delegates to fit in shopping with attendance at the busy programme of events. Overall, the financial out-turn was positive.

We return to Harper Adams on 17-19 April 2015 and there will be further improvements to the offering, including a reduced-priced ticket for those who simply wish to visit the trade exhibition. As usual, I thank all the Committee for their tireless dedication and hard work, which goes on year-round. Several members, including your chairman have indicated that they will retire shortly, so new blood is to be welcomed.

***Tim Lovett, Spring Convention Committee Chairman***

## **TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL**

### **Pesticides and Neonicotinoids**

The moratorium on three neonicotinoids still has a year to run during which time a full review is being carried out by EFSA, the Commission and Member States on the existing risk assessments and any new information which has become available since the previous assessments including a large scale field trial which it is planned to be completed in 2015.

At this point in time there is no indication or interim reports available on the progress of the reviews or news of any political comments on their future. The BBKA will not be making any comment until it has read the reviews and considered the recommendations or decisions which result from the work.

The BBKA continues to follow developments, scientific publications and attend relevant meetings.

The BBKA continues to stress the importance of the need to deal with potential harm to honey bees caused by all pesticides.

### **Varroa**

The status of the use of oxalic acid in the UK is unsatisfactory and the BBKA has been involved in discussions to regularise the situation.

### **Small Hive Beetle**

The BBKA has been liaising with the authorities regarding its recent discovery in Italy and the actions which will be taken to intercept the SHB in the UK. The role of beekeepers in helping in this work is also being discussed.

### **Asian Hornet**

It appears that the Asian Hornet has not been found in the UK during 2014, however it is only a matter of time and beekeepers should maintain their state of preparedness when the flying season begins again in 2015.

### **Bee Health**

The 2013/14 Winter Survival survey was carried out and we now have 7 years of comparable data which is becoming recognised as important in the data being evaluated to understand the health status of our honey bees.

The Information obtained from the Honey Survey will also be used as a surrogate measure of bee health.

### **Bee Health Advisory Forum**

The BBKA is a member of this forum, which is charged with helping the implementation of the Healthy Bee Plan. Bee Base contains records of the meetings of the Bee Health Advisory Forum.

The BBKA has been following the changes being made at FERA, the NBU and the Bee Inspectorate as well as the future delivery of bee related support services and research, including the establishment of the new Plant and Animal Health Agency.

### **National Pollinator Strategy**

The BBKA has actively been participating in the development of the National Pollinator Strategy, the consultation on the draft and as a member of the Pollinator Advisory Steering Group whose role is to support the Defra Pollinator Policy Programme Board. The strategy will have been launched in November 2014.

### **Insect Pollinator Initiative (IPI)**

The BBKA hosted a successful IPI event at the Spring Convention at which representatives from each of the projects presented some key aspects of the findings of their projects. In October there was a Final reporting and dissemination event hosted by the Wellcome Foundation in London and attended by a BBKA representative. This has been reported in BBKA News.

We continue to handle technical and environmental questions raised by members or the public.

### **BBKA Research Fund**

This is the subject of a separate report to be published on line

***Dr David Aston, Technical & Environmental Committee Chairman***

## **EXAMINATION BOARD REPORT**

This year the Examinations and Assessments have had a variable intake with the Basic Assessments showing a substantial decrease for the first time in many years. There were just 685 successful candidates from 56 Areas compared to 941 from 57 Areas last year. However both General Husbandry and Advanced Husbandry have had the highest number of applicants to date. This year all modules were offered twice a year for the first time and 5 Master Beekeeper Certificates have been awarded. A detailed analysis of the results is given below.

At the Board Meeting in January, Gerry Collins was appointed as Chairman; John Hendrie was appointed as the Moderator with Margaret Thomas and Tom Salter as Assistant Moderators.

The Board held four meetings during the year and a Moderation weekend in December to agree the Module papers for 2014. Stands were manned by members of the Examinations Board at the National Honey Show in October 2013, at the Spring Convention in April 2014.

Members of the Board provided training for the Basic Assessment, the General Husbandry Certificate and the Advanced Husbandry Certificate at the Spring convention which was well received and also provided training on assessments and examinations at the National Honey Show.

Assessor training for the Basic Certificate (14 new assessors) took place in May, there are now 182 Basic Assessors. Training was also held General Husbandry Assessors which included 13 new assessors giving a total of 46 assessors.

Module 1,2,3,5,6,7 and 8 examinations were held on March 22, 2014 with 311 candidates sitting examinations at 48 centres across the country and, at the time of writing, all modules are to be held on November 8 with 227 candidates taking 252 examinations at 49 centres.

Members continue to appreciate two opportunities in the year to take modules and the numbers have remained stable. The Examination Board has responded to concerns about insufficient time in Module examinations by introducing a 5 minute period before the exam for the candidate to read the examination paper.

Revisions that reflect current issues and priorities were made to the following syllabi for 2014: Modules, General Husbandry Certificate and Advanced Husbandry Certificate. The Microscopy Syllabus has been updated for 2015.

Correspondence Courses have seen another busy year with application increasing by 11%. 161 actual students enrolled for 239 course entries. 15 of these were group applications with the group size ranging from 3 to 6 – most common being 5.

Our course seems to command respect as there are applications from around the world and we have students who are inmates and officers at a HM prison, and recently received an enquiry from a prison in Wales. We have students in the USA and France to mention just some.

## **Enrolments October 13 to September 14**

Module	Number enrolled (2014)	Number enrolled (2013)
Basic	47	46
1	43	43
2	35	24
3	26	22
5	30	25
6	19	22
7	18	13
8	10	10
Microscopy	11	9
Total	239	214

## EXAMINATION RESULTS 2014

The individual Examination Results have appeared in the BBKA News and will continue to be published as they become available.

The Robert Hammond Award for the best Intermediate Candidate was awarded to Kirsty Gordon, London

The Wax Chandler Award for the best Master Beekeeper was awarded to - James Vivian-Griffiths, Monmouth, Monmouthshire

## November 2013 Module Results

Module	Total Modules	Pass	Credit	Distinction	Fail	Overall Pass Rate
1	75	28	18	9	20	73%
2	47	13	16	5	13	72%
3	30	11	11	5	3	90%
5	43	10	16	12	5	88%
7	48	18	17	2	11	77%
	243	80	78	33	52	79%

There were 222 candidates of which 60 were new candidates taking 1 module. The pass rate of these candidates was 73%.

## March 2014 Module Results

Module	Total Modules	Pass	Credit	Distinction	Fail	Overall Pass result
1	113	47	27	4	35	69%
2	58	23	16	8	11	81%
3	47	11	11	11	14	70%
5	40	11	11	5	13	68%
6	36	19	4	1	12	67%
7	30	11	11	2	6	80%
8	23	12	9		2	91%
	347	134	89	31	93	73%

2014(2013)	Applied	Assessed	Passed	Pass rate
<b>Basic Certificate</b>	748(1004)	695(941)	685(920)	99%(98%)
<b>General Husbandry</b>	85(46)	58(25)	40(19)	69%(76%)
<b>Advanced Husbandry</b>	25(20)	24(20)	9(11)	38%(55%)
<b>Microscopy (to date)</b>	20(44)	(29)	(19)	(66%)
<b>Junior Certificate to date</b>	5(14)	5(9)	5(9)	100% (100%)

**Basic – 26% fewer assessments carried out than 2013.**

### Other Certificates Awarded 2014

Intermediate Theory Certificates 40 (42)

Advanced Theory Certificates 25 (16)

Master Beekeepers 5 (10)

## Basic Certificate Results by Area 2014

Name	Basics	Members	%
SURREY	52	961	5
LANCASHIRE & NORTH WEST	46	603	8
YORKSHIRE	43	1660	3
HAMPSHIRE	40	1151	3
DEVON	35	1040	3
SOMERSET	25	827	3
WARWICKSHIRE	24	667	4
KENT	24	811	3
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	23	628	4
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	22	577	4
MIDDLESEX	18	590	3
WILTSHIRE	17	434	4
ESSEX	17	863	2
SUSSEX	15	519	3
CHESHIRE	15	572	3
LINCOLNSHIRE	15	471	3
AVON	14	419	3
LONDON	13	143	9
SUFFOLK	13	647	2
NORTHUMBERLAND	12	270	4
BERKSHIRE	10	385	3
STAFFORDSHIRE SOUTH	9	162	6
DURHAM	9	155	6
NORFOLK WEST AND KINGS LYNN	9	166	5
MANCHESTER & DISTRICT	9	225	4
CAMBRIDGESHIRE	9	389	2
HARROGATE & RIPON	9	385	2
TWICKENHAM & THAMES VALLEY	8	144	6
HERTFORDSHIRE	8	379	2
DORSET	8	390	2
WORCESTERSHIRE	8	470	2
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS	8	609	1
DOVER & DISTRICT	7	93	8
GWENT	7	143	5
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	7	265	3
JERSEY	6	60	10
STRATFORD ON AVON	6	91	7
SHROPSHIRE NORTH	6	104	6
CORNWALL WEST	5	108	5
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	5	228	2
DERBYSHIRE	5	246	2
SUSSEX WEST	5	431	1
KENDAL & SOUTH WESTMORLAND	4	48	8

PETERBOROUGH & DISTRICT	4	121	3
VALE AND DOWNLAND	4	129	3
CHESTERFIELD	4	178	2
CLEVELAND	3	112	3
NEWBURY	3	123	2
CORNWALL	3	349	1
OXFORDSHIRE	3	276	1
LANCASTER	2	81	2
BOURNEMOUTH & DISTRICT	2	115	2
MEDWAY	2	87	2
WYE VALLEY	1	78	1
HUNTINGDONSHIRE	1	90	1
NORFOLK	1	271	0

The following Areas had no entries for the Basic Assessment in 2014:

SEDBERGH, INST OF NORTHERN IRELAND, NEWCASTLE & DISTRICT, ISLE OF MAN, ISLE OF WIGHT, LUDLOW & DISTRICT, SHROPSHIRE, STAFFORDSHIRE NORTH, HEREFORDSHIRE, RUTLAND, THANET, CUMBRIA

***Val Francis, BBKA Examination Board Secretary***