



Sussex Beekeepers Association Annual General Meeting Saturday 4th March 2023

Draft

Minutes of the Sussex Beekeepers' Association Annual General Meeting held The Luxford Centre Uckfield, TN21 1AR on Saturday March 4th 2023, 14.00pm

Present:

Brighton & Lewes: Norman Dickinson, , Graham Bubloz, Hilary Osman, Manek Dubash, Shirley Light, Jude New. Joining on Zoom, Bob Curtis.

Eastbourne: Jean Piper, Jacky Eustace, Ben Pratt, Stuart walker, Grant Eager, Mike Cook, Rory Graham. Joining on Zoom, Simon Tuck

East Grinstead: No members attended.

Hastings & Rother: Harold Cloutt, Sheila Fellows-Turnbull, Morris Metcalf. Joining on Zoom, Steve Burgess

High Weald: Peter Coxon, Jonathan Coote, Lesley Francis, Malcolm Wilkie, Fiona Henniker, **Colin Small?** Joining on Zoom, Sue Taylor.

Bee supplies stall, "The Bee People", Ben and Maggie Pratt.

- 1. Opening of the AGM by the President.** Jonathan Coote.
Jonathan welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. The previous summer had been exceptional in terms of honey crop, the last year he recalled such a glut was 2006. It had been an interesting year since both he and Peter had been elected, and here they were again. Both are eligible to remain in post for a maximum of three years, assuming they are re-elected. It had been a much easier year to run SBKA, being able to hold in-person meetings.
- 2. Apologies for absence:** Kerry Weller, Peter Halford, Kit Bentham, Ian Smith, Matt Weeks, Keith Obbard, Maggie Wright.
- 3. Minutes of the previous AGM** held on March 5th 2022
Peter offered to put the past minutes on screen should anyone want to go through any specific points. No one elected for this. Peter noted Norman was very good at making good/noting errors in spellings, but he had nothing to note this year.
- 4. Matters arising** from the minutes:
Nothing noted.
Jonathan Coote voted we adopt the minutes, proposed by Norman Dickenson, Seconded by Jacky Eustace.
- 5. Chairman's Report.** Peter Coxon.
Peters' main aspiration had been to increase the relevance of SBKA for members, by for example inviting the divisions to share talks and events, some on zoom, some in person. This had been achieved with some success. And proved a most welcome move. He pointed out that to some extent we are the

victims of our own success in that the divisions had grown tremendously since he had become a beekeeper, by a factor of 3-4 in the case of HWBKA for example, which meant the divisional committees were all extremely busy with their own affairs, putting on full programs of activities etc. and with therefore less time for the SBKA activities.

The SBKA website was now regularly updated.

The SBKA committee being able to meet in person has been a healthy change, lubricated by beer perhaps, but he felt we were able to achieve more. Preparing the documents for this meeting had been a challenge but achieved a paperless meeting.

SBKA accounts finances could be healthier given the huge amount of work required to put on an event such as the Bee Market for example. This is no reflection on the past committee but needed to be addressed if we, the SBKA, are to have more relevance by providing more to the divisions. An increase of capitation of 50p per head, the first for 26 years, will help to increase the bank balance.

A lot of work has already been put into the Bee Market 2023. This year it will be held at the new venue of Uckfield College. Wonderful new posters produced by Simon Tuck are ready for collection today, in both A3 and A4 size. Relevant information is on the posters along with a QR code which will lead you to the SBKA website for more details. An onsite beekeeper, Steve Banks, working for Acres Education has agreed to present the live bee demonstration. Entrance charge to the bee market 2023 is increased from £1.00 to £2.00. The new venue has two lecture theatres we can use, with retractable staging and seating, a refectory, along with improved wi-fi, good mobile phone signal for the traders and lot's of parking. It is a fairly central location for all the divisions. The speaker chosen will be the editor of the Bee Craft magazine.

Norman Dickenson had advised the committee he would no longer represent the division at the National Honey Show due to ill health. Peter expressed our appreciation for the huge contribution Norman has provided over the years and presented Norman with a book in recognition and thanks for his sterling service. Norman reported the NHS committee had awarded him an honorary membership. He would still be helping out with the organisation of the show.

6. Treasurer's Report and Acceptance of the Accounts: Harold Clouff

The account was shown on the screen and Harold provided further explanation. Expenditure included the sponsorship of a lecture and prizes at the National Honey and South of England Show prizes. The account shows a surplus of £273.30. The Association is a shareholder of Bee Craft which has minimal value.

The accounts were accepted with no abstentions.

Proposed by: Sheila Fellows-Turnbull Seconded: Manek Dubash

7. Election of President: Jonathon Coote.

Proposed: Peter Coxon. Seconded: Norman Dickinson. None against with no abstentions.

8. Election of Chairman: Peter Coxon

Proposed: Harold Clouff. Seconded: Norman Dickinson None against with no abstentions.

9. Election of Officers:

Hon. Treasurer: Harold Clouff

Proposed: Manek Dubash Seconded: Jude New None against with no abstentions.

Hon Secretary: Jean Piper

Proposed: Mike Cook Seconded: Harold Clouff. None against with no abstentions.

Annual Delegates Meeting Representative,

Liz Twyford had agreed to fulfil this role for another year.

ADM Report , 13.2.23 and 14.1.23

An uneventful practice on Thursday evening was followed by microphone/speaker malfunction on Saturday morning so there was a tense moment while speakers were found and plugged in and all sorted by the 10am start time. Some other associations took longer but it was decided that the meeting was quorate and would proceed.

A minute's silence was held for members who had died during the past year.

Delegates were reminded that speaking to the meeting was limited to 5 minutes.

The Annual reports were taken as read and questions followed.

Awards: S. Green Glos. for highest mark, Surrey shield (most successes at basic) Yorkshire, George Knight award (most successes above basic) Avon, Wax Chandlers (Advanced Theory) Diane Webb, Glos. There was a debate on the criteria for awarding the Surrey Shield and clarification will be published in BBKA news.

Finance: A slight surplus was reported and accorded with the budget set. No plans to increase capitation. Forecasts have been fairly accurate and although the 2022 budget spooked the market there have been improvements since. Auditors' fees have increased but are apparently modest compared with other charities and it was considered that they had done a good job and prioritised our accounts to fit our short time frame and also given advice during the year. Whether accounts need to be examined or just audited depends on amounts involved and will be published in BBKA news. Howard Pool is resigning and was thanked.

2023/1 Pre-meeting ballots were accepted for this year due to exceptional circumstances. Margaret Wilson Honorary member.

4 trustees for 5 posts: David Hunter, Clare McGettigan, Stephen Barnes, and Joyce Nisbet. All were elected for 3 year terms.

Apiculturae Maxime Se Dedit certificate was awarded to Mike Ticehurst.

There were no candidates for the Exam board.

2023/2 Exam to retract discontinuation of local modular exams

The strength of feeling in the discussion that followed was evident and included areas of poor internet reception and that it is not a test of facility with technology. As much access as possible should be encouraged. This resulted in a proposition to instruct the exam board to rescind their proposal to go solely on-line. It was thought that consideration may be given to changes but no time limit was given. (A subsequent email outlines this and includes safeguarding procedure.)

2023/3 withdrawn in the light of the previous proposition's discussion.

2023/4 to allow beekeepers to obtain adrenalin auto injectors without prescription.

There was much discussion especially on the medico-legal aspects and the other bodies that would need to be involved and the issue was referred back to the executive.

2023/5 Educate public on the benefits of local honey and creation of honey for sale map on BBKA website.

It was felt that the Honey Authenticity Group is already doing this. Policing is done locally and Trading standards recently won a case against Tesco.

2023/6 Beekeeping needs to demonstrate it is not contributing to global warming.

After a great many amendments this was altered to: simply 'to seek to encourage sustainability in all aspects of beekeeping' which the BBKA felt they are doing currently.

At this time the voting system crashed and the alternative could not give membership vote.

2023/7 to change the constitution to allow elections prior to the meeting

Discussions included the added costs and lack of presentations at the meeting.

The delegate vote was 44 for, 21 against and 1 abstention (with 75% needed to be carried) when a membership vote was requested.

The meeting was adjourned to a future date to be advised: Now 20.2.23 at 19.00

To be continued:

The meeting resumed on 20.2.23 at 19.00 however according to the constitution the vote on 2023/7 had to be completed within a time frame that had been exceeded.

The zoom meeting waited the statutory 15 minutes when the 25 delegates present were declared quorate. The vote on proposition 2023/7 was declared null and void. It can be proposed again at the next ADM. The remaining two propositions were withdrawn and the meeting closed.

10. Divisional reports:

Brighton & Lewes Beekeepers



Brighton and Lewes Annual Report 2022

Graham began his report by showing on screen a map pinpointing where their members were situated across the division. They are attempting to relocate an apiary to the South East Coast area to be closer to many of the membership.

Introducing the use of WhatsApp, specifically for mentoring had proven beneficial, in the absence of more seasoned mentors.

The division has requested some help with funding for the relocated Apiary mentioned previously. They now run four out-apiaries.

Queen rearing started last year, with eight people giving it a go. Graham personally raised one queen- who later absconded. This will continue this year having learnt some lessons.

The association is financially secure having benefited from prudent management over the years.

They have started to make bulk purchases on behalf of members, for example buying 10,000 honey jars.

A bee Disease Day was successfully held with full attendance. They will repeat the day in the future but give other divisions the chance to hold one this year.

The presentation concluded with photos of members enjoying their Christmas party.



Eastbourne Beekeepers' Association

Annual Report 2022

Our membership numbers remain stable at approximately 120 full members and friends.

We ran a successful beginners' course in February/March for which we had to limit numbers to around 20 in order to keep it manageable. The high take-up was likely due to the glut of interest following the pandemic although apiary visits were poorly attended which was disappointing especially as many had already purchased bees and didn't take up the opportunity to get practise handling them.

Beginners included a flurry of staff from schools with four from a single school who were setting up an apiary for students. This seems to be an ongoing theme and we have since been made aware of a secondary school in Hailsham also setting up an apiary. Despite BBKA recommendation, schools don't always approach local Beekeeping Associations before starting out...

Importantly, we gained some keen beekeepers through the beginners' course, some of whom continue to attend regular meetings, gaining knowledge and experience and one even helping out regularly at the training apiary and now a part of the committee. So, it's great that the course is bringing in new 'blood' and allowing us to share out the overall workload. Our aim is to develop this in the coming years.

Seven members took their basic assessment, and everyone passed! Weather was perfect this year (one hive had 4 supers on it!).

Our association apiary continues to be in demand by members. The committee decided to limit the time of use since the apiary is needed for beginners and as an emergency space for members. It was agreed use should be 2 years max. Despite the severe pressures on land for house building there seem to be a number of house owners who would like to have bees in their garden (managed by a local beekeeper) and there seems to be sufficient opportunities for those in need of an apiary site.

The association would like to strive for beekeeper improvement and aims to run sessions for those wishing to progress beyond their basic. More to follow in 2023!

As in previous years, members from all divisions are most welcome to join us at meetings both in person and on Zoom. We are very grateful for the shared meetings we have currently taken part in.

I'd personally like to thank everyone on our committee; particularly Jean Piper who was chair for the majority of 2022 and who stood down at the AGM in November after 4 years of excellent service. She's been a hard act to follow but I am continuing her admirable work as I take the Association forwards. I'm supported by an excellent team on the committee and feel the Association is currently in a really strong position.

Simon Tuck
Chair EBKA



East Grinstead Beekeepers Association



Unfortunately a report was not received at the AGM.

Hastings and Rother Chairs report 2022.

Read by Sheila Fellows-Turnbull



HASTINGS AND ROTHER DIVISION
of the Sussex Beekeepers' Association

Membership - 164

Finances - We have recently paid to renew the roofs on our apiary sheds and are subsidising some forthcoming courses for the benefit of members. Our income mainly comes from subscriptions although we also benefitted from the sale of quite a lot of divisional honey from our honey show last year.

Apiaries - Our main apiary is at Netherfield with Roger Renner as apiary manager. We have an overflow/isolation apiary at Guestling which we are planning to use for education purposes. There are currently 6 active colonies at Netherfield and Roger intends they be primarily for educational and instructional purposes

Education - we ran a beginners' course in February 2022 which managed to be a success despite it being the weekend after the great storm and the venue thus having no power or water. We are not planning another course as we have excellent training facilities available at Mantel Farm and we continue to work closely with them. We are, however, developing improvers' training courses and practical continuation training for beginners with a view to people taking the Basic. We are also developing a Junior Bee Club. Our winter programme continued over the cold season with some very interesting talks and other associations' members joined us via Zoom

Challenges - our current apiary is sited on land which was alongside a Plumpton College site, but which is now rented by others. Adaptations have had to be made. Last summer we had to split our apiary meetings between the local village hall and the actual apiary which was unsatisfactory. This has hopefully now been resolved and we are anticipating an increase in numbers of attendees. It has taken time but the numbers at our winter programme meetings have slowly increased and we are getting back to pre-pandemic attendance.

Prizes at the National Honey Show - Sussex Class, first Rebecca Champion, 2nd Fern Burgess, 3rd Graham Burgess



I have been in post for just a few months, having previously ran the beginners' classes with other members of the committee. It would appear the crest of new beekeepers has peaked. Also considering the crowding out of food sources for other pollinators we have decided not to run a beginners course this year but concentrate on advancing the skills of those with bees already. The beginner's course had previously raised the association a substantial income.

A local business has sponsored the purchase of new microscopes which will be available to share with other associations.

We currently run two training apiaries, *Slab Castle and Horsted park?* The training apiaries are a lot of work and we are trying to work out how to create less work. Last summer like many beekeepers we were over run with honey and Peter had a difficult job keeping up with extracting, etc.

In the coming year we plan to run for our members courses in Queen rearing, use of mini mating hives, varroa workshops, preparing for the winter, soft set honey, beeswax wrap making courses and how to prepare and exhibit honey.

Like many associations it's a challenge to get members to turn out and attend meetings.

We have benefited and would like to encourage divisions to share their resources more generously.

National Honey Show entries have successfully led to two cups being awarded to members in the division, the Lady Denman cup and Crawly cup. It is good to showcase Sussex honey. One winning entry smelt like "smelly socks", but it still won at both NHS and local exhibitions.

A plea to all associations to review how much they charge "Associate members". HWBKA only charges £10.00 and would like to see this cost the same across all the division.

11.AOB:

Harold Cloutt shared a local press article where a past member, Marjorie Bartlett had recently celebrated her 106th birthday. Her secret to long life was attributed to honey and bee keeping. Marjorie is an honorary member of Hastings and Rother Division.

Jonathan Coote expressed concern over the lack of participation from EGBKA and suggested we visit East Grinstead in the near future.

12. Host Division for 2023 AGM:

High Weald Division will host the next year.

The next AGM will take place on 2nd March 2024, venue TBC.

13. Presentation of cups and Examination Certificates:

Candidates who had successfully completed modules had already received their certificates. Congratulations were extended to all who had had success.

BBKA Examinations 2022

Basic Assessment

Brighton and Lewes

Tony Birkbeck	Credit
Pete Dollimore	Credit
Anna Forrest	Credit
Joy Garnsey	Credit
Adrien Parker	Credit
Jose Reina	Credit
Lisa White	Credit

Eastbourne

Sue Barter	Credit
Michael Cook	Credit
Rory Graham	Credit
Mike Saunders	Credit
Simon Tuck	Distinction

Hastings and Rother

Jay Packham

High Weald

Stephen Davies	Credit
Phil Edwards	Credit
Jo Fuller	Credit
Paul Lindstrom	Credit
Sandy Infield	Pass

Congratulations to all candidates for their success.

Modules

Brighton and Lewes

Jeff Rodrigues

Eastbourne

Simon Tuck 3 Credit
Simon Tuck 5 Distinction
Simon Tuck 1 Distinction

Hastings and Rother

Paul Seal 1

High Weald

Phil Edwards 2 Credit
Lorraine Patel 8 Credit
Lorraine Patel Advanced Theory Credit

Cups awarded to Sussex beekeepers at the National Honey Show

Lady Denman Cup	(most points in NHS Sussex classes)	Lesley Francis
Crawley Cup	(second highest in points)	Rob Gore
Mrs Matthews Cup	(third highest in points)	Rebecca Champion
PJ Cup	(Mead/Metheglin)	Phil Edwards
Berry Cup	(Novice)	Rob Gore

The AGM finished at 15.10pm

Following the AGM refreshments were provided and served by Eastbourne Division.

The AGM was followed by an interesting talk on "Planting for Pollinators by David Robinson