



**Sussex Beekeepers Association
Annual General Meeting Minutes
Saturday 1st March 2025**

Minutes of the Sussex Beekeepers' Association

Annual General Meeting

Held on 1st March 2025 @ 1.30pm at Mountfield Village Hall, Church Road, Mountfield, East Sussex, TN32 5JU

Present:

President: Jonnathan Coote,

Chair: Peter Coxon,

Eastbourne:

Ben Pratt, Dan Morgan, Simon Tuck, Stuart Corner, Jean Piper, Sue Flanagan, Stuart Walker,

Hastings and Rother:

Harold Clouett, Kerry Weller, Liz Twyford, John Twyford, Mike Cullen, Gill Sales, Graham Burgess, Peter Rothery, Henrietta Jones, Francoise Cummings, John and Helen Nichols, Fritz Manthis,

Roger Renner, Simon Read, David Scott, Emily Reed, Anthony Barning.

Brighton and Lewes:

Graham Bubloz, Maneck Dubash, Jude New, Rachel Ramaker,

East Grinstead: Alister Lee,

High Weald: Paul Lindstrom

Kent and East Sussex: James Hern,

1. Welcome by the President

Jonathan Coote welcomed everyone to the AGM. He then passed to the Chair of SBKA, Peter Coxon, to continue proceedings.

2. Apologies for absence

Shelia Fellows-Turnbull

Simon Redgrove

Sebastian Mottram

Clive Foster Sue Taylor

Kim Rapley-Hawkins

Peter Halford

Stephen Busby

Christopher Millns

Hilary Osmans

Beverley Coombs

Stephen Pratt

Martyn Wake

Amanda Millar

Kit Bentham

Thelma Mason

Morris Metcalf

Marcus Berry

Malcolm Wilkie

Chrissie Granger

3. Minutes of the past AGM held on March 2nd 2024

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. The minutes were accepted without exception.

Proposed by Manek Dubash and seconded by Paul Lindstrom.

5. Chair's Report

Membership in 673 v 691 in 2023

Finances healthy'ish

Balance now £4650.64 v £4,937.34

Successful 2024 Bee Market ... not profitable for SBKA!

SBKA profit £26.59 ... v £708.89 in 23 due to re-distribution of income

2025 Bee Market Actions

Same venue ... better value, Wi-Fi, & support etc.

Taken on a professional events organiser

To drive up attendance through promotion

Find more stalls ... including hot food

Campaign to produce an auction catalogue

To drive up attendance

Achieve better prices for those selling

Pls. fill in the form when you get it !

Full complement of committee members

Website moved to new platform

Less expensive & can host 100 sites

Free plugins – Events Calendar

Important ... to support main emphasis ...

collaboration and inter-divisional sharing of resource & knowledge ... otherwise what's the point?

Education

Collaboration on training

AHATs / YLHATs

Not as awful as we might have anticipated based on 23

But we are still in the front line

Hence Martin Smith meeting this morning on eR2 training & invited talk next

SBKA Committee Membership 2025			
President	Jonathan Coote		jonathancoote1@gmail.com
Chair	Peter Coxon		chair@sbka.info
Honorary Secretary	Jean Piper		secretary@sbka.info
Honorary Treasurer	Harold Cloutt		treasurer@sbka.info
ADM Delegate	Liz Twyford		delegate@sbka.info
Sussex Division Link Trustee	Toby Chapman-Dawe		toby.chapman-dawe@hbka.org.uk
Webmaster	Peter Coxon		
Divisional Members			
HWBKA	Malcolm Wilkie	Chair	the.hwika+chair@gmail.com
High Weald Beekeepers Assoc.	Peter Halford	Membership Secretary	the.hwika+membership@gmail.com
EBKA	Simon Tuck	Chair	chair@eastbournebka@gmail.com
Eastbourne Beekeepers Assoc.	Ian Smith	Treasurer	treasurer@eastbournebka@gmail.com
	Stuart Walker		s.walker@sky.com
BLBKA	Manek Dubash	Chair	manek@manekdubash.com
Brighton and Lewes Beekeepers Assoc.	Ian White	Swarm Coordinator	swarms@brightonlewesbeekeepers.co.uk
HRBKA	Sheila Fellows-Turnbull	Chair	chair@hastingsandrotherbee.org.uk
Hastings and Rother Beekeepers Assoc.	Kerry Weller		kerry@mantelfarm.co.uk
EGBKA	Alistair Lee	Chair	chair@egbka.org.uk
East Grinstead Beekeepers Assoc.	Simon Redgrove	Treasurer	treasurer@egbka.org.uk

A question from the floor asked how much the event organiser was charging for her services, Peter responded there was zero cost to us directly as the stall holders, food outlets etc. would pay a fee to the Events Organiser and they would also refund to SBKA 10% of profits. If we do not increase footfall and the event it will not be financially viable and fall into oblivion.

Dan Morgan, seasonal Bee inspector responded to a question on YLH as to whether traps should be placed out now. The response was to kill now but trap later in the year so nests can be traced.

6. Treasures Report & Acceptance of Accounts - Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 30th September 2024

2023	2024		
Income		<u>Balance Sheet as at 30th September 2023</u>	
14058.00 BBKA	13701.00		
691.00 SBKA – 673 members [691 in 2023]	673.00		
5341.54 Bee Market	5098.66	1641.31 Current Account	1269.63
77.50 NHS - West Sussex	82.50	3293.02 Building Society	3378.01
46.67 Bank and Building Society Interest	84.99	1.00 Beecraft Share	1.00
Donations		1.00 Antique Equipment	1.00
20214.71	19640.15	1.00 Challenge Cups	1.00
		4937.33	4650.64
Expenditure		<u>Represented by</u>	
14058.00 BBKA	13701.00	Opening Balance 1st October 2023	4937.33
86.50 SEAS	60.00	Surplus	-286.69
4583.05 Bee Market	5022.52	Closing Balance 30th September 2024	4650.64
485.00 National Honey Show	665.00		
91.00 AGM and Halls	135.00		
53.34 Administration and Web Site	143.42		
29.79 Equipment	199.90	H R Cloult	
19386.68	19926.84	Treasurer	

Proposed by Alastair Lee seconded by Mike Cullen

7 & 8. Election of President

Jonathan Coote- after a three-year period, the President and Chair would normally step down. Despite efforts a replacement both the President and Chair, they had unsuccessfully been sought.

Peter had worked very hard on our behalf over the last three years year and the SBKA was prospering under his leadership. To this end it was proposed to circumnavigate the three-year tenure for one more year, as had happened previously. Jonathan Coote asked once more if there were any nominations for the Chair, to which there was a no response.

Someone suggested we consider changing the constitution. Jonathan Coote replied that firstly the whole membership would need to be consulted which would not resolve the current issue. The motion for Jonathan Coote and Peter Coxon to continue for one more year was put to the all those present and agreed unanimously with no objections.

Proposed by Harold Cloult and seconded by Roger Renner.

Anthony Berry asked if the committee needed more help? Peter responded the SBKA was supported by the committee which was made up by representatives from each division but any willing person would always be welcome to help especially at the bee market.

A post of deputy chair was proposed to learn the job before taking over? Peter said that on a day-to-day basis he was supported by the Secretary and Treasurer. Ben Pratt (a previous SBKA Chair) stated that the post of Deputy Chair had previously been removed under his watch.

Peter described the task of a chair akin to keeping all the plates spinning without any falling down at any point.

9. Election of Officers.

There were no other nominations for the post of treasurer and secretary. Both Harold Cloutt and Jean Piper were willing to stand once more.

Proposed by Mike Cullen, seconded by Jude New.

10. Divisional Reports

Brighton & Lewes BKA – Manek Dubash

Brighton & Lewes Beekeepers



Membership Growth: down to 155 from 192 (glitch?).
New Membership Secretary/Treasurer: Graham Bubloz
Queen rearing programme: weather...
Swarms: changes in social media now affecting swarm co-ordination
Asian Hornet threat: nothing in our area but lots of public interest. Weather...
Wax Workshops: Two workshops held in October.
Eight members passed the Basic Beekeeping Certificate
Peter Brooke-Ball; Jessica Gould; Andrew Hindell; Richard Lawson-Crutenden;
Katherine Moore; Alasdair Nicol; Sarah Peek; Rebecca Squier

Eastbourne BKA – Simon Tuck

Membership Numbers:
Approximately 146 full members and friends (increase on last year)
Positive attendance at all meetings (year-round, at least 1 per month)
Beginners' Course:
Revamped this year to run throughout April, including apiary sessions
Around 10 participants, similar to the year before (encouraged to join first as local members)
Consistent influx of valuable members from each year's beginners' course
Interesting occurrence of third-party requests for training
Basic Assessment:
Six members successfully achieved their Basic Certificate
Intention to have more members take the assessment this year
Offering the Honey Bee Health Certificate for the first time in 2025, open to all Divisions;
assistance from Dan Morgan
Association Apiaries: Well used by members
Now have a dedicated Queen Rearing Apiary
New possibilities for places to keep bees do come up, though not all are ideal
Beekeeper Improvement:



Association continues to prioritise bee and beekeeper improvement
Queen Rearing Training as per BBKA long-term plan provided for the first time this year
Highly successful Module study sessions on Zoom and these are now available to all
Divisions

General Husbandry 18-month programme arranged by the BBKA - highly recommended
Acknowledgments:

Thanks to our highly valuable Committee members

All those who helped out at our Microscopy evening in January - greatly appreciated by
all thanks to Malcolm, Peter, Jill & Paul; excellent to share Divisional resources
(expertise, experience and equipment!)

East Grinstead BKA – Alastair Lee



East Grinstead Beekeepers Association



Membership stands at 91

Training

A taster day in May attracted a small number of people, all joined the association and
took part in other association events.

The extraction day used different uncapping techniques a variety of different types of
extractor, the honey was jarred and labelled

We have a Basic Assessment training course, taster day and extraction day planned for
2025

Events

Varroa Resistant Bees talk

Christmas Meal

The apiary - an monthly sessions for members from April to September 2024, weekly
inspections were also carried out by the apiary manager and a small group of others
during the busy period.

The year finished with 5 thriving colonies.

Yellow Legged Hornets

We had one verification call to investigate which proved to be European Hornet

We had a nest found on the edge of our area in Ardingly, but were not involved. Ardingly
show ground hosts antiques fairs with many traders bringing antiques across from
France so we are considering this a hot spot.

We were notified of 2 nests in Forest Row in the December. These proved to be Median
wasp (*Dolichovespula media*). One of the deciding factors was that the NBU said a YLH
nest would still be somewhat active while the Median wasp nests were dead.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Janice Fearn the outgoing Chair for all her work supporting the Association

Thanks also to new committee members for putting themselves forward.

Hastings & Rother – Harold Cloult

Currently have 135 members.

Held a 'Bee Disease Day' with the Bee Inspectors.

Established a new Divisional Apiary

Held a Beginners Event

Held an Extraction Day where members could bring their own Honey

Held a busy honey show which was well attended by members of the Public

Had a full winter programme of talks

Have arranged a one-day conference on 12th April



HASTINGS AND ROTHER DIVISION

of the Sussex Beekeepers' Association

High Weald – Paul Lindström, vice chair



Membership Trends:

In the 2023/24 season we had 198 members and early 2025 we are up at 200 members – a drop from 248 members 2020/21

Training Programs:

A small Beginners' course this year, only 3 people finished the course. In 2025 we will do a joint course with other BKAs

Events/Workshops:

We built Asian hornet traps in February, arranged a Bee Safari and had a Wax workshop.

We have "Bee Banters" every month – an informal evening event at a pub either in Crowborough or Mayfield

Microscopy sessions

Our new microscopes has been used for pollen sessions in HWBKA and shown at the Bee Market in May. They were also used at the South of England show

Basic Training:

Four members completed basic training and/or finished modules in the BBKA exam series.

Asian Hornet Challenge:

We will continue to encourage members to set out AH traps and report sighting via the Asian hornet Watch app or by phoning the Bee inspectors

MW / HWBKA obtained another large grant to fund increase in the library

Other:

A HWBKA member, Helen Hadley, is now a Bee inspector

11. ADM 2025 Report – Liz Twyford

In Memoriam: Members Martin Tovey, Howard Pool, Julian Rolfe, and Richard Hudson passed away.

AH/YLH Reports:

Asian Hornet: Fewer sightings but evidence of overwintering. More details

Communications: Campaign with Ocado to promote local honey featuring Nigella Lawson.

Dates in 2025:

Spring Convention: April 4-6

World Bee Day: May 20

Bee Needs Week: 2nd week of July

Asian Hornet Week: September (TBD)

National Honey Day: October 21

Presence at Events:

BBKA attended Outdoor Expo, Hertfordshire County Show, Game Fair, and BBKA Spring Convention.

Exam Board:

New supplementary modules 'Plants and Pollinators' and 'History' available in November 2025. Training new assessors.

Awards: Various awards were given, including the Robert Hammond award to Louisa Simpson-Brown.

BBKA Finance Report:

Ended with a surplus of £22k.

Costs reviewed, finances in a good state, but a deficit included in the 2025 budget.

Capitation: Proposed increases of about 10%, 50% cut for juniors, rates for registered members, partners, etc., specified.

Honorary Membership:

Anne Rowberry, immediate Past President.

Elections:

Trustees and Exam Board positions filled.

Propositions:

2025/2: Indexing BBKA policies, adding 'searchable.' Passed.

2025/3: Modularity of General Husbandry. Referred back to executive.

2025/4: Voting system for Trustees, requiring over 50% delegate vote. Passed.

2025/5: Replace 'Executive Committee' with 'Board of Trustees' in the constitution. Passed.

2025/6: Investigate costs and benefits of external accreditation of exams. Passed.

2025/7: Increased budget for addressing adulterated honey issue to £25k. Passed.

Meeting Closure: Meeting closed at 14:23. Issues with remote voting and technical difficulties were noted. A fuller report will be available through BBKA.

12. AOB:

13. Host Division for 2026 AGM

East Grinstead.

14. Recognising the successes of Cup Winners and Examination Certificates

Given the record number of exam success -37, there was insufficient time to acknowledge them all individually, but Cups and Examination Certificates were presented to those present. Congratulations were expressed to them all and their mentors and Education Officers

First Name	Last Name	Branch name	Examination	Grade
Peter	Brooke-Ball	Brighton & Lewes	Basic Certificate	Pass
Bob	Curtis	Brighton & Lewes	Microscopy	Pass
Jessica	Gould	Brighton & Lewes	Basic Certificate	Credit
Andrew	Hindell	Brighton & Lewes	Basic Certificate	Credit
Richard	Lawson-Cruttenden	Brighton & Lewes	Basic Certificate	Credit
Katherine	Moore	Brighton & Lewes	Basic Certificate	Credit
Alasdair	Nicol	Brighton & Lewes	Basic Certificate	Distinction
Sarah	Peek	Brighton & Lewes	Basic Certificate	Credit
Jeff	Rodrigues	Brighton & Lewes	Module 5	Pass
Rebecca	Squier	Brighton & Lewes	Basic Certificate	Pass
Joseph	Berry	Eastbourne	Basic Certificate	Distinction
Marcus	Berry	Eastbourne	Basic Certificate	Distinction
Marcus	Berry	Eastbourne	Module 1	Credit
John	Carmichael	Eastbourne	Module 1	Pass
Stuart	Corner	Eastbourne	Module 1	Pass
Anne	Cox	Eastbourne	Basic Certificate	Credit
Rory	Graham	Eastbourne	Module 1	Credit
Jonathan	Joseph	Eastbourne	Module 1	Pass
Sue	Osmond	Eastbourne	Module 1	Credit
Mike	Saunders	Eastbourne	Module 1	Pass
Lisa	Sherlock	Eastbourne	Basic Certificate	Credit
Simon	Tuck	Eastbourne	Master Beekeeper	Pass
Simon	Tuck	Eastbourne	Advanced Theory	Distinction
Simon	Tuck	Eastbourne	Module 6	Distinction
Simon	Tuck	Eastbourne	Module 8	Credit
Simon	Tuck	Eastbourne	Microscopy	Pass
Simon	Tuck	Eastbourne	Advanced Husbandry	Pass
Daniel	Tugwell	Eastbourne	Module 1	Pass
Stuart	Walter	Eastbourne	Basic Certificate	Distinction
Stuart	Walter	Eastbourne	Module 1	Pass
Catherine	Wynne-Elhinn	Eastbourne	Basic Certificate	Pass
Roxanne	Gould	High Weald	Basic Certificate	Credit
Roxanne	Gould	High Weald	Module 5	Distinction
Lorraine	Patel	High Weald	Bee Health	Pass
Carlton	Waghorn	High Weald	Basic Certificate	Pass
Mark	Wilcox	High Weald	Module 5	Distinction
Malcolm	Wilkie	High Weald	Module 1	Pass

With special mention being made of Simon Tuck who recently became a Master Beekeeper

The AGM finished at 3:30pm

The AGM was followed by Tea & refreshments and a talk by Martin Smith

Past president of Lancashire and Northwest BKA, President of BDI and Project Manager ER2 membership system.

Managing Colony Numbers.

It has struck me for a while that a lot of beekeepers end up with either less colonies than they are after, whilst others struggle to keep their numbers under control, and seem to be increasing until they end up with more than they can handle/ wanted the first place. This talk will explain how the beekeeper can take control over the number of colonies they have, rather than the bees dictating as often seems the case.