

# **REIGATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**

## **Division of Surrey Beekeepers Association**

### **Chairman's AGM Report for the Year 2018/2019**

My first year as your Chairman commenced with seeing through the commitment to the creation of the all-weather car park and associated works at Henfold and the consequences to the divisions financial position. Of necessity, we have subsequently endured something of a 'year of austerity'. However, as the Treasurers Report will set out, we end the year in a strong position again, enabling us to focus in the year ahead on improving our beekeeping equipment.

Membership reached 213, of which 152 were BBKA registered and with Associate Membership rising to 37. An average attendance of 57 at our weekly training sessions during the Summer has held up with the previous year and includes one session accommodating 82 participants; challenging the capacity of our new car park.

During last Christmas, we regrettably suffered mindless damage to the Henfold pavilion and a storage container. However, far from my initial fears of an 'annus horribilis' ahead, members rallied round to quickly right the wrongs dealt upon us and demonstrated the great sense of pride members clearly have in Reigate Beekeepers.

Our Auction, under Vince Gallo's continued stewardship and the new format managed by Colin Clement for the Taster Day were both very successful. 19 of the 27 attendees of this year's Winter Course took up membership. Existing members continued to better themselves, with successful Basic assessments, Module exam passes and 3 candidates taking and passing the new Honey Bee Health assessment this year. Our Honey Show in Dorking has been deemed a success, despite a wedding party interfering in the public's access to the venue. Our apiaries yielded an impressive total of 870lbs of honey thanks to the diligence of our Apiary Managers, members helping them and Andrew Cornwall's extraction team. As our President may himself comment upon, we also attended a record number of summer shows. These take a lot of effort, but are where we sell most of our honey, So your support is important and appreciated, as is the task of jarring & labelling our honey by yet more members led by Anna Slade, to be both available and fit for sale. The year has also seen the BeeNews baton transferred to the creative hands of Lisa Gallo who has brought a fresh new look and feel to your monthly digest of news and upcoming events.

As shown by holding the 2019 AGM at Henfold, we are striving to extend use of the great facility we have. Hence its use during the year for Study Group sessions, NDB courses, our hosting a talk about Yellow Legged Hornets open to SBKA members, Honey Jar filling and even a Beeswax Wrap 'production line'.

Whilst not yet called upon in earnest, our preparations for the appearance of those hornets on our patch have been progressed by new AHAT leader Jim Wynn. Reigate has also taken the initiative within SBKA to source the procurement of banners for all Surrey divisions to help raise public awareness ... throughout Surrey.

On a sad note, the passing of Gerry Poole in June and of Nigel Sones in October has robbed us of two gentlemen beekeepers who will be greatly missed. We also marked the passing of Mary Broatch, a loyal supporter of her late husband, and past President, Malcolm as well as of Reigate Beekeepers.

You may have noted from the AGM Agenda that Geoff Blay has stood down as a committee member due to relocating to Somerset. Happily, Geoff intends to maintain close involvement with our activities. Also stepping back from frontline committee action is Andrew Buchanan after many years of driving and steering RBKA's growth. But not before becoming a well-deserved recipient of the Reigate & Banstead's Mayors Volunteer Award for just that. In addition to again thanking Andrew for his devotion, I thank him for the support and mentoring he has provided me with during this year; I look forward to his continued participation in greeting us all to our Wednesday evening Summer meetings at Henfold.

Finally, my thanks to all the Officers, Committee members, role holders, ad hoc sub-committee members and general get-stuck-in-and-help members working in the background; for all that you have done and will hopefully continue to do for Reigate Beekeepers.

Richard Bradfield  
Chairman  
1st November 2019