

Summary Chairman's Report WBKA, 2020/2021

Introduction 2020 - 2021

2021 was another year of resilience and even success in the face of adversity. Many of the activities of the WBKA which required face-to-face meetings remained cancelled, delayed or radically changed as compared to their pre-COVID forms. Notwithstanding the hindrance caused COVID, the WBKA and its members persevered mightily and all members and committee members are to be commended for their efforts and imagination in finding ways to carry-on their beekeeping and the activities of the association.

Apiaries Report

The WBKA continued with 7 apiaries under the charge of the following wardens:-

- Cannizaro Park - John Deacon
- Dorset Triangle - Amanda Berry, having taken over from Peter Bowbrick
- Holne Chase - Gareth Morgan
- Martin Way - Alison Pelikan
- Morden Hall Park - Steve Derry
- Putney Vale/Stag Lodge - Steve Derry
- Watermeads - Dave Charnley

Apiary activities carried-on as usual, having made allowance and adjustments to deal with COVID working modalities, while these still applied. Further improvement work was undertaken at Morden Hall Park apiary, to support the WBKA's teaching activities. At Watermeads, there was a considerable reduction in vandalism and destruction of hives, in part due to CCTV monitoring of the site. At Dorset Triangle some honey was again contaminated in the hive - strawberry syrup collected by the bees from an unknown source. This led to some considerable waste and inconvenience at extraction time.

Events

During 2021 a full programme of talks was run, via Zoom, as follows:

- February – Celia Rudland, “Preparing for Spring”
- March – Isobel Grindrod, “Understanding the evolution of natural Varroa-tolerance mechanisms in various beekeeping populations”
- April – Francesca Mahoney, “Wild Survivors - Beekeeping, Biofuels and Big Beasts”
- May – Andrew Gibb, “Demystifying and encouraging Queen rearing”
- June – Richard Rickitt, “From Buckfast to Buckingham Palace”
- July – Celia Perry, “On becoming a master beekeeper”
- August – no meeting or talk
- September – Dr Gavin Broad, “Social wasps and honey bees”
- October – Richard Rickitt, “Rolls Royce to Rajasthan”

The lifting of COVID restrictions enabled both the WBKA's Summer Barbecue and Summer Bee Health Day events to go ahead. Both were a great success with many members in attendance. The WBKA's Honey Show did not go ahead, chiefly due to logistical challenges, but its Christmas Party remains on track.

The WBKA's AGM was run successfully in person on 1 November 2021.

Membership

The WBKA ended the membership year 2020/2021 with 116 members (2 Life, 87 Registered, 13 Partner, 11 Country, 3 Junior), slightly down on the previous year (130), mainly due to the lack of new members from the COVID cancelled Beginners Course at the start of the year. The cost of membership increased this year, including a WBKA membership fee of £5 for all adult membership categories and slight increases in BBKA and BeeCraft subscriptions. Late renewals continued steadily, via the BDI/BBKA electronic membership system.

SBKA

Steve Derry was the WBKA's trustee to the SBKA and Gareth Morgan its representative.

Swarms

Approx. 30 genuine calls were received by the WBKA's swarm hotline, of which 21 were documented and 13 collected. Challenges during the swarm season included one particular crank caller and a general shortage of members available to collect swarms in time. The latter is likely to impact the availability of the service if it continues in 2022.

Financial

The Treasurer's end-of-year financial breakdown and notes are provided separately.

Subscription income remained strong, though slightly less than last year, showing a 2% decrease. Total membership income is 1% less than last year, but this represents a very good outcome given their being no beginners course or beginners in 2020 due to COVID. The WBKA ran 2 very successful taster courses in July, which resulted in some welcome income. As in 2020 there were no country shows, due to COVID. However honey sales, chiefly from Morden Hall Park Apiary, remained strong. Overall, total income was 19% less than the previous year, but total expenses were 23% less, mainly due to the fact that the association did not have to pay for premises hire during the COVID period. As a result, the WBKA finished the year with a £685 net funds decrease which is 50% less than in 2020. At the end of the year the financial position was satisfactory at £12,832, which is 9% more than a year ago.

Honey Yield & Extractors

Full data was not available this year. Anecdotally, yields seem to have been down as compared to past years.

Website & Newsletter

An update of the website was kept on hold due to COVID, however the website continues to maintain a steady number of views and to facilitate contact with the association. The WBKA's Newsletter continues its vital role of informing WBKA members.

Education and Library

The 2020 Beginners Course, which had been deferred due to COVID, was able to be completed in 2021. In addition two Taster Days were run, each with 12 members of the public in attendance, and feedback was very positive. A number of the Taster Days attendees have booked on the 2022 Beginners Course and joined the Sunday morning sessions to help maintain the association hives at MHP.

The WBKA continues to build up a library of resources to support members wishing to study for the BBKA's module exams but also those wishing to expand their knowledge generally. The books available for loan have been listed via the website, as they apply to modules. The stock includes the latest special editions booklets and videos from the BBKA as well as some rarer and less easily obtained material. The library also has standard weights for members who are selling honey, to ensure their weighing sales are accurate and a refractometer to check the water content of their honey. Other resources include a Gas-Vap for Apibioxal treating and a number of teaching aids.

A number of members completed on-line module exams although it is hoped that paper and pen exams will return in the near future. 6 Members were able to take and pass the practical bee health assessment, which was held in the MHP apiary.

<u>WBKA Committee 2021 - 2022</u>	
<u>Role</u>	<u>Person</u>
CHAIRMAN	Paul Kearney
TREASURER	Eszter Colley-Korondi
SECRETARY	Stephan Leclair
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Brett Colley
AUDITOR	Toby Chapman-Dawe
WBKA SBKA TRUSTEE	Steve Derry
SBKA REP	Gareth Morgan
APIARY WARDENS	Gareth Morgan (HC)
	John Deacon (CP)
	Alison Pelikan (MW)
	Amanda Berry (DT)
	Dave Charnley (WM)
	Steve Derry (MHP)
SWARMS COORDINATOR	John Clarke
SURREY SHOW REP	Open
PROGRAMME SECRETARY	Toby Chapman-Dawe
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Amanda Berry
EDUCATION/LIBRARY	Steve Derry
EXTRACTOR MANAGERS	Steve Barton
	Toby Chapman-Dawe
	Paul Gardiner
WEBSITE	Gareth Morgan
ADDITIONAL MEMBERS	Mario Lopez
	John Kelly
	Sally Bishop
	Zoe Hunt
	Clare Rawlings