



Surrey Beekeepers Association AGM 2nd December 2017

Chairman's Report

As usual your Surrey BKA Council members met four times during the year. SBKA is a registered charity. Each of the eight Surrey Divisions is asked to provide a Trustee. In addition, the Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman are also Trustees. Trustees are proposed by their divisions and elected at the AGM. Each Division also provides a Representative whose job is to put forward the views of his or her Division and report back on what happens in each Council meeting. Representatives are elected at Divisional AGM's. It is a testament to good management by all our Divisions that I can't think of any contentious issues relating to our management in the past year.

This year Richard Snelling is standing down as our auditor. Actually his correct title is Independent Examiner as our accounts are simple and don't need a full audit. Richard has been our Independent Examiner since 1992. 25 years! Thank you Richard for all you have done for Surrey BKA. It is much appreciated. Richard has proposed that his successor should be Chris Tomaszewski, a chartered accountant whose practice is 'Alexanders' in Redhill. His nomination will be put forward at the 2017 AGM and I'm sure everyone will join me in welcoming him to our team.

This year we welcomed Kevin Woodward as the new trustee for Epsom BKA. My thanks to all the Trustees and Divisional Representatives who give so freely of their time to make our organisation such a success.

John Legate is retiring as the trustee for Kingston BKA. I'm sure I speak for all members in thanking him for all he has done for SBKA in his many years as Kingston trustee. John, I hope that shedding this job will allow you more time to enjoy your allotment.

It was a pleasure to welcome Rosalind Clague to our August meeting. Rosalind has been proposed by Farnham BKA to be the Farnham trustee in 2018. David Dennington is stepping down as Farnham trustee at this year's Surrey BKA AGM. David has made a great contribution to Surrey BKA in his time as Farnham trustee and I'm sure I speak for all the council members in saying we will miss his often entertaining contributions to our meetings.

This year's British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) Annual Delegates Meeting (ADM) is the subject of a separate report.

We have some issues regarding the correct application of Gift Aid to our subscriptions and we are still in discussion with HMRC about this.

Weybridge Division's plan to develop a council owned building on an old nursery site as a training centre is making good progress. This will be a project of many stages. Weybridge Division are fortunate to be able to pursue this project thanks to a very generous bequest. Congratulations to all concerned and good luck with the project.

Croydon BKA are going to have WC facilities at their apiary. Possibly not the most glamorous announcement of the year but could well be the most welcome!

Surrey Beekeepers Association founded 1878

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Always at the cutting edge, Surrey BKA have been involved with the development of the new BBKA Honey Bee Health Assessment. This is a practical assessment designed to sit between the BBKA Basic Assessment and the General Husbandry Assessment. Members of Farnham BKA kindly offered themselves as guinea pigs to test run the assessment this summer. This was a highlight of the year for me as I have been campaigning for a practical exam between 'Basic' and 'General' for about 15 years. I had the great honour of assessing the very first candidate. Anyone who knows Farnham BKA understands the quality of their training so it was no surprise that all the candidates passed. BBKA will launch the new assessment in 2018.

I'm always a little nervous of thanking individuals as I inevitably forget someone important so if that is you, my apologies!

Julie Hogarth has proved to be an admirable successor to Sandra Rickwood as our secretary. I would like to thank Julie for all she has done and for watching my back to make sure I don't get into too much trouble!

My thanks also to our Treasurer Penny McMahon who keeps us all on the straight and narrow in such a cheerful way. When all the divisional assets are totalled we are quite a wealthy association and it is important that our accounts are properly maintained to the satisfaction of both our members and the Charity Commission.

County Examinations Secretary Celia Perry has had yet another busy year with a bumper crop of exam results. Thank you Celia for all your hard work. Congratulations to all who have been successful in exams and assessments this year.

The Education Subcommittee has taken a sabbatical which is understandable as the events they have been organising are very hard work. I hope they will pick up on new projects in 2018.

Michael Main did his usual wonderful job as Chief Steward at the Surrey County Show. Thanks also to the 40+ stewards who helped make the show a big success and to our Show Secretary Hazel Sharples for staging another superb honey show. More about this in the separate show report.

Michelle Ernout has kept everything running smoothly in her role as Membership Secretary. Well done Michelle!

Martin Major has done a great job maintaining the county website. It's a difficult balance as it needs to be user friendly for SBKA members and for the public but not a replacement for all the excellent divisional websites.

Thanks to all the Surrey members who helped on the Surrey stand at the National Honey Show. Special thanks to Richard Bradfield for organising the stewards rota and the stand display. Reigate members Janet Jones, Sarah and John Keenan and Geoff Bley kindly volunteered to collect two of the main speakers from Heathrow and deliver them to the show. Janet, Sarah and John ably looked after Heather Mattila. Geoff was thrown a curve ball as he was supposed to collect Professor Tom Seeley on the Wednesday prior to the show. Tom was the first speaker at 9.30am on Thursday. However, Tom missed his plane and had to come in on the 'red eye' on Thursday morning. Geoff stepped up to the plate, met Tom at silly o'clock and got him to Sandown Park in time to deliver his lecture. Thanks Geoff. You saved the day!

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And finally, thanks to every one of you for making Surrey BKA great through all the wonderful work you do for your divisions. Well done!

Have a very happy Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all at our many events in 2018.

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