

# **THE HEXHAM & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**7:30 pm Tuesday 4 January 2022**

**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Welcome and Introduction**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Minutes of previous AGM held on 5 January 2021 (Enc 1)**
- 4. Chair's Report 2021 (Enc 2)**
- 5. Treasurer's Report 2021 (Enc 3)**
- 6. Setting of Subscription Rates (Enc 4)**
- 7. Membership Report 2021 (Enc 5)**
- 8. Apiary Report 2021 (Enc 6)**
- 9. Education and Training Report 2021 (Enc 7)**
- 10. Election of Officers - List of Nominations (Enc 8)**
- 11. Appointment of Auditor for 2022**  
Re-appointment of Brian English as Auditor
- 12. BBKA Annual Delegates' Meeting 2022 (Enc 9)**
- 13. Any Other Business**  
Resignation of Sheilagh Matheson as a Trustee
- 14. Close**

# THE HEXHAM & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

7:30 pm Tuesday 5 January 2021

Virtual meeting held via Zoom

### Minutes

**Present:** Judith Stewart, Jane Hughes, Jonathan Storey, Neill Wylie, Sue Robinson, Paul Mingard, Martyn Farrer, Trish Scratcherd, Dave Cowings, Barbara Storey, Neil Dawson, Sam Burnish, Peter Dodman, Dorian Pritchard, Helen Hill, Helen Schooler, Jane Lewis, Mike Lewis, Jola Weaver, Jilly Halliday, Dot Coe, Ian Robinson, Claire Dickinson, Darrell Jackson, Sandra Knowles, Sheilagh Matheson, Stephen Dowson, Wendy Gregory

**Apologies:** Mark Robinson, Allan Ranson, Bill Hunter, Philip Latham, Peter Judge, Ann Howorth, Bev Bookless, Amanda Gray, Mary Greening, Lisa Ormston, Meg Middleton

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1. Jonathan Storey welcomed everyone to the AGM.

#### 2. Apologies for absence

2.1. Jonathan Storey recorded the apologies as noted above.

#### 3. Minutes of AGM held 7 January 2020

3.1. There were no further matters arising from the minutes of the 2020 AGM and they were agreed as an accurate record.

#### 4. Chairman's Report

4.1. Judith Stewart summarised the key messages from her written report which had been distributed with the Agenda papers. She reflected on a difficult year due to the disruption caused by the global pandemic which resulted in the cancellation of virtually all of the season's meetings and training events.

4.2. She acknowledged the support of the Committee – particularly Bill Hunter who is standing down after several years of service. She encouraged members to come forward to replace Bill on the Committee – the commitment is not too onerous and can be particularly rewarding.

4.3. She also thanked Sue and Ian Robinson for their many hours they have spent in maintaining the teaching apiary at Wylam during 2020. A full account of events there can be found in the Hermitage Sisterhood on the HBKA website. Judith applauded the general

membership of 178 for largely renewing their subscriptions in 2021 when, hopefully, something approaching 'normal service' can be resumed. She was particularly hopeful that the customary Beginners' Sessions can be delivered in 2021 – albeit with some degree of social distancing, as necessary.

- 4.4. Judith highlighted the need to relocate the teaching apiary during 2021 in order to accommodate the new owner's plans for the development of the High Hermitage caravan site. Any suggestions for additional or alternative apiary locations would be most welcome.
- 4.5. Our winter meetings programme will continue with an 'Ask the Panel' session to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021. Further details will follow shortly by e-mail and posted on the website.

## **5. Treasurer's Report**

- 5.1. Jane Hughes reported that the Association remains financially sound thanks to the continued support of the members. The accounts for the year ended 31 October 2020 show a surplus of receipts over expenditure of £956.65. Consequently, the Association's finances reveal a strong cash balance of £9,416.89 which we expect to need to call upon in order to fund the costs of relocating the teaching apiary.

## **6. Subscriptions 2022**

- 6.1. Jane Hughes explained that the BBKA is proposing to increase the capitation fees by £2 in 2022 at the forthcoming ADM. She therefore proposed an increase the HBKA subscription by this amount, acknowledging that we currently have the lowest subscription of any Association in the region. This proposal was agreed unanimously.
- 6.2. Ian Robinson asked how any increase in the Bee Disease Insurance (BDI) element of the subscription would be addressed. Jane responded that we would have to meet such an increase from HBKA funds and/or call an Extraordinary General Meeting in order to seek an increase in the members' subscription rates.

## **7. Membership Report**

- 7.1. In a written report, Neill Wylie noted that the Association membership reached a peak of 178 during 2020. The new eR2 membership system is proving to be effective in managing individual records and communicating with members.

## **8. Apiary Report**

- 8.1. Similarly, Sue Robinson reported that she and Ian had maintained the Wylam apiary during 2020 and eleven strong colonies had been taken into the winter with the prospect of resuming beginners' sessions in 2021.

## **9. Education and Training Report**

- 9.1. Also in a written report, David Wilson noted the cancellation of virtually all training activity in 2020. Various on-line training resources have since been made available and he remained optimistic that we will be able to support Basic Assessments in 2021.

## **10. Election of officers**

- 10.1. Jonathan Storey explained that the existing Committee (with the exception of Bill Hunter) was prepared to continue for 2021 and that no other nominations had been received.
- 10.2. According to the Constitution, Judith Stewart is required to stand down as Chair, having already served a term of three years. However, given the curtailed nature of HBKA activities in 2020, it was proposed that, exceptionally, she should be invited to continue as Chair for one further year until the next AGM. This was agreed unanimously.
- 10.3. Consequently, the list of Officers proposed by the Committee was also agreed unanimously.

## **11. Appointment of Auditor**

- 11.1. Brian English was re-appointed as Auditor for 2022.

## **12. BBKA Annual Delegates Meeting 2021**

- 12.1. Paul Mingard is Hexham BKA's representative at the BBKA Annual Delegates' Meeting to be held via Zoom on Saturday 16 January 2021.
- 12.2. Paul highlighted the three more important propositions on this year's ADM agenda –
  - **Proposition 9** – Surrey BKA is proposing no change to the voting system until new rules are agreed for the admittance of new Associations
  - **Proposition 10a/10b** – BBKA Guidelines/Rules for the admission of Area Association members
  - **Proposition 11** – BBKA proposal for a new single weighted voting system to replace the current dual Delegate and Membership voting systems.
- 12.3. Paul explained the background to these three propositions. He referred to recent correspondence from BBKA which suggested that a suitable compromise had been reached which would satisfy the concerns of Surrey and other large Associations while permitting progress to be made on a revised weighted voting system.
- 12.4. It was acknowledged that a single unified voting system would be a welcome improvement on the proceedings of the ADM. No further comments or questions were forthcoming.

## **13. Any other business**

- 13.1. **Honorary Life Member** – Sue Robinson proposed that Dorian Pritchard should be become an Honorary Life Member of Hexham BKA.
- 13.2. Dr Dorian Prichard is a well-known figure in the world of beekeeping – nationally and internationally as well as here in the North East. He has been a member of Hexham BKA since 1979 and over the years he has held positions of Membership Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Treasurer and Chairman. For ten years he was Convenor of the North East Beekeepers' Convention.

- 13.3. Dorian is best known in our region for the 'Introduction to Beekeeping' course at Kirkley Hall which he taught from 2003 until 2014. During his tenure he taught more than 300 prospective beekeepers, many of whom have gone on to become involved in their local Associations. He is a regular speaker on a wide range of topics from honey production for shows to his beloved native bee. One of Dorian's greatest skills is his ability to communicate with a wide range of people. He inspires them to go on to become the best beekeepers that they can be and work for the common good of the honeybee - preferably native. His well-known work speaks for itself, but it is the passion and enthusiasm he has engendered in his students that has enabled them to go on and spread the word.
- 13.4. Sue's proposal was seconded by Martyn Farrer and agreed unanimously.

#### **14. Conclusion**

- 14.1. Jonathan thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 8:15pm

Another year draws to a close and with the Omicron variant, we are possibly looking at a bleak winter. We decided a while ago to keep the AGM as a Zoom meeting, that has turned out to be the right idea. Jonathan Storey has worked hard with the Zoom presentations, I think we have delivered some very interesting talks. If you have missed any, please take a look at the recordings on our website. Our next meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022 is entitled 'British Bees & Foreign Food' with our guest speaker Rinke Vinkenoog. Rinke always delivers an entertaining lecture and I hope this can still go ahead as a face-to-face meeting as planned.

Our apiary meetings have gone well this year, albeit a little smaller than usual and none of the refreshments and chat afterwards. Sue Robinson has worked hard organising the teaching sessions and maintaining the apiary, with help from the rest of the committee and other members.

Over the summer the committee has faced the challenge of the apiary move. Our old apiary site was needed by the new owner and we knew we would have to move. We discussed many options that could give a good location with the right facilities and a site that we could have for a few years. We finally negotiated a different field with the new owner. It is a better site, slightly bigger and with more scope for our teaching. Sue gave a lovely review at the December meeting. It is recorded on our website, you can see pictures of our new site and the work done so far. I would like to thank our new landlord Henry Ward for agreeing the continued use of his land. We have purchased a new shed and we moved our original one, this gives a lot more room for storage. We still need to do quite a bit of work on the site - drainage on the site, planting a hedge, painting both sheds, erecting hive stands and moving the bees. We welcome any offers of help, we have sent emails out to ask, thank you for the replies so far. We are hoping that our new apiary can accommodate not only our teaching sessions but also new ventures such as queen rearing. Jane Hughes' latest accounts do not include the new apiary expenses as they fall after 31st October.

Hexham Beekeepers Bee Mart is changing this year, hopefully it will be launched on the website in early 2022. The Bee Mart is HBKA's buying and selling site for bees and in 2022 for equipment as well. We really want to encourage buying local bees. The website page will be an easier way to see what is available and there are already colonies about to go up for sale.

I am standing down as Chair this year but I am happy to remain on the committee. I would like to thank Neill Wylie who is standing down from Membership Secretary and welcome David Wilson who has offered to take on that role. Neill has worked hard in the last few years on the new online BBKA system. If you haven't already seen it, have a look at Neill's presentation at the December meeting, now recorded on the website. If everyone followed Neill's guidance, the role of Membership Secretary would be so easy. Neill outlined the mistakes some members make that cause extra work. Please help our new Membership Secretary by paying on time and the correct amount. I know how frustrating it is having to chase people who just forget to renew and in my days of membership, having to return incorrectly made out cheques.

I would like to thank Paul Mingard for all his work on the Honey Press over recent years. Paul is standing down from that role and, as we have no one to take over, there will be no more editions. The Honey Press magazine has been a lovely publication but we know that

only a few members read it and we feel that we now have other, more effective means of communication to reach our members. Paul continues as our representative at the BBKA Annual Delegates' Meeting (ADM) and helping with our website and email issues.

Thank you to Mark Robinson who is standing down from his role as Bee Buddy Co-ordinator. We want to encourage the Bee Buddy system so that new beekeepers have someone to guide them through their challenges. The Bee Buddy system has been a little neglected of late, especially with Covid and needs new thinking and a new plan. Dave Cowings has agreed to take on this role.

Thank you to everyone on the committee for their hard work last year. We all give our time freely because we share a passion for bees and beekeeping. If you enjoy beekeeping too, make it easier for our committee by helping out now and then.

Best wishes for 2022.

Judith Stewart  
Chair

In spite of continuing COVID restrictions and the various difficulties experienced throughout 2020-21, HBKA membership has remained strong. Fees of £4,510.25 were received and, after paying BBKA Capitation and BDI, HBKA own membership fees (of £897) were up 9% on last year.

The Association received several donations through the year.

- An especial thank you should go to the committee of the Northern Bee Convention, who, on the demise of NEBEES, donated their reserves to the local beekeeping associations. As a result, we received £1,931.53.
- A total of £190 was donated by members of the public as a 'thankyou' to a number of our members who had helped remove swarms and give advice on potentially troublesome bumblebees.
- The Association also benefited from several members who, after paying their membership fees twice, donated the funds rather than look for a refund. A small levy was also raised on the sale of bee-feed this year.

These donations totaled £2,263.23. This amount, along with the £250 received, as in previous years, in memory of Robert Furniss and the Gift Aid received from HMRC (of £869.70), has been set aside to help fund the new apiary which is to be established over the coming winter months.

Total receipts were £11,096.60.

Expenditure of £7,415.43 was down on 2020 reflecting the 'quiet' year we have had.

We were again able to offer members reasonably priced fondant and syrup following the bulk purchase of four pallet loads of bee-feed.

The Association finished the fiscal year with a current account balance of £7,628.32 and with a deposit balance of £5,469.70.

Jane Hughes  
Honorary Treasurer



## Hexham Beekeepers Association

### Receipts and Payments Account For Year Ending 31st October 2021

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>PAYMENTS</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Subscriptions	4510.25	4234.05	BBKA Capitation	3053.00	2923.00
Robert Furniss Donation	250.00	250.00	BDI	560.25	485.30
Donations recd	2263.23	30.00	Lecture Expenses	193.88	158.99
Interest	0.38	1.08	Shows	0.00	87.00
Xmas 2019	0.00	364.00	Xmas 2019	0.00	599.00
Memorial Lecture	0.00	0.00	Memorial Lecture	0.00	0.00
Gift Aid	869.70	771.44	Auditor	20.00	20.00
Extractor hire	25.00	0.00	Sundries	43.79	321.36
Sundries	25.00	0.00	Equipment	187.74	0.00
Fondant Sales	3128.00	2523.75	Apiary	129.17	165.00
Apiary Sales	0.00	480.00	Fondant Purchases	3024.00	2637.00
Insurance rebate	25.00	0.00	Website	0.00	90.77
			Refund of subscriptions	29.00	157.25
			Apiary Insurance	174.60	53.00
	<u>11096.60</u>	<u>8654.32</u>		<u>7415.43</u>	<u>7697.67</u>

Total resources as at 31st  
October 2020

£ 9,416.89

Excess of Receipts over  
Payments

£ 3,681.13

Total resources as at 31st  
October 2021

Comprising:

Deposit Account

£ 5,469.70

Bank Account

£ 7,628.32

Jane Hughes  
Hon Treasurer, HBKA

Brian English  
Auditor

*Brian English*  
24/11/2021

## Proposed Subscription Rates

## Enclosure 4

<b>Membership Category</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022*</b>	<b>2023**</b>
REGISTERED MEMBER	£25.00	£27.00	£27.00
PARTNER MEMBER (same address)	£14.00	£15.00	£15.00
JUNIOR MEMBER	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00
COUNTRY MEMBER (no bees)	£15.00	£15.50	£15.50
ASSOCIATE (already BBKA member)	£8.50	£8.50	£8.50

### NOTES

**2022\*** – Increases reflect changes in BBKA capitation fees following last year's AGM

**2023\*\*** – Subject to any changes in Capitation Fees subsequently imposed by the BBKA

**Overview**

The total number of members this year reached a new high of 190. Although one or two members have since stated that they cannot continue, due to ill health or a significant change of circumstances. Constant change.

The current total is made up of the usual combination of “Registered”, “Partner”, “Country”, “Junior”, “Local”, and our own HBKA “Honorary members”. Please see the graphic shown below, and the supporting table below.

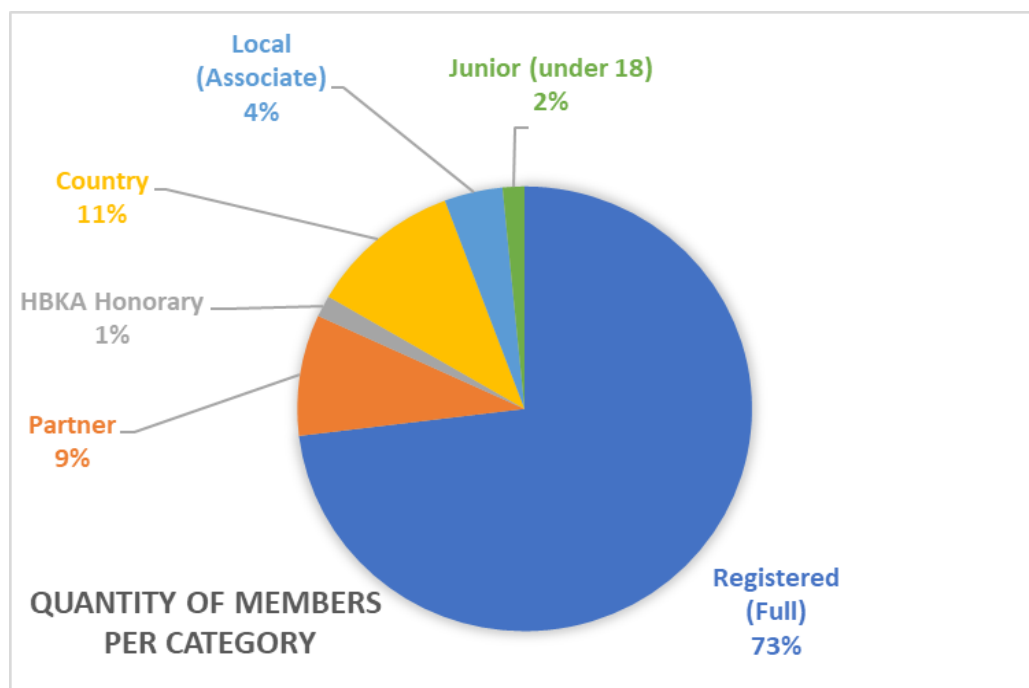


Figure 1: Pie-chart of members per category

Membership category	Number of members
Registered (Full)	141
Partner	17
HBKA Honorary	3
Country	21
Local (Associate)	8
Junior (under 18)	3
BBKA Honorary	0

Table 1: Members per category end of 2021

The annual ‘churn’ of membership continues to range between 10% and 15%, as people discontinue with beekeeping and new members join. That is quite significant, and why it is important, to help new members through the early hurdles of being a beekeeper.

In summary, we appear to have a healthy association based on these numbers. Long may that continue.

## Changes in fees for 2022 that were advertised and approved last year

Category	2021	Increase	2022
Full/Registered	£25.00	£2.00	£27.00
Partner	£14.00	£1.00	£15.00
Country	£15.00	£0.50	£15.50
Junior	£10.00	£0.00	£10.00
Associate	£8.00	£0.00	£8.00

*Table 2: New fees for membership*

## Challenges to be addressed with membership management

Over the last four years, I have found that the annual collection of membership fees follows the 80:20 rule in terms of the effort incurred by the membership secretary across the full membership. The 80% effort on the 20% of membership involves identification of the 'defaulters', sending out reminders, and the resolution of mistakes. In particular, a lot of the effort can be generated by about half of the leavers who ignore any form of communication - by email, text, or phone message.

Therefore, this year, I propose to simplify the renewal process with what might be seen as a more 'radical' approach:

1. Only one fee renewal reminder will be sent out to members during the first week of January when the fees fall due.
2. It is the responsibility of the members to take the appropriate action. Those members wishing to renew their membership of HBKA are encouraged to do so promptly and no later than 31 January.
3. Those members who do not renew their membership by 31 March will be removed from the BBKA eR2 database and will lose the benefits of attendance at local HBKA events, receipt of the monthly BBKA News and Bee Disease Insurance (BDI) cover for their colonies.

## Changes with the Membership function at HBKA

I will be stepping down as Membership Secretary at the end of February 2022, having performed the role for four years. I believe that the role would now benefit from some "fresh eyes", along with the implementation and monitoring of the new renewal policy of "one reminder" etc. I am pleased that David Wilson has volunteered to take on that challenge and I trust that everyone will give him their full co-operation and support.

Despite labouring the 80/20 rule above, I have genuinely appreciated the fun that comes from interacting with what is generally a group of very pleasant people.

My thanks for your many interactions.

Neill Wylie  
Membership Secretary

After the turmoil of 2020 with no Beginners' sessions at the apiary, we were able to resume in May this year with a few slight amendments, including smaller group sizes, which worked really well with our beginners getting more hands-on time at each session. This is something that I think we will continue with for 2022, it means beginners are offered perhaps fewer sessions but better quality at each visit. Sadly, we decided to abandon the after-session tea, coffee and chat time to comply with Covid restrictions and safety. All the sessions were well attended and we only had to cancel one session due to heavy rain.

This year I also had the assistance of a regular Thursday afternoon group, made up of beginners from 2018 and 2019 who have their own bees. This meant I could keep up with the jobs that don't always get done on Sundays and we worked on into the autumn to prepare the bees for winter.

We have finished the year with 14 colonies, which is more than usual and hopefully, if they all come through the winter, then we may have a few for sale in the spring.

This year has seen big changes at the apiary as detailed by the short presentation that I will make at the meeting. The AGM will be recorded and will be available on the website after the meeting so if you want to see the accompanying pictures then please have a look. For the purposes of this report and the benefit of those who will not attend the AGM here is a brief written summary.

In 2019 the High Hermitage site changed hands and the new owner has been making substantial changes but he is still happy to accommodate us - just not in our current location. He has offered us a site at the north-east corner of his land, which is an excellent location for the bees and we have made strides over the autumn to have the area fenced and a new shed built. The old shed has been relocated too. We have plans to build new hive stands and move the hedging from the old apiary to the new one. Weather permitting this will be done in January so that we can move the bees at the end of January/early February. We also have some shed painting planned but this will need to wait for warmer weather. All help is welcome!

As the new area is slightly larger than previously, we have some plans to do some research and maybe some queen rearing in future but these are things that will develop over time. This next year is about getting the new apiary up and running and finding out the positives and negatives of the new site. Exciting times ahead!

Sue Robinson  
Apiary Manager

No practical examinations were taken by any of our members in 2021. However, 2022 is expected to be a much busier year as we all move on from Covid.

### **Basic Training and Assessment**

We are planning to hold the usual 10-week programme of Beginner's Sessions at the training apiary to be organised by our Apiary manager. Details will be published on the website in due course.

We also anticipate providing short revision classes for those members with at least one year's beekeeping experience who plan to take their Basic Assessment in July/Aug 2022. The Basic Assessment provides a great opportunity to consolidate your initial beekeeping knowledge and skills - so why not give it a go?

### **BBKA Module Examinations - March and November 2022**

Looking to next year, now is time to think about preparing for the March or November Module Examinations. Details can be found at this link: - <https://www.bbka.org.uk/modules>  
We will look to support those members wishing to take the BBKA module examinations by, for example, exploring the feasibility of refresher training events.

### **General Husbandry Course - March/April 2022**

We currently have ten or so members consolidating their intermediate beekeeping experience by attending a General Husbandry course in March/April 2022. Some are preparing to undertake the BBKA General Husbandry Assessment but others simply wish to improve their knowledge. If you think that this training may be of interest to you in the future, please let me know.

### **Other**

Currently the committee are working alongside the BBKA with the aim of improving our examination and training offering particularly with looking to bridge the gap between the Basic Assessment and General Husbandry levels.

Please check the website for the latest news on this and course dates during 2022.

If you have any specific training needs, please get in contact with me at [dhwprivate@hotmail.com](mailto:dhwprivate@hotmail.com)

David Wilson  
Examinations Secretary

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Proposed by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>
Chair	Martyn Farrer	Jonathan Storey	Jane Hughes
Honorary Secretary	Jonathan Storey	Sue Robinson	Jane Hughes
Honorary Treasurer	Jane Hughes	Sue Robinson	Jonathan Storey
Committee #1 – Membership Sec	David Wilson	Jane Hughes	Jonathan Storey
– Exam Sec			
Committee #2 – Apiary Manager	Sue Robinson	Jane Hughes	Jonathan Storey
Committee #3 – ADM Rep	Paul Mingard	Jane Hughes	Jonathan Storey
Committee #4 – Bee Buddies	Dave Cowings	Jane Hughes	Jonathan Storey
Committee #5 – Bee Mart	Judith Stewart	Jane Hughes	Jonathan Storey
Co-opted Members	TBC		

**Notes**

**Judith Stewart** is stepping down after four years as Chair. Last year we asked her to stay on for an additional year to see us through the pandemic. Judith intends to continue as an active member of the committee and will coordinate the Bee Mart in 2022.

**Martyn Farrer** has agreed to take up the role of Chair for the next term of three years.

**Neill Wylie** is standing down as Membership Secretary after four years in the role during which he guided HBKA safely through the implementation of HBKA’s new on-line membership system eR2.

**David Wilson** has agreed to replace Neill as Membership Secretary, combining that role, for the time being, with his duties as Examinations Secretary.

**Paul Mingard** is standing down as Honey Press Editor. There is no intention to re-appoint to this role - so no further editions of the Honey Press will be issued. In future, it is intended that the function of the Honey Press will be delivered by a variety of alternative electronic means - through postings on the Association website, direct e-mails to members and periodic announcements on social media.

**Dave Cowings** has agreed to take up the role of Bee Buddy Co-ordinator following Mark Robinson’s enforced retirement from beekeeping due to increasingly adverse reactions to bee venom.

Our thanks are due to the above ‘retirees’ for their past contributions to the success of HBKA and our best wishes for those who have agreed to replace them. We intend to strengthen the Committee by co-opting other members as required in order to fulfil specific tasks/roles.

The ADM will be held on 15 January 2022 – Paul Mingard will be representing Hexham & District Beekeepers’ Association with Jonathan Storey acting as Reserve Delegate.

Full details are available from the BBKA website - <https://www.bbka.org.uk/bbka-adm> .

**Propositions for Consideration**

<b>Nominating Association</b>	<b>Brief Summary of Proposition</b>
1. BBKA	Pre-meeting election of Honorary Member, President, Trustees and Examination Board Members to be ratified.
2. Devon BKA	Honey Adulteration – BBKA approach to Trading Standards
3. Devon BKA	Honey Adulteration – BBKA approach to HM Government
4. Devon BKA	Honey Adulteration – Publicity
5. Bucks BKA	BKA to communicate earlier with Area Associations about national events
6. Hampshire BKA	Complete ban on import of honey bees, including individual queens
7. Hampshire BKA	Programme to counter the spread of Asian Hornet
8. BBKA	Amendment to clause 12.7 of BBKA Constitution
9. BBKA	Amendment to Section 16 of BBKA Constitution
10. BBKA	Amendment to clause 21.2 of BBKA Constitution
11. BBKA	Amendment to clause 12.3 of BBKA Constitution
12. BBKA	Amendment to clause 14.4 of BBKA Constitution