

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

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

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

**Virtual meeting held via Zoom**

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Judith Stewart, Jane Hughes, Jonathan Storey, Neill Wylie, Sue Robinson, Paul Mingard, Martyn Farrer, Ian Robinson, Barbara Storey, Neil Dawson, Sam Burnish, Peter Dodman, Dorian Pritchard, Helen Hill, Jola Weaver, Claire Dickinson, Darrell Jackson, Sandra Knowles, Sheilagh Matheson, Stephen Dowson, Michael Lloyd, Colin Hall, Christopher Dorman O’Gowan, Philip Latham, Carol Moffit, John Dickinson, Karen Cumberledge, Michael McGregor, Wendy Gregory, Mike Higgins, Nick Athey, Pam Peart, Paul Edwards, Tom Jamieson.

**Apologies:** Ros Evans

#### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

1.1. Jonathan Storey welcomed everyone to the 2022 AGM.

#### **2. Apologies for absence**

2.1. Only one apology was received as noted above.

#### **3. Minutes of AGM held 5 January 2021**

3.1. There were no further matters arising from the minutes of the 2021 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.

4.2. She acknowledged the support of the Committee and other members over the last year. Judith anticipated an exciting year ahead with the establishment of our new teaching apiary. She reminded everyone that recordings of last year’s meetings are available on the web site. Judith will be continuing to coordinate the Bee Mart – details of which can now also be found on the website. Judith concluded by inviting members to get involved – either with the new apiary or assisting with other ‘business as usual’ as we attempt to re-establish our traditional calendar of events.

4.3. Jonathan thanked Judith for her 4-year tenure as Chairman.

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

- 5.1. Jane Hughes reported that the Association remains financially sound thanks to the continued support of its members. The accounts for the year ended 31 October 2021 reflect the benefit of a strong membership during another Covid year.
- 5.2. Jane highlighted the donations received – particularly £1,900 from the winding up of the Northern Beekeepers' Convention which was most welcome, given the significant costs incurred in establishing the new apiary. Expenditure remained 'flat' and as at 31/10/21 so the Association had bank balances exceeding £13,000.
- 5.3. As noted, a lot of additional expenditure was incurred post balance sheet in November. We spent £7,000 on a new shed, fencing and landscaping. The net result was to reduce the bank balance to around £7,000 immediately before the 2022 membership cycle. More expenditure will follow in 2022 in order to complete the new apiary but it is not expected to be material.
- 5.4. In response, Sue Robinson thanked Jane and the Committee for their support during a difficult period in delivering the new facility.
- 5.5. Philip Latham commented that funds received from NEBEES had been calculated so as to be as close as possible to the sum donated by HBKA to the convention over recent years.
- 5.6. The Accounts were agreed unanimously.

## **6. Subscriptions 2023**

- 6.1. Jane Hughes confirmed that the BBKA has increased the capitation fees by £2 in 2022. No further increases are anticipated for 2023.
- 6.2. Jane sought the agreement of the meeting to increase the subs for 2023 by any additional sums that BBKA might impose at the forthcoming ADM.
- 6.3. This proposal was agreed unanimously.

## **7. Membership Report**

- 7.1. In his written report, Neill Wylie noted that the Association membership reached a peak of 190 during 2021. Neill commented that the fee renewal demand for 2022 will be coming out shortly. Neill is proposing to send only one reminder this year.
- 7.2. Neill Wylie is standing down as Membership Secretary after 4 years. David Wilson will be taking from Neill once the current membership renewal process for 2022 subscriptions is completed.

## **8. Apiary Report**

- 8.1. Sue Robinson reported on the recent changes to the teaching apiary. As a result of the recent sale of the caravan park, we have been required to relocate to the north-east corner of the site. Sue shared her presentation, previously shown in December, showing images of the work in progress at the new apiary.
- 8.2. Her presentation included plans of the proposed layout of hive stands which will be achieved by re-using timbers from old stands.
- 8.3. Sue reported that there are lots of jobs to do and volunteers are needed to replant hedging, build stands, lay out paths and paving etc.
- 8.4. Sue invited questions and Pam Peart asked about parking which is available in the layby opposite the new entrance.

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

- 9.1. David Wilson reminded everyone of the deadline to register for BBKA Module exams by the end of February. A lot of interest has been shown in pursuing General Husbandry examination. George Eames is running a preparatory course and more training is anticipated this year.
- 9.2. Tom Jamieson asked about the need to do the Basic Assessment before attempting the General Husbandry. David said this was the case and Neill Wylie confirmed. Sue commented that the Basic Assessment is really useful on its own merit which was echoed by Martyn Farrer. Sue intends to provide revision sessions for anyone thinking about doing the Basic Assessment.
- 9.3. Anyone interested in pursuing any form of training should contact David Wilson.
- 9.4. Pam Peart asked about George Eames' General Husbandry course. David said that he was waiting for responses from some of our members but that Pam was definitely on the list and the sessions would be held in March.
- 9.5. Pam also enquired about Ian Jobson's Microscopy course which David agreed to chase up.

## **10. Election of officers**

- 10.1. Jonathan Storey explained the proposed Committee members 2022 and confirmed that no other nominations had been received. A brief discussion followed.
- 10.2. Philip Latham expressed his concern about the loss of the Honey Press and the lack of a Librarian or other person who might curate the history of the association.
- 10.3. Dorian Pritchard supported Philip's comments regarding the discontinuation of the Honey Press which had historically been an important vehicle for obtaining and sharing information from the general membership. Martyn Farrer commented that he is keen to document the history of Hexham BKA but that this was proving difficult to access or even to know where the history lies. Jonathan Storey commented on the difficulty of sourcing contributions and Paul Mingard supported this view. Hexham BKA has the capability to share information by e-mail or via the website – we just need suitable content.
- 10.4. Paul proposed to store the Association Library at the new apiary with the aim of making it more accessible to those most likely to need access – our beginners/novices.
- 10.5. Dorian offered to donate 40 years' worth of Honey Press publications which Martyn welcomed as an invaluable resource – it could possibly be digitised for wider access.
- 10.6. Ian Robinson suggested that we should also try to capture anecdotal/spoken history from some of our older members before it is lost forever. Dorian recalled former student of his who might be able to assist with this.
- 10.7. Following the discussion, the list of Officers proposed by the Committee was agreed unanimously.
- 10.8. Sue Robinson reminded everyone that Nick Athey, Wendy Gregory and Mike Higgins have also agreed to join the Committee as co-opted members.

## **11. Appointment of Auditor**

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

## **12. BBKA Annual Delegates Meeting 2022**

- 12.1. Paul Mingard is Hexham BKA's representative at the BBKA Annual Delegates' Meeting to be held via Zoom on Saturday 15 January 2022.
- 12.2. Paul highlighted the more important propositions on this year's ADM agenda –

- **Propositions 2,3 & 4** – Devon BKA – Honey Adulteration
- **Proposition 6** – Hampshire BKA – Ban on bee imports – supported by BBKA – to re-affirm – concerns about bees via NI
- **Proposition 7** – Hampshire BKA – BBKA to do more to counter spread of Asian Hornet
- **Proposition 8-12** – BBKA – amendments to constitution. NB Cancellation of membership – no refund from BBKA

12.3. Tom Jamieson applauded the timing of the HBKA AGM immediately before the BBKA ADM which he found to be very helpful. He commented on the real threat posed by the Asian Hornet and cited the experience in Portugal where insufficient resources had been provided at a critical stage. We need to avoid making same mistakes in the UK by ensuring that the local authorities and agencies are fully 'on board'.

### **13. Any other business**

13.1. **Resignation of Trustee – Sheilagh Matheson** – Jonathan Storey reported that Sheilagh Matheson would be standing down as a Trustee and he thanked her for her contribution over the years

### **14. Conclusion**

14.1. Jonathan thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 8:50pm