

# **NORTH SHROPSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**

**Founded 1945**

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Held on 20th October 2020 at 7.30 pm by Zoom**

**Present:** Alison Hine, Angela Kirk, Ann Moore, Guy Preece, Ann Johnson, Sarah Hodnett, Alison Mackenzie, Brian Roberts, Joyce Nisbet, Karen Broomhall, Hannah Jones, Alex Ellis, Marcus Hughes, Karen Jackson, Wilf McSherry, Tom Nisbet, Gill Rich, Andy Wood, Mandy Wood, Cathie Hunter, Ed Wadon, Andy Bates, Carol Bates, Simon Irvin, Brian Allaker, Ken Beevor, Audrey Beevor

The Chairman, Alison Hine opened the meeting and asked for forbearance as we dealt with the new medium of Zoom. Alison H welcomed all present particularly new members Karen Jackson, Gill Rich, Cathie Hunter and Brian Allaker.

Alison H noted how we were sad to lose Frank Owen this year. He had been a longstanding member and many of us had benefitted directly from his advice and help.

Alison H explained that we would proceed with the item on the agenda 'Honorary Members' first so it could be discussed and voted on before the members it concerned joined us. Joyce Nisbet provided some background on Ken and Audrey Beevor and proposed them for Honorary membership. It was seconded by Alison H and a vote taken. The proposal was passed.

Ken and Audrey then joined the meeting and were welcomed as Honorary Members of the Association. Joyce then gave a brief overview of their beekeeping careers. Ken and Audrey thanked the Association and Ken said he only wished they could have done more. Ken also thanked Audrey for all her help over the years.

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from: Nigel Hine, Andrew Bailey, Janet Wakefield, Alison Clare, Tom Rothwell and Rosemary Titley.

### **2. Minutes of the 2019 AGM**

Approval of the minutes of the 2019 AGM was proposed by Ann Johnson, seconded by Ann Moore and agreed by all present.

### **3. Matters arising from the Minutes of 2019 AGM.**

Matters arising from last year's minutes were Hugh Allen's comments on what he considered a large balance in the account. The Committee had examined this. More funds had been invested in the apiary, but as it turned out the balance has been a substantial relief in the unforeseen Pandemic situation.

### **4. Annual Reports for year ended September 2020**

The Reports from committee members had previously been circulated to all Association members by email. They are repeated here for ease of reference.

### **Chairman's report – Alison Hine**

*As you will all be only too well aware this has been a difficult year, as COVID 19 has meant that we have been unable to hold any face-to-face meetings or activities over the bee keeping active season. Through it all, the NSBKA Committee has continued to do its best to keep the Association running. I would like to thank all Committee members for their continued efforts on behalf of the Association, and their willingness to get to grips with Zoom Committee meetings. In particular I must thank Sarah and her dedicated 'bubble' of Brian, Ann and Guy who have continued to run the apiary every week. Without their continued hard work, we would have had no apiary to look forward (hopefully) to visiting next year. I must also thank Angie for her sterling work as Secretary, for her management of the bulk*

feed order and for always fizzing with ideas! It is thanks to her impetus that we have come up with some new ways of working. Three of our Committee members are hoping to stand down at the AGM: Ann Johnson (Events), Alison Mackenzie (Membership) and Steph Fielding (Newsletter). They have put in an enormous amount of work during their time in office and we are very grateful to them.

I would also like to congratulate Joyce Nisbet on becoming a BBKA Trustee earlier this year. This is in addition to all her other beekeeping related activities, including producing our excellent newsletter each month and judging our virtual honey show.

We can only continue to be a successful Association with the help and support of committee members and other volunteers giving their time. I would ask anyone who is able to help, in any capacity, to consider standing for a Committee position at the AGM or offering help in other ways.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the Association members, for staying with us during this difficult time and for making it such a pleasant and friendly Association to belong to.

At the meeting Alison H reiterated her thanks to the committee for all their efforts over a difficult year, with Covid 19. The Committee had introduced several new initiatives. She particularly thanked Sarah, Brian, Ann M and Guy for keeping the apiary going, to which there was much agreement. She also thanked Ann J and Steph, who were stepping down from the Committee, for their contributions. It was noted that Ann J had been an active Committee member for many years, including General Secretary and Events Coordinator. Also, although it seemed a long time ago, Alison reminded the meeting that the Association had again come first with our Glass Display at the 2019 National Honey Show. It had been taken to the Show by Ann J and Angie.

### **General Secretary report**

*It has been a challenging year, learning a new normal, adapting to new ways of doing things from Zoom Committee Meetings, introducing mentoring schemes, to a socially distant bulk distribution. Our online presence has become more important and keeping in contact through Beelines, ER2 (our email distribution), our amazing website and growing facebook membership has been really useful.*

At the meeting Angie thanked everyone for being so thoughtful with the bulk collection change this year.

### **Treasurer report – Ann Moore**

#### **Accounts period 1st October 2019 to 30th September 2020 - Ann Moore**

*When we set our financial budget a year ago for the 2019/20 year, we expected to finish the financial year with a deficit of £750, but in the event, we finished it with a deficit of over £1,600.*

*Inevitably, our finances for the year have been affected by the Coronavirus pandemic, which has prevented us from holding training courses and reduced our options for selling the association honey.*

#### Income

*This has resulted in a shortfall in income against our original estimate of £2,900 for the year, leaving our income for the year at just under £1,700, compared to £4,243 for the previous year.*

*Our membership income was slightly up at £1,225, and we made a small surplus on events held last Winter, eg the Wax day in November, and the Microscopy Day in February.*

#### Expenditure

*Our expenditure for the year totalled £3,353, which is only £300 less than we originally budgeted for. While we would have expected to see savings due to activities being suspended during lockdown, some of the benefit of these reduced costs will not be seen until next year. For example, although we have not held any meetings at Tilstock since early in the year, the room hire costs are paid yearly in arrears, so we will only see the savings from this in next year's accounts.*

*During last Winter we carried out extensive renovations to the paths at the apiary, and replaced some of the older equipment, hence the larger than usual expenditure of £1,400.*

*The Show costs in this year's accounts relate to the National Honey Show in October 2019.*

#### Deficit for the year

*As a result, the association ended the financial year with a deficit of £1,658. We are fortunate in having a surplus of funds brought forward, which provides us with a buffer against circumstances such as we have seen this year.*

#### **Bank Balances**

*As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the association's bank balances totalled £9,352, which hopefully will enable us to continue to weather the current situation until such time as we can resume our normal activities.*

The Balance Sheet is attached at the end of these Minutes.

At the meeting Ann M went over the figures, noting that income had dropped by £1,700 due to there having been no training courses because of Covid 19. However, with a reserve of £9,500 we remain in good shape but that would soon be eaten up if things continue to be difficult. Training possibilities next year are still unknown. Brian was thanked for selling Association honey. Alison proposed the adoption of the accounts, Angie seconded, and the vote was passed.

#### **Apiary Manager report – Sarah Hodnett**

*The Association Apiary at Pim Him has unfortunately remained closed to the wider membership for the whole active beekeeping season. Due to social distancing guidelines and Covid19 lockdown restrictions we had to take this decision very early and initially it was to be reviewed weekly, but as the National situation unfolded we took the regrettable decision to remain closed for the whole year. The Apiary has been managed by a team of four experienced beekeepers, who have been responsible for individual hives and areas of the Apiary. So, that social distancing can and has been maintained.*

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank wholeheartedly Brian, Ann & Guy, for their hard work over the last 6 months and for making a difficult situation straightforward and taking such good care of the Association Bees.*

*Because we have been unable to carry on with our usual teaching and mentorship, HOT#9 did not go ahead this summer and the 3 hives belonging to our HOT#8 were absorbed into the main Apiary. We have produced some beautiful 2020 Queens to head new colonies for the 3 HOT#8 participants to start again in Spring 2021*

*The Apiary has always been the focal point of the Association during the summer months, where Beekeepers of a can gain experience and confidence with the bees and our craft. It is an important space to share knowledge. Although this has not been possible this year, we are optimistic that next Spring we will be able resume our Tuesday evening beekeeping at the Apiary, possibly with a slightly different format reflecting whatever the situation is, at that time. As Beekeepers we are pre-programmed to look to a positive future.*

At the meeting Sarah confirmed all was fine at the Apiary.

#### **Events – Ann Johnson**

*This year has of course made a mess of most of the schedule and a major re-think has been necessary to try and maintain at least members evenings and guest speakers.*

*It all started so well... we ran a very popular and successful Wax Day in November 2019, which drew in beekeepers from some distance away. NSBKA members delivered workshops and those who attended were very appreciative of the day. The Annual Dinner went ahead at the Boathouse in Ellesmere, with little indication of how difficult 2020 was going to turn out to be.*

*Our February speaker, Jim Vivian-Griffiths was unable to travel to us from Monmouth because of the floods that swept the country in late winter, but we did manage to squeeze in an extremely informative and educational Microscopy Day with Graham Royle a few days later. Those members who attended found the day very worthwhile. And the cake, of course, was excellent.*

*The onset of the pandemic in early March put paid to the planned programme for the rest of the year. We were unable to welcome Julian Routh who was to have talked to us about swarm control and moving on through the year, the out apiary visit to Erddig and the NSBKA hosted Disease Day in May and June both fell by the wayside.*

*We did have the summer to re-group though and as keeping in touch virtually via such platforms as Zoom was becoming the norm for so many, we looked into what could be achieved by those means. It was (and is) important to keep contact with members as far as life and technology permit and as bees know nothing about our human viruses, they still need our customary attention, meaning we still need information and advice!*

*Committee meetings were already running on Zoom, so in June we ran a trial quiz/Q&A session which worked well and which was followed in July by a lecture from Enid Brown on the Honey Harvest. We were then fortunate to hear from Martin Han and Clare Densley from Buckfast Abbey, who were offering a very comprehensive list of Zoom talks and were extremely keen to deliver to as many beekeeping associations as possible. In September, they spoke to us on the topic 'What the books don't tell you and why bees change their minds' The talk was well received and we are planning to take advantage of Martin and Clare's extensive list again in the future. Zoom has allowed us to keep many members in touch with the Association and each other and if you haven't tried it yet, it isn't difficult and I would recommend you give it a go.*

*Who knows what next year will bring us, but some of our cancelled speakers are re-booked, either in person or on Zoom for 2021 and here's hoping we will actually be able to meet together soon. And eat cake...*

At the meeting Ann said we were making the best of things with Covid 19, that most of the speakers we didn't get this year had been rebooked for the future or by Zoom, Joyce stepped in with a talk on cut comb that was well received just before lockdown. Marcus recommended a YouTube presentation by Giles Budge on Foulbrood diseases. As Ann J was standing down this year many thanks were given by the committee for all her good work in various positions on the Committee and over many years.

#### **Education Officer report – Alison Hine**

*We were all set to run the Taster and Beginners courses at the end of March, but the lockdown intervened. At the same time the BBKA Modules, which some of us were sitting, were cancelled and the Tuesday evening apiary sessions ceased.*

*We have tried to address the gap in various ways:*

- A remote mentoring scheme was set up. Four mentors assisted seven mentees by means of phone, emails and Whats App. I would like to thank the other mentors, Joyce Nisbet, Carol Jones and Wilf McSherry for their efforts – and trust our mentees found it useful.*
- Arising out of some of the mentees' queries we have included more 'skills' articles in an expanded newsletter.*
- We would not normally have held evening meetings over the summer, other than the apiary sessions, but we introduced monthly Zoom presentations. We plan to continue these.*

*Over the winter it is planned to run some Zoom sessions for those who were unable to do the Taster course. It is also hoped to run sessions based on the BBKA Module 1 syllabus for anyone who is interested. In the hopes that things might be approaching normality next Spring, planning has started for a Beginner's course for new beekeepers plus the usual Taster and Basic courses. Later on it is hoped to run a Skills Day.*

*We would be grateful for suggestions of anything else that members would like us to put on.*

At the meeting Alison reported that we had various things planned to fill the gap from the pandemic and she was planning Taster, Beginner and Basic courses for the spring. BBKA Modules are on hold until further notice.

#### **Membership report – Alison Mackenzie**

*We have a total of 122 active members which includes 18 who have joined us during the year. I anticipated a reduction in new members because we had to cancel the Taster Weekend and were unable to hold any apiary sessions. Normally we invite prospective members to the apiary or Tilstock before they join us to see if they like what we do. Unfortunately, like most things this year, that has not been possible. However, we have embraced technology and held a couple of zoom meetings*

*which I hope you managed to see. The advantage of these is that you can watch them on your phone/ipad wherever you are, even if you are traveling (though not driving!).*

*ER2 made renewals and the processing of new members much easier and although we had a couple of problems at the beginning, they were quickly and easily resolved.*

*I hope we can all meet up in the coming year, talk bees and eat cake!*

At the meeting Alison M confirmed we had 122 active members and 18 newly joined, although the connection cut out at this point.

### **Librarian/Publicity report – Ann Moore**

*One of the consequences of the current situation is that the association library has not been out and about at NSBKA meetings; however it is still alive and well and the books are available for borrowing by members (in a socially distanced way, of course!)*

*The library has 130+ plus books (and a few dvds), ranging from general interest books which are a great introduction for newer members, together with more technical reference books for those members that way inclined.*

*All the books can be viewed on the NSBKA website, and members can request books via the website or directly from myself at [librarian@nsbka.org](mailto:librarian@nsbka.org)*

*Suggestions from members for books they would like to see in the library are always very welcome, so do let me know if you have any ideas.*

At the meeting Ann encouraged new members to look at the website or email her for a list of books from the library that she would endeavour to get to them appropriately. Suggestions for new books were still welcome.

### **Webmaster report – Guy Preece**

*It has been a rather odd time to maintain and develop the association website nsbka.org, with many of the usual things having to be cancelled, but over the last twelve months I have still enjoyed looking after the website.*

*An additional domain of .org.uk was added to our setup recently, as there had been some confusion with the NSBKA just using the .org for emails.*

*If you have not already done so, I would urge you to register on the website for a username and password; this gives you a personal login so that you can access the NSBKA members' areas which cannot be reached by the public, such as current and back copies of the Beelines newsletters, recorded Zoom presentations and many other items.*

### **Website Features**

- *Latest Bee News – bee-related news in the press and media are outlined with a link to view them online.*
- *Zoom presentations (Members area)*
- *Interactive swarm collectors map*
- *A focal point for information for anyone interested in beekeeping in Shropshire*
- *A source of information for the general public – e.g. swarm collection, Asian Hornet identification/contact*
- *All the NSBKA library book details are in an interactive section of the website so that books details can be viewed, and books requested, reserved and reviewed online.*
- *Events calendar*
- *Beelines the NSBKA newsletter current and back issues (Full access when log on)*
- *Bee related Word puzzles*
- *Pollen colour identification chart*
- *Pollen and Nectar Rich Plants for Bees*
- *The website content is updated regularly.*

Website visits since last time from...

Kazakhstan 202

At the meeting Guy had nothing to add, Alison H pointed out that a resources section of the website would hopefully be updated this winter with previous newsletter articles and recommended online content.

**Beelines Editor report - Joyce Nisbet**

*A regular monthly edition of Beelines has been produced all year. Thanks to many contributors in the past year and to Angie for sending it out. The editors welcome suggestions and articles from members. Please do not be shy. The newsletter is only as interesting as the material submitted!*

Joyce thanked Steph for her help in the past and asked everyone to keep contributing and reading the newsletter. Not forgetting to nominate people to write up Zoom meetings.

**5. Asian Hornet Action Team – Alison Mackenzie.**

Alison McKenzie reported that a few members had done the online training link but in fact any member could do it without commitment. We are limited to a team of 15 and have 5 now. Ali described to new members why we have an AHAT Team.

**6. Swarm Collectors List – Angie Kirk**

At the meeting Angie reported that we have 13 swarm collectors on the list and nearer to spring she will confirm if they wish to continue (and in what area defined by postcode) and put out a call for new Swarm Collectors who had some experience, at least with bees. Angie suggested Brian, as a very active Swarm Collector, could do a short talk on the subject, Brian added that if anyone would like to accompany him on a collection, it was a good way to learn.

**7. Election of Officers**

Before the election began, Alison H stated that all positions were available and urged members to put themselves forward, particularly as some officers were standing down permanently. Unfortunately, due to the nature of Zoom we had to hold votes a little differently and members were not asked to leave the meeting for voting confidentially which was a little awkward and perhaps could be looked at next year if needed.

The following were elected to the Committee:

<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>NOMINEE</b>
Chairman & BBKA Delegate	Alison Hine
Vice Chairman	Peter Rawlinson
Treasurer	Ann Moore
General Secretary	Angie Kirk
Apiary Manager	Sarah Hodnett
Apiary Assistant Manager	Brian Roberts
Education Officer	Alison Hine
Assistant Education Officer	Wilf McSherry

Events Coordinator	Hannah Jones
Assistant Events Coordinator	Helen Trevelyan
Librarian/Publicity	Ann Moore
Membership Secretary	Alison Mackenzie
Newsletter Compiler/Editor (1)	Joyce Nisbet
Newsletter Editor (2)	Marcus Hughes
Webmaster	Guy Preece

**8. Any Other Business**

Alison H Thanked everyone for attending and regretted no cake or catch-up this year. She reminded everyone that if anyone has any problems or Bee related queries they could always contact the committee.

**10. Date of Next Meeting.**

The 2021 AGM will be on 19 October 2021 hopefully at Tilstock Village Hall

23/10/2020

DRAFT

NORTH SHROPSHIRE BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

TREASURER'S REPORT - ACCOUNTS PERIOD 1ST OCTOBER 2019 to 30TH SEPTEMBER 2020

	ACTUAL 2,020 £	BUDGET 2020 £	ACTUAL 2,019 £	BUDGET 2019 £
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>				
Subs - NSBKA	1,225	1,100	1,010	1,010
Subs - BBKA/BDI/Beecraft	(291)		465	-
Honey sales	162	500	607	500
Taster fees (carried fwd to 2021)	160	900	1,420	900
HOT Fees	-	400	300	500
Annual dinner/Other events (net of expenses)	355	-	185	-
Prize money	50	-	110	-
Polo shirts	15	-	80	-
Donations/Interest	19	-	66	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,695</b>	<b>2,900</b>	<b>4,243</b>	<b>2,910</b>
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>				
Admin/Printing & Postage/Library	100	200	159	200
Room Hire	614	600	569	600
Speakers (including expenses)	353	500	316	500
Apiary costs	1,409	1,000	622	1,500
Jars/Labels	-	200	68	150
Ambrosia & Fondant costs	397	400	160	500
Education & Training expenses	178	500	455	500
Flower Show/Honey Show/Competitions	302	250	105	150
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>3,353</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>2,454</b>	<b>4,100</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the period</b>	<b>£(1,658)</b>	<b>(£750)</b>	<b>£1,789</b>	<b>(£1,190)</b>
<b>BANK BALANCES AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER:-</b>				
	<b><u>2020</u></b>	<b><u>2020</u></b>	<b><u>2019</u></b>	<b><u>2019</u></b>
Current Account	4,856	5,416	6,819	3,842
Savings Account	4,496	4,490	4,190	4,190
<b>Total Bank Balances</b>	<b>£9,352</b>	<b>£9,906</b>	<b>£11,009</b>	<b>£8,032</b>