

BRIDGEND & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Charity Registration Number 1159663



Annual Report 2023

Trustees

John Gilbert - Chairman

Ceri John - Secretary

Graham Tierney - Treasurer Membership Secretary

Chris Jones - Apiary Manager

Huw Evans - Association Shop Manager

Dafydd Pett – Website/social media Manager

Jonathan Griffiths - Trustee

Volunteers

Greg Nuttgens - Education

FROM THE CHAIRMAN – ANNUAL REPORT

1st April 2022 – 31 March 23

The weather in the summer of 22 was glorious and hopefully you enjoyed your beekeeping and were presented with a bumper harvest.

We are now at the back end of the pandemic, yes Covid will continue to re-infect us all at times and we all hope our levels of immunity will keep us safe. So, looking back to 2019, the Association had been talking with AWEN Cultural Trust who operate buildings and enterprises for the Local Authority. In respect of Bryngarw Country Park and the B-leaf horticultural project we had some hopes that our path to our Apiary might be improved, and an adjacent classroom might be built with a bee room or at least a bee viewing area. In the end these things didn't happen. However, Chris our Apiary Manager together with some of our members took time in the winter to make significant improvements at our Apiary. We now have new Bee Stands, wider levelled areas to make hive inspections easier and safer and the damaged fence has been replaced / repaired. Surrounded by new 'whips' to thicken the hedge we have hopes it will deter our neighbour's cattle or intruders from breaking in. It has taken time but it has been done at minimal expense and looks very neat and tidy, so thank you Chris and anybody who went along and helped.

Greg our Education Officer still comes to Trustee meetings by invitation but without any voting rights. Not being a Trustee has not diminished his enthusiasm, and once again he has taken the lead on the Beginners course (ably supported by Graham and Jonathon) and has continued to try to get guest speakers to our meetings. I recall that Greg was very quick to book Master Beekeeper Lynfa Davies to present a Microscopy Course on pollens during the afternoon of Sunday 19th June 22 and then in the evening Lynfa presented the Mike Pett Memorial Talk on 'Plants for Bees'. The course had limited space and having invited our neighbouring Associations I am pleased to say all the spaces were filled. The evening talk was thin on the ground and once again the Trustee had to accept that speakers were getting harder to book either because they have already spoken before at Bridgend or because they preferred 'online presentations and a wider audience. Since then, we have asked members to volunteer to help us. Paul rescued the Honey Show in October, and I was very pleased to see the response, particularly the number of entries from new members. Then in March Steve Lintern volunteered presenting his views on Queen Rearing, particularly his focus on introducing virgin Queens into the hive. Thank you Steve, it gave me a lot to think about and I can see it makes a lot of sense to introduce a newly hatch queen into the hive to avoid rejection. You seem to have a well-rehearsed process in place, whereas I have been caught out by a lack of preparation yet again this year.

I am indebted to all our Trustees for sharing the workload to keep the Association going and I believe these individuals like what they are doing and they are in the right position.

We have repeatedly asked members to volunteer and become a Trustee and clearly the nomination process we use year on year doesn't work. As a consequence, we have to go

back to our Constitution and make an amendment. Some 8 years ago the then committee followed advice from the Charities Commission and we introduced a requirement that committee members were forced to retire when they had completed two terms in office and they could not be reappointed for 5 years. The Trustees believe that this provision needs to be deleted. It would mean that a previous Trustee might be prepared to stand again but the old phrase 'don't hold your breath' comes to mind.

Having been a Trustee for over 8 years it is now my turn to retire at this AGM and that leaves the Trustees in post at 6, being the minimum number required by our Constitution. Between publication of this report and the AGM I would love to hear of any expressions of interest from the membership who would like to put themselves forward as a possible Trustee. You don't need to be an expert beekeeper. Life experiences are of great value. And I will happily talk it through with you. Just use the 'contact us' facility on the website, and I am sure the message will get to me very quickly.

John Gilbert

Chair Bridgend Beekeepers

Bridgend and District Beekeepers Association Membership report for 1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023

On 31st March 2023, we had a total of 103 paid up members, this compares with 105 registered with WBKA on the same date in 2022. The comparison with previous years is as follows: -

2017 - 112	2019 - 95	2021 - 110
2018 - 109	2020 - 108	2022 - 105

Approximately 58% of the membership are individuals, 36% Families the remainder are Schools, Corporate and Members with no bees.

The total number of Colonies insured on 31st March 2023 was 649, the same as 2022, which compares with previous years as follows: -

2018 – 640	2019 - 693	2020 – 660	2021 - 651	2022 - 649
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If the pattern follows previous years, the total membership for 2023/2024 should exceed 115 which bucks the trend of falling membership numbers in the years before Covid. The total membership for previous years were: -

2022 - 114	2021 - 123	2020 - 116	2019 - 119	2018 - 125
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On 31st March, there were 44 members from 2022 that had not renewed their membership (27 in 2022)

The changes to the BDI insurance categories and fees, which take effect from 1st January 2024, will affect all members but will have a bigger effect on Family Memberships due to the way family members are classified.

This information has already been included in newsletters and will be circulated again before the end of the year.

Graham Tierney - Membership Secretary

Bridgend and District Beekeepers Association

Registered Charity 1159663

Accounts for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 prepared using the Receipts and Payments method.

Bank Accounts

Cash at 31 st March 2023	- Current Account	498.14	
	Deposit Account	8,464.81	
	PayPal	<u>274.92</u>	9,237.87
Cash at 31 st March 2022	- Current Account	260.05	
	Deposit Account	11,130.07	
	PayPal	<u>0.00</u>	<u>11,390.12</u>
Deficit for the year ending 31 st March 2022			£2,252.25

The deficit for the year ending 31st March 2022 was £332.22

Income was from membership fees and shop sales, there were no charitable donations in the year.

A stock check was carried out in January to establish the value in the association "Shop" and the apiary store, the value of stock is as follows: -

"Shop" stock	£ 7,452.04
Apiary store	<u>£ 2,836.66</u>
	£10,288.70
Additional stock purchased between January and 31 st March 2023	<u>4,782.92</u>
Stock Value on 31 st March 2023	<u>£ 15,071.62</u>

The stock value was more than the value declared to our insurers; we have therefore increased the value of cover as a result.

The total value of Stock (£15,071.62) and cash (£9,237.87) at 31st March 2023 was £24,309.49, the value in 2022 was £22,629.38

The accounts have been audited; a copy of the Auditors report is attached.

Graham Tierney – Hon Treasurer

BRIDGEND BEE KEEPERS

EXAMINATION OF ACCOUNTS 1st APRIL 2022 - 31st March 2023

On examination of the association's accounts (01.04.22 – 31.03.23), these were found to have been meticulously kept, following standard accounting procedures. The association uses bank current & deposit accounts with money transfers made by cheque, Paypal and BACS, where all transactions had been accurately recorded and monitored.

There are no risk areas to be noted.



Helen Embling ACIB
Ty Coch
The Court
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CF35 5EH

24th April 2023

The Training Apiary Report 01.04.22 – 31.03.23

Land maintenance of the site has continued, with the hedge line being trimmed and maintained at a manageable height with new whips added to strengthen the hedge.

The apiary's stock proof fencing had been trampled by livestock and the new hive stands had been knocked off at an angle, all the hives were also knocked off at an angle but stayed on their stands. The stock proof fencing has been repaired and strengthened; new posts have been put in with new barbed wire to top fencing. There has been evidence of cattle moving around down the bottom part of apiary but no incursions to the apiary site.

Along the bottom and left-hand side of the stockproof fencing a new native hedge has been planted, this was a grant which I applied for through Llais Y Goedwig and the Woodland Trust.

I have introduced a top bar and a warre hive into the site, at present they are not occupied as this will be an ongoing project this year, it is mainly to show members/newcomers that there are different types of hive.

With the coming of lock down restrictions coming to an end the apiary was prepped for a possible return of beginners and members. The hives had been inspected over this period and EFB was detected on the 10th July 2022 and confirmed by SBI on the 15th July 2022 and all procedures carried out by SBI's, so the apiary was put on standstill for six weeks. Hives were inspected during this standstill period and on the 26th August 2022 we were given the all clear. But now we have lost the time for the apiary to be open.

Committee purchased two new Nuc's to replace those lost through EFB, they were brought on and placed into hives.

Inspections were carried out throughout spring/summer/autumn/winter/spring 2022/2023 and the full supers of capped honey from the 2022 season were removed from the hives and passed on for extraction where some were put into containers and some jarred.

Swarm Management report 01.04.22-31.03.23

For year 2021, we had approximately 260 calls regarding bees. We collected approximately 63 swarms and provided advice and guidance for the rest.

Huw Evans - Shop and Swarm manager

Bridgend Beekeepers Association Social Media & Website Report – 2023

Social Media

Our association recognises the significance of social media in reaching a broader audience and fostering community engagement. We have shared informative posts, captivating visuals, and important updates about our activities. By utilising social media platforms, we have expanded our reach and attracted new members, while also encouraging dialogue and interaction among our existing community. Our social media channels have had a large increase in engagement both throughout public page and our members only group.

Within our members only Facebook group, we currently have 96 members. We have imposed an approval only system for members and posts which will protect the page from unrelated and spam posts. The Bridgend Beekeepers Facebook group allows members to ask questions, sell beekeeping items and be notified of any upcoming events.

Within our Public Facebook page, we have 352 Followers. Our Facebook page has reached 12,500 people within the last 12 months. This has been particularly helpful advising members of the public about our swarm services and raising awareness for beekeeping and sustainable beekeeping practices for already existing beekeepers.

We continue to encourage members to join the strong community of likeminded members on our Facebook group @Bridgend & District Beekeepers Association – Members Only, as well as like our public Facebook page.

BBKA Website

Over the past year, we have focused on enhancing the functionality and user experience of the newly revamped Bridgend Beekeepers Association website. We revamped the design to make it more visually appealing and user-friendly, ensuring that visitors can easily navigate and access the information they need. We have also incorporated new features such as a document resource library, Online Loan Kit Form, FAQ, and a range of new features to enhance the user experience. Regular updates have been made to ensure the website remains a valuable resource for beekeepers and a hub for association-related activities.

Dafydd Pett – Website and Social Media Manager

Education Officer's report, 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Beginner's course 2023

It was decided to continue with presenting the theory part of the course online, with sessions being held via Microsoft Teams on Thursday evenings, followed by practical sessions in the Apiary on the following Sunday. The theory sessions were presented by myself, Graham Tierny, Jonathan Griffiths and John Mosedale, and the practical sessions by myself, Graham and Jonathan, with assistance from Apiary Manager Chris Jones.

20 people signed up for the course, of whom less than half attended either the theory or practical sessions.

This may reflect the continuing anxiety about Covid. This year's (2023) Beginners' Course has had a much higher attendance rate.

Monthly talks

With the lifting of Covid restrictions, we were able to resume monthly meeting with visiting speakers and Association members, listed below:

11th April, Giacomo Ciriello, Bees for Development, Natural Beekeeping

19th June, Lynfa Davies, Mike Pett Memorial Lecture, afternoon microscopy session and evening talk on Plants for Bees.

12th Sept, talk by myself and other members about preparing hives for winter.

14th Nov, Lynne Ingram, Honey and adulteration.

13th Feb 2023 Clare Densley and Martin Hann, Buckfast bees.

13th March 2023 Steve Lintern (BDKA member) , simple queen rearing

These talks were generally not well attended, numbers varying from 10 to 20.

Bee calls

During the year, I dealt with numerous email queries from the public, through our website and through the Association's Facebook page, about bees. These were usually about bumblebees nesting in nest boxes and roofs, and showed how widespread Tree Bumblebees now are. There were also many queries about honeybees in roofs, walls, and chimneys.