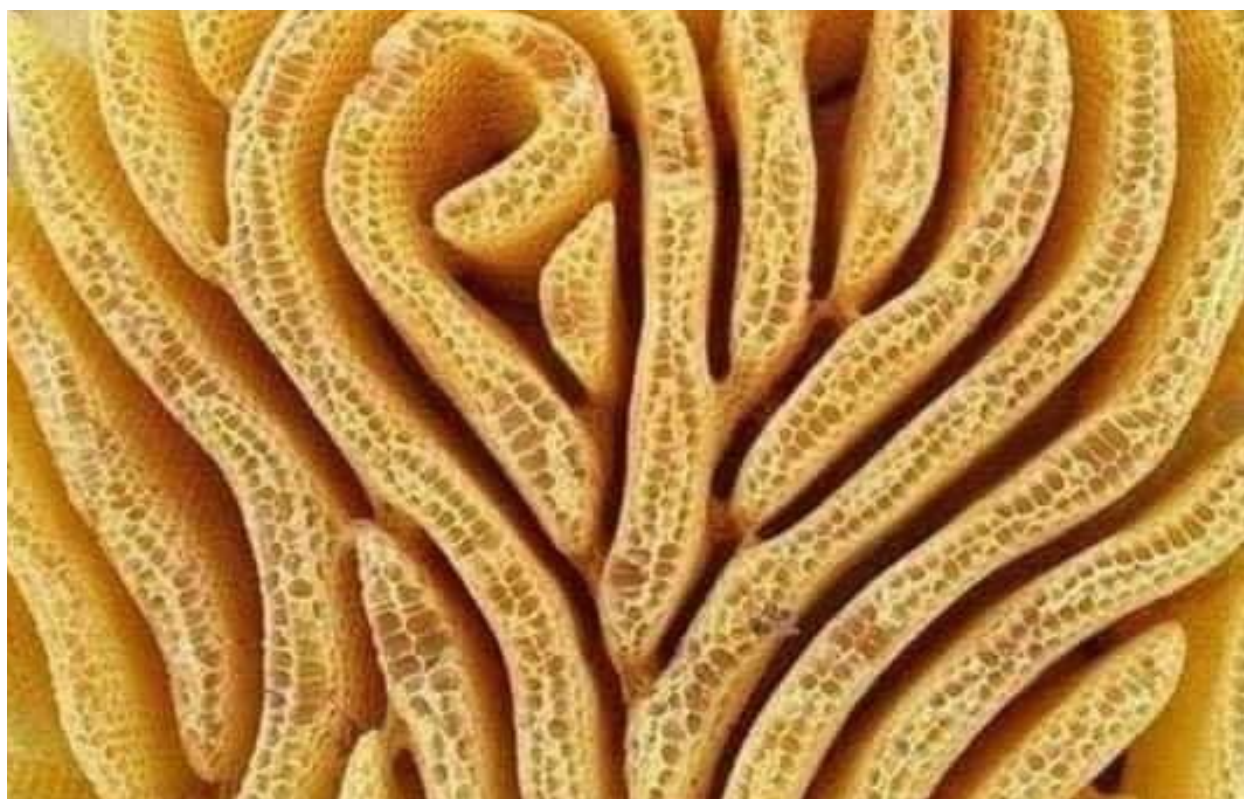


BRIDGEND & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Charity Registration Number 1159663



BRIDGEND
BEEKEEPERS
GWENYNWYR PEN-Y-BONT



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

TRUSTEES:

Clive Farrant - Chairman (to 31.12.19)
John Gilbert - Chairman (from 01.01.20)
Shirley Myall - Secretary
Graham Tierney - Treasurer
Huw Evans - Shop Manager
Greg Nuttgens - Education Officer
Paul Whatley - Social Media Manager
Chrissie Langmaid
Richard Pett

Dafydd Pett (Youth Ambassador - no Trustee responsibility)

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It has certainly been a turbulent period since our last AGM in July 2019, through to September 2020. The election in December resolved the stalled 'Brexit withdrawal negotiations' but even this was completely overshadowed three months later by the spread of the Covid virus and a country-wide lockdown. Undoubtedly each of us had and do have continuing concerns for their personal well-being and the health of their families and friends, but beyond that, each individual and family was impacted very differently. Some found themselves secure with time on their hand, others justifiably feared for their financial security or found themselves busier than ever being classified by the term 'an essential worker'.

Your Committee in recognising the above, implemented the immediate actions as follows:

- The 2020 Beginners Course was cancelled with an expectation that it might be run a few months later when the summer sun and dry weather destroyed the virus.
- The Association shop was closed.
- Committee meetings were cancelled with essential business being conducted by email.

With the closure of Bryngarw Park:

- Permissions were obtained so that our two Apiary Managers could access the Association Apiary to conduct routine inspections.
- Our plans to improve access to the Apiary site and our joint working with AWEN as detailed in the Chairman's 2019 Report were delayed or put on hold depending on the constraints applied by our partners.

Subsequent actions:

- The Association shop was reopened on July 20.
- The formal 2020 AGM has been cancelled.

2020 AGM

By way of explanation, initially your Committee sought simply to delay the scheduling of the meeting from 12 months from the preceding AGM into a window of an additional three months as allowed by our Constitution, which meant we could have delayed into September. In these unprecedented times and in accordance with guidance provided by the Charities Commission, the committee formally cancelled the 2020 AGM on the 7 September 2020. This means we are still obliged to file our report with the Commission and in 2021 the reports for both 2020 and 2021 will be presented to members. A copy of my report along with the Treasurer's report is herewith provided to members.

FINANCIAL

I am pleased to confirm that your Association is financially stable thanks to our healthy reserves. As a Committee we are mindful that the temporary closure of the shop and the ultimate cancellation of the 2020 Beginners Course has impacted our revenue streams.

THE SHOP & APIARY

The shop continues to be a valuable asset for the Association and the Membership and I ask you all to support Huw and remind you that when collecting items to take along a copy of your web order and pre-payment and to maintain social distancing on site.

I thank John Rees & Chris Jones who share responsibilities as Apiary Managers providing the Trustees with a record of their regular inspections. We as a committee appreciate all their efforts and that diligence was key in identifying a further outbreak of EFB at the site. The subsequent inspection by the 'Bee Inspector' confirmed that two hives were infected and both were destroyed, the remaining hives were subjected to a shook swarm and given new comb, and restrictions were lifted in mid-June.

The reduced number of hives has been retained to help facilitate some of the improvements being considered at the Apiary as we will need to move them to allow works to commence. In addition, the temper of the bees is currently poor and this will need to be addressed for next season when we hope that the Beginners Course can operate once again.

TRUSTEES

There comes a time when Trustees choose to resign or are forced to retire because they have completed their tenure in office as defined by the Constitution. More often than not the two coincide and we now say goodbye to Clive who had been our Chairman for at least five and half years and goodbye to Shirley our Secretary who was in post for a similar period. Both were on the management committee before we became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and were both in the forefront of leading the new team in 2015. I thank them both, their individual contribution and attention to detail ensured that the new Trustee structure was implemented and operating smoothly. I hope we can proceed in a similar manner.

I took over as Chair in January and Clive remained on the Board continuing to liaise with AWEN to discuss our development plans. I am pleased to advise the members that Gislaine Hopkins has agreed to join the Board as our new Secretary. The Constitution provides for the Trustees to appoint in such a manner and it is our practice to ask the membership to endorse such appointments at the next AGM. Finally, a 'thank you' to all our other Trustees (plus Dafydd) they can be relied upon to play their individual parts and bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the team.

JOHN GILBERT - CHAIRMAN

THE ASSOCIATION'S EDUCATION PROGRAMME

During the autumn and winter 2019-20, a varied programme of talks and events was on offer to members, and these were generally well attended. Highlights were Prof Robert Pickard's entertaining talk on 'Queens', and Roger Patterson's talk and demonstration at the apiary.

The Honey Show was well attended, and at the Annual General Meeting a 'Beekeepers Question Time' was held with considerable success.

Two members took and passed the WBKA Basic Assessment. An inmate of Parc Prison also passed the Assessment, based on the prison apiary set up by the Association, and overseen by one of our members, Neil Jones.

The Beginners' Course was fully booked, with 20 participants of varied ages and backgrounds attending. As in previous years, relatively few participants appear to have taken up beekeeping, but we do have a small number of very keen new beekeepers as a result of the course.

Thanks are due to Dan and Beth and the staff at Bryngarw for their help in the use of the Classroom, at no cost to the Association. Thanks are also due to the Tutors who delivered the course, Graham Tierney, Richard Pett and Ellen Davies.

The 2020 Beginner's Course was again fully booked, with 20 participants. Sadly, as a result of the Covid 19 outbreak, we have had to postpone this year's course, and it seems unlikely at present that it can go ahead this year. It may be possible later in the year, depending on the progress of the outbreak, to have an introductory session at the apiary for those who enrolled on the course.

GREG NUTTGENS

EDUCATION OFFICER

THE ASSOCIATION'S TRAINING APIARY

Following the end of the Beginner's course in mid May 2019, 'open' apiary sessions continued fortnightly through the summer, with small numbers attending. The apiary hives produced a good crop of honey, mainly from Himalayan Balsam. Eight supers were eventually taken off and extracted.

In May 2019 the apiary was checked by the Seasonal Bee Inspector, mainly for EFB, and no disease was found.

At the peak in mid summer, there were eight active hives. However, one hive became very aggressive, and as such a hive is not acceptable in a teaching apiary, it was decided to cull this colony. This was done with the 'soapy water' method.

There was an outbreak of Chronic Bee paralysis Virus, with one hive in particular being badly affected, and this colony died out. The CPBV appeared to die out in the other hives later in the summer.

Varroa counts were low throughout the year. In September, the hives were treated variously with MAQS strips, Apiguard, and Oxalic Acid vapourisation.

Six hives were taken into the winter, and all appear to have survived into spring 2020.

A major change in the management of the Apiary occurred in June 2019, when John Rees and Chris Jones were appointed as Apiary Managers. Since then they have improved the apiary by clearing vegetation and 'laying' the surrounding hedge. They had planned on landscaping and re-organising the apiary to make access easier, but the very wet winter meant that they have had to postpone this work.

In February 2020, it became apparent that the Covid 19 outbreak would have a major affect on our activities, and we have cancelled the Beginners' Course and all apiary meetings. John and Chris have continued to monitor the hives, and will continue to do so for as long as is necessary.

GREG NUTTGENS



SWARMS REGISTER

Each year the Association offers a free swarm collection service to the general public and also gives advice to people who are finding that bees are a nuisance but they are not sure of the type of bee they have.

During the year in excess of 350 calls or emails from the public were dealt with resulting in members collecting swarms from 15% of the calls.

As usually happens, around 70% of callers were given advice about bumble bees and 15% were given advice on wasps.

HUW EVANS

SOCIAL MEDIA

We have two presences on Facebook - a **Group** and a **Page**

Our **Group** can only be accessed by paid up members of the Association web address <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BridgendBeeKeepers/>

Those wishing to join are vetted to ensure they are members.

An exercise was carried out during early spring to advise and remove non-members, inviting them to follow our Page instead

The **Group** has 50 members and is a useful tool for Association Members to exchange information. We have approximately 170 members of the association at present, so less than a third of members are using it.

Our **Page** is a public free access platform for public discussion and promotion of BeeKeeping in general web address <https://www.facebook.com/BridgendBeekeepers/>

There is also easy access via Google etc. **@BridgendBeekeepers.**

We currently have 179 followers, several from abroad, with regular submissions, enquiries and posts of information to share.

We would encourage more to use our Facebook presence as most of us are now familiar with how it works. This also applies to use of the Association website which we are planning to update with the assistance of John Rayner, who volunteered to help with the website and keep it up to date

PAUL WHATLEY - SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

MEMBERSHIP

At the end of March 2020, we had a total of 108 paid up members, this compares with 95 registered with the WBKA on the same date in 2019.

The breakdown of membership, as at 31 March, into categories is as follows:

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	2020	2019	2018	2017
INDIVIDUAL	60	38	60	64
FAMILIES	27	23	21	23
JUNIOR	0	0	0	1
SUPPORTER	2	1	2	2
CORPORATE	2	1	2	2
SCHOOL	1	1	1	1
NEW MEMBERS	1	11	2	3
BEGINNERS	15	20	21	16
TOTAL TO 31 MARCH	108	95	109	112
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP FOR THE YEAR		116	119	125

With a membership at 31 March of 108 and, if the pattern follows previous years, the total membership for 2020/2021 should be 118. However, in previous years additional members have joined after March to take advantage of our beneficial 'shop' prices. The number of additional members this year will depend on length of the Covid-19 'lockdown' and on how long Bryngarw Country Park is shut, preventing access to our store.

The totals for Beginners is not a direct comparison as we have capped the number of people on the course to 20. For 2020 the total includes 5 Family memberships, which we count as two people and 10 individuals.

As at 31 March, 23 members from last year have not renewed of which six were Beginners in 2019.

GRAHAM TIERNEY
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY