

Dear Friends and Follow Beekeepers

I hope you have all had a good season with good crops of honey, and that your bees are now settled down for the winter with fondant on and syrup off, and mouse guards on.

We ran a Beginners course at the beginning of the year and had a good attendance. Several of the beginners went on to get their own hives subsequently. The next beginners' course will be starting in February this year with six evenings of talks and then six x weekly practical sessions. We held our summer social BBQ at the Litten Nature reserve in July which was well attended, and a good time was had by all. The AGM and Christmas social was held on Saturday 10th December at the Greenford Community Centre and was well attended with members and their partners. Always people are very generous and there was way too much food – but there were no complaints.

The National Honey Show was as always, a great success and well attended by our members. We did moderately well for prizes – although not well enough to knock Harrow off their perch! One of our members, Dale Gibson managed to scoop seven prizes and the John Wilson novice cup went to Dinesh Bharkhada. I noticed that this was also won by Bill Turnbull and John Chapple many years ago.

Following the recent theft of hives from the apiary we have been looking into our security – although as an association we are responsible for the building and land, but the hives are the responsibility of the individual beekeepers. We have accepted a heavy lock from the Council who are also looking into strengthening the surrounding fences. The new lock and key has been in use from the middle of December. Only the Council, members with hives at the apiary and store cashiers have keys so a limited number. We are also considering security cameras and will make a decision on that shortly.

We looked into the costing of ready-made frames, but there was not enough enthusiasm from our own members, so we contacted Pinner association and are considering joining their order. One of our problems is that we have no storage space.

The passings of Bill Turnbull, a Middlesex man and Brian Sherriff were sad events. Bill will always be remembered for his NHS quizzes, books, and general support for bees. I treasure a lovely photograph of Brian on a bee holiday to Oman, where he was standing next to an Osmanian who was wearing one of his suits and beaming broadly. Pat Morgan too was a great loss – we were at medical school together, so we went back a long way.

Our committee members remain the same with myself as Chair, Kathy Binesh as secretary, Llyr Jones in charge of finance, Angela Bowen as membership secretary, Bruce Marquart as Education lead (but stepping down this year, John Chapple as apiary manager, Johan Ditmar as our IT expert and Catherine Grey and Stan Miller for general support. We made no new appointments. Our membership list is fairly static too with about 90 members.

Clare Vernon
Chair EDBKA