

Harrow BKA Report to the Federation of Middlesex Beekeepers Association 2022

- 2022 was less dominated by Covid-19, but the process of getting back to normal continues to proceed slowly, due to our membership age profile being skewed towards the more vulnerable higher age groups. Older people are more hesitant about freely mixing in larger groups. Overall life within a beekeeping Association has not yet resumed normality.
- Outdoor beekeeping activities continued as normal, but as mentioned above, 2022 was again a difficult year for some Association activities, as many members show hesitancy about meeting face to face indoors.
- 2022 turned out to be a pretty good year for the nectar flow for most members and hence the availability of honey for sales in Southern England improved.
- UK weather, especially in the south, was changeable with some longer dry periods and some localised outlying districts didn't see a good nectar flow consistently throughout the season.
- Committee meetings reverted to normal monthly frequency using Zoom and mix of some face to face outdoors in the warmer months. We ran our trading shop on the tried and tested socially distanced click and collect basis. Covid compliant loan equipment procedures also continued. Our Swarm Collection and Advice service had another good year, but swarm collections were much lower than last year's bumper year. We collected twenty-two swarms, and these were passed onto members.
- A mix of outdoor face to face sessions and online content was used for our education sessions. Initially every Sunday and thereafter every two weeks and they continue to be remarkably successful. We held a successful Beginners Course, which was held online with some hands-on at the Apiary (outdoors). We also resumed our Basic beekeeping assessment education sessions, although demand to sit the actual exam was low.
- We successfully held our 2022 Honey and Beekeeping Show in conjunction with Harrow in LEAF's Annual Show at Headstone Manor on August bank holiday Monday. Beekeeping Show entries improved over the previous Covid year, and the numbers of the public who attended the event were very good. The public once again demonstrated a pent-up demand to get out and see things.
- Our membership numbers remained about the same year on year around 130 members. Each year some members are slow at renewing, but during the last few years numbers have remained between 120 to 140. There is a regular small number moving out of the area each year, usually to a more rural location.
- In July, our association hive inspectors, with help from Tom Bickerdike (our seasonal Bee-Inspector) conducted an inspection of all colonies on HBKA sites in the borough and found our hives to be in good condition again with no foul brood. We were again complimented on the good state of our hives.
- A project has been completed to replace a large old wooden shed at Hatch End with a more secure new galvanised steel shed, the project was mainly funded by a generous donation in memory of Judy Earl, past member, Trustee and Committee member.
- The November AGM was held by Zoom and it ran smoothly, but again this left a few committee posts unfilled, although for the first time in years we did manage to fill the committee secretary post. Our thanks go to all those members who have given their time to ensure that HBKA continues to thrive, despite the current challenging times.

Rod Parker

HBKA Chair

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