

THE WELSH BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION CYMDEITHAS GWENYNWYR CYMRU

Annual Report

1st January 2016 to 31st December 2016

Trustees:

Chair	Jennifer Shaw (elected AGM 2014)
Vice Chair	Andrew Ryan (resigned AGM 2016)) – Trustee since AGM March 2014
Treasurer	Graham Wheeler (elected SGM 7.11.15) – Trustee since AGM March 2014
General Secretary	Vacant
David John Bowles	(elected AGM 2014)
Christopher Clarke	(elected AGM 2016))
Lesley Williams	(elected AGM 2016))
Ian Hubbuck	(co-opted MM 03.08.16)

Officers:

President	Tony Shaw (elected AGM 2016)
Vice-presidents	Fred Eckton
Membership Secretary	Ian Hubbuck
Minutes Secretary	Currently vacant
Convention Secretary	Jill Wheeler (appointed 11.09.15)
Exam Secretary	Lynfa Davies (retiring at AGM 2017)
Website Manager	Grant Williams
Editor	Grant Williams (appointed 06.02.15)
Sub-editor	Elin Meek (appointed 7.12.15)
Technical Officer	Wally Shaw
Insurance Officer	John Bowles
Health & Safety Officer	John Pilgrim (appointed 2016)
Publicity & Press Officer	Angharad Westmore (appointed 2016)
WBKA Archive	Ian Hubbuck (2016)
WBKA COLOSS officer	Ian Hubbuck (2015)

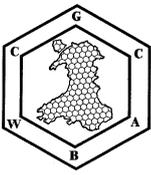
All trustees and WBKA officers give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits. The WBKA is indebted to these volunteers for their continued goodwill and efforts on behalf of the Association.

The Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Our Aims & Objectives:

The encouragement, improvement and advancement of beekeeping throughout Wales by:

- developing co-operation amongst all beekeepers throughout Wales and interchanging ideas and experiences,
- improving the standard of beekeeping by:
 - i. publication of literature,
 - ii. providing and supporting the provision of apicultural educational aids and materials,
 - iii. encouraging the training and qualification of beekeepers,
- arranging for national examinations at various levels,
- encouraging community participation in observing and learning about bees in safety, and developing an appreciation of the value of bees in the environment.



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Administration

A list of meetings during the year can be found at the end of this report.

The Trustees met with the WBKA Council three times (March, June and November) to report on the actions of the Management Team and to seek guidance from the membership. At each of these meetings a minimum of 60% (11) of the WBKA Member Associations were represented and overall 84% (16) Associations attended at least one meeting. Minutes of all Management Team meetings have been circulated via Association Secretaries. Council meetings are scheduled for March 4th, June 24th and November 4th in 2017. The Management Team will meet at least four times in 2017 the first meeting being on January 28th. The venue and date for Management Team meetings reflects the availability and home addresses of the Trustees to ensure maximum attendance and minimum travelling expenses are incurred.

Non Trustee officers of the WBKA have been invited to attend Management Team meetings during 2016 to assist the work of the trustees. The Member Associations were invited to send observers to the October Management Team meetings to understand how the day to day business of the WBKA is conducted. Four of the associations sent representatives; Brecon and Radnor, Carmarthen, Ceredigion and Teifside.

The lack of volunteers to take on roles, especially trustee ones, with the WBKA led to the Management Team asking the Member Associations to discuss and report what they wanted to receive from being part of the WBKA. The November Council meeting drew up a list of the requirement which has been circulated and will form the basis of a consultation paper to be circulated early in 2017.

Work continues to add to and update the policies of the WBKA, all of which are available on the WBKA website. In particular advice is now in place for including children in Association activities and there is a Code of Conduct for Trustees. Once again we are indebted to the services of the translators who have assisted the Management Team to provide bilingual documents for beekeepers in Wales.

We are now in a position where the sudden loss of the treasurer can be accommodated without undue impact on the Management Team's ability to run the day to day business of the WBKA. Work continues to put in place similar provisions for the other vital roles.

Insurance: The WBKA Insurance cover is based on a number of conditions including the need for capitation to be paid on time. Payment of capitation is due from Associations on the 1st of January each year but an allowance is made providing that all monies due are received by the 31st March in that year. Member Associations are reminded of the need to make payment punctually. A separate report from the Insurance Officer can be found later in this document.

Finance Reserves: The Reserve policy states that the Charity (WBKA) shall maintain a reserve of £10,000-£13,000. This reserve is required by Charity Law to cover operational and contractual expenses should the need arise. This policy is monitored and updated annually.

Monies held on the HSBC current account are used to not only cover the running costs of the Association but to fund various projects such as the running of courses and the dissemination of information, by various means, such as the website, publications and booklets.

A detailed financial report accompanies this document



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Governance: During 2016 several factors have hindered the Management Team in their running of the day to day business of the WBKA and ultimately curtailed their activities. The inability of the 2016 AGM to appoint either a General Secretary or Vice Chairperson and the failure to recruit a full compliment of Trustees has increased the workload of several Officers in ensuring that essential tasks are covered. The Trustees are indebted to the Membership Secretary, Ian Hubbuck who has facilitated the circulation of information from the Management Team to the Member Associations throughout the year and for agreeing to be co-opted as a Trustee during the year. At the 2017 AGM two of the retiring Trustees will not be seeking re-election, Andy Ryan and Jenny Shaw. Both will have completed a 3 year appointment and we thank them for their endeavours on behalf of the WBKA.

Several non-trustee officers have been recruited during 2016. We welcome Angharad Westmore as our Press and Publicity Officer and the administrator of the WBKA Facebook and Twitter accounts. John Pilgrim as our Health and Safety Officer and Ian Hubbuck to the role of Archivist. Despite this success, the role of Minute Secretary remains vacant. At the AGM Lynfa Davies will be standing down as Exam Secretary after three years in the role. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Lynfa for all the work that she has undertaken on behalf of the WBKA. It is good to report that replacements have been found to take over the Exam Secretary role from Lynfa.

Membership: The WBKA has nineteen Member Associations who represent 1,762 Indirect Members. As part of the annual capitation fee levied on each Member Association the Indirect members benefit by receiving four editions of the 'Welsh Beekeeper' and third party Public and Product Liability Insurance. There are currently twenty five Individual and eight Honorary Members of the Welsh Beekeepers' Association. A detailed breakdown of membership accompanies this report

Website: Following consultation with the WBKA Council in November a review of the website will be made in 2017 to incorporate the views expressed by the member associations.

Welsh Beekeeper Magazine: The editorial committee was re-structured in 2016 and meets to provide support for the editor and also acts as an editing team for each edition of the magazine. A contract with the printer S&G was negotiated to include date protection procedures to ensure that beekeepers contact details were handled securely and only used for distribution of the magazine.

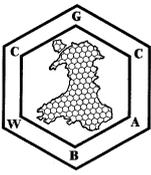
Publications: The Welsh Government booklet 'There are queen cells in my hive – what should I do?' was revised by the WBKA Technical Officer, Wally Shaw and distributed to all members of the WBKA with the Spring 2016 Welsh Beekeeper. Additional copies are available to Member Associations at Council meetings.

A number of leaflets aimed at the general public were produced and made available to the Associations via the WBKA website. The WBKA Council were asked to advise on future leaflets that should be produced.

Logo: A competition was organised in early 2016 to design a logo for the WBKA. The WBKA Council voted in March to suspend the competition and not to appoint a winner. In November the Council voted not to change the WBKA Logo.

75th Anniversary: The WBKA was formed in 1943 and 2018 will be the 75th anniversary of that founding. The holding of a 'Summer School' in 2018 is being explored and when available a detailed proposal will be put to the WBKA Council.

Winter Losses: Seventy six (76) beekeepers were randomly selected and encouraged to take part in the European Colony Loss Survey (COLOSS) for the winter of 2015/16. Fifty three percent (53%) of



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those selected submitted details of their colony losses. The preliminary result from COLOSS record Wales, along with Scotland and Ireland, as having higher than average losses, when compared to other European countries, for the winter of 2015/16. Beekeepers in England do not submit winter loss information to COLOSS as the BBKA organise their own survey each year. We are indebted to Ian Hubbuck for organising the WBKA survey.

Sponsorship: WBKA provided sponsorship to the Midlands and South West Counties Convention (MSWCC) which was organised in 2016 by Swansea and District Beekeepers' Society being held in October on the Gower Peninsular.

The BBKA will be hosting the 2017 International Young Beekeeper meeting at Marlborough in July. The WBKA were invited to enter a team but despite several appeals for entrants none were forthcoming. The entry date has now passed.

Archive: Work continues in gathering together historical WBKA documents to construct an archive after all the WBKA material stored at the Wales National Library was destroyed by fire. We are indebted to Ian Hubbuck for his endeavours to source and store these historical documents. We hope that anyone with relevant documents dating from before 2005 that Ian has not already sourced, will consider making them available to be copied.

The Trustees have worked with several external agencies during 2016 to ensure that Welsh beekeepers are kept fully informed and supported at a Wales, UK and European level. A list of the external meeting attended by the WBKA is given below.

Bee Health Advisory Forum (UK): Details are included in Technical Officer's report below.

Wales Pollinators Taskforce: In September 2016 the Welsh Government launched a scheme aimed to promote Wales as the first 'Bee Friendly' country. Through the Pollinators Taskforce the WBKA has participated in the design and launch of this scheme. Information about the 'Bee Friendly' scheme and how beekeepers can get involved has been circulated to all the member associations and a link can be found on the WBKA website. It is hoped that all the associations and their members will support this scheme by encouraging organisations, groups, schools, etc., not normally associated with insect pollinators, to become recognised as 'Bee Friendly'.

CONBA: The Beekeeping Associations of Wales, England, Scotland and Ireland as well as the Bee Farmers Association jointly form CONBA which supports the interests of all beekeepers and beekeeping in the UK.

NDB: The National Diploma in Beekeeping is the highest formal academic beekeeping qualification available in the UK. As well as awarding the Diploma the NDB also run short courses on specific subjects that are of interest to some of our members. The WBKA is working to encourages the NDB to run short courses in Wales.

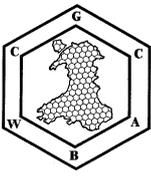
Internal WBKA Meetings 2016:

25th January – Management Team – Trustees and other Officers (Dolgellau)

12th February – Editorial meeting (Dolgellau)

5th March – AGM, Council meeting and Event Committee meeting – (Newbridge-on-Wye)

11th May – Management Team – Trustees and other Officers (Dolgellau)



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25th June – Council and Events Committee meetings– (Llandrindod Wells)

12th July – Meeting with Editor re Welsh Beekeeper (Dolgellau)

3rd August – Management Team – Trustees and other Officers (Dolgellau)

22nd October – Management Team – Trustees, other Officers, Association representatives (New Inn, Newbridge on Wye)

5th November - Council and Events Committee meetings (Llanbister)

WBKA representation at External Meetings 2016:

Jenny Shaw (J.S.), John Bowles (J.B.), Leslie Williams (L.W.), Wally Shaw (W.S.), Trisha Marlow (T.M.),

1st March – Veterinary Medicines Directorate - New Haw, Surrey (J.B.)

16th March –Bee Health Advisory Forum: London (W.S. and J.B.)

6th April – CONBA: Harper Adams (JS and JB)

1st June – RCVS (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) Stakeholders Meeting and Dinner: Cardiff (J.B.)

17th June – Wales Pollinator Taskforce: Newtown (J.S.)

12th July – Plas Pilipala official opening: Carmarthen (L.W.)

7th September – Wales Biodiversity Partnership Conference and launch of 'Bee friendly': Bangor (J.S.)

26th October – CONBA: Esher, Surrey (J.S. & W.S.)

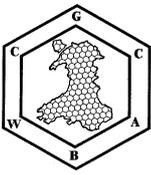
28th October – NDB: Esher, Surrey (T.M)

8th December - Bee Health Advisory Forum: London (J.B. and W.S.)

REPORTS

Learning and Development Committee:

1. The Learning and Development Committee have not met face to face during 2016. The work has been carried out using emails.
2. During 2016 a revised booklet (There are Queen Cell in my Hive) has been written by Wally Shaw, printed and distributed to all members, who receive the Welsh Beekeeper magazine by post. The booklet has also been put on the WBKA website. This booklet was originally produced by the Welsh Government, but stocks were exhausted and WG were unwilling to fund a reprint.
3. Four leaflets have been produced for distribution at shows that WBKA attends. These leaflets have also been put on the WBKA website for BKAs to use.
4. The following are in hand for production during 2017:-
 - a. WBKA flyer – “advertising” the role of WBKA and its advantages.



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- b. A booklet "Harvesting Honey", written by Wally Shaw, is currently in draft form, and it is hoped to distribute it with the Spring edition of Welsh Beekeeper.
- c. WBKA have run out of stock of the Honey Bee Disease Cards. The production of new bilingual cards with some additional information is in hand. These will be distributed to all members when available.

Examination and Assessment

2016 Annual Report – Examination Secretary's report

Basic Assessments

The WBKA continued to promote and offer Basic Assessments to members during 2016 with 54 applications received. Of these, 45 were completed with the remainder deferring until 2017. The following list shows the number of applicants from each association.

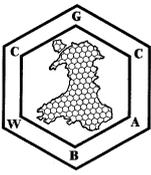
South Clwyd	1
Lampeter	1
East Carmarthenshire	1
Brecon and Radnor	6
Swansea	5
Flint and District	7
Cardiff	6
Conwy	6
Teifiside	6
Pembrokeshire	13
Bridgend	2

In 2016, with permission from BBKA, we adopted their Basic assessment. They have eight versions of the assessment with one being chosen at random for each candidate. This has allowed us to speed up the assessment as not all aspects of the syllabus are covered in each candidate's assessment but the candidate does need to fully prepare. The other difference is that the assessment is split into 4 sections; Manipulation and equipment, natural history and beekeeping, swarming and disease. The candidate needs to score at least 50% in each section in order to pass which means they cannot rely on being stronger in some sections to carry them through weaker sections. The following information shows the proportion of people achieving passes in the following bands;

GRADE	No of candidates
Below 50% (Fail)	1
50-60%	0
61- 80%	32
81-100%	12

These pass rates illustrate that candidates are very well prepared and from what I have seen as I have visited associations this is due to the efforts from the Association Training Officers. The majority of assessments were carried out in apiary associations allowing the assessors to examine more than one candidate at each session. This is the most efficient way to organise Basic Assessments and the WBKA is grateful to the Association Apiary Managers and Training Officers for their help in arranging these assessment days.

Thank you also to all of the assessors who make themselves available to assess candidates during what is a very busy beekeeping period.



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Modules

In March 2015 the WBKA switched to utilise the services of the BBKA for the provision of modules and higher practical examinations. This requires each candidate to pay an annual exam membership fee to the BBKA which the WBKA covered during 2015 and 2016. The WBKA Council agreed to continue paying this fee for 2017 at their Council meeting in November 2016. There were 11 candidates requiring this membership for 2016 at a cost of £9.00 per candidate. The following information shows the number of modules and higher practical exams sat during March 2016 (the Advanced Husbandry was taken during the summer).

Exam	Number of candidates	Number of passes
Module 1	4	1 (1 deferred)
Module 2	1	1
Module 3	1	0
Module 5	1	0
Module 6	1	0
Module 8		
Advanced Husbandry	1	1

This is a disappointingly low result and highlights the need for good preparation prior to undertaking these assessments. I hope that future results will improve and hopefully associations will build on the success they are having with the Basic assessments.

On a more positive note, Stephen Davies from Swansea, in successfully completing his Advanced Husbandry Assessment, gained his Master Beekeeper certificate. This is a great achievement and thoroughly deserved.

In November 2016 the following modules were entered.

Exam	Number of candidates
Module 1	3
Module 3	1
Module 5	1
Module 6	1

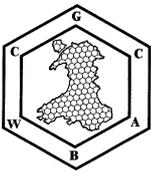
Results for the November modules are as follows;

Caroline Mullinex	Module 1	Credit
Margaret Gill	Module 3	Distinction
Mike Lax	Module 5	Credit

Congratulations to these candidates and also of note is that Mike Lax and Andy Ryan have been awarded their Intermediate Theory Certificates. In addition to this the BBKA award a Qualified Beekeeper badge to those who have achieved their Intermediate Theory and their General Husbandry. Mike Lax has reached this standard and has been awarded his Qualified Beekeeper badge.

I will be standing down as the Examination secretary at the 2017 AGM after three years in the post but I will continue as an assessor. I will be very happy to support the new secretary in their new role and I hope they find it as interesting and rewarding as I have.

Lynfa Davies
WBKA Exam Secretary



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Events Committee:

- a) The Spring Convention was attended by 482 delegates from across Wales and the borders. 43 Stewards helped to ensure that the convention in the new venue was a success. The stewards' prize of a poly hive donated by Maisemore was won by John Williams. There were 4 new traders with 15 in all and displays from APHA, Bee Farmers and Bees Abroad. The convention made a surplus of £506.46. We are looking into altering the venue to allow more traders who would like to attend.
- b) The Spring Festival was supported by 16 members stewarding the stand alongside the Bee Inspectors. I would like to thank Fred Eckton, Martin Middleton, Graham Wheeler, Keith Davies and Keith Hall who set up the stand on my behalf. This year saw our display information being bi-lingual and the launch of two new leaflets. Thanks to Angharad Westmore, Andy Ryan, Trisha Marlow, Lorraine Pocklington and Lampeter BKA. The stand was again very popular with both the general public and beekeepers from Wales and beyond.
- c) The RWAS 18th to 21st July saw us with a small stand in the South Glamorgan Hall. Anne Lucas and Keith Hall oversaw the stewards on the 4 days and Keith set up the stand, Thank You! 21 members stewarded the stand
- d) The planning for the 2017 Spring Convention is well underway. We are expanding the trader space in the Old Food Hall and continuing with the lectures in the Montgomery Pavilion. We will be accommodating the canteen and Beekeepers corner in the International Pavilion.

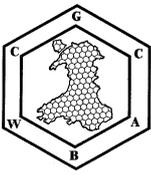
The Opening and main speakers have been booked:

Bron Wright – President of the Scottish Beekeepers Association (opening)
Prof. David Evans - St. Andrews University on Deformed Wing Virus, Pam Gregory Memorial Lecture(BDI Lecture)
Phil McAnespie- Beekeeping in our present environment.
Graham Royle, NDB - Seasonal Bee Inspector, The Hive Mind

- e) The committee has been running without an active Chair for most of the last 18 months as the WBKA does not have a Vice-Chair who normally Chairs this committee. Jenny has been Chairing this committee, so that plans could be put in place for the 2017 Convention.

Report prepared by Jill Wheeler Events Secretary

Webmaster
www.wbka.com



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The web site has remained fairly static over the last 12 months while discussions and reports were contemplated on future developments. It is hoped that 2017 will see the implementation of some of the ideas proposed.

The site has received over 1.6 million visits from around 100,000 visitors, and although this includes automated visits by search engines etc., this still demonstrates the site's popularity.

Editor

Welsh Beekeeper

2016 saw the continued evolution of the Welsh beekeeper. The shift from A5 to A4 has been well received and has allowed for the progressive development of style and content. We have been fortunate in the continued support of our advertisers, even attracting some new ones. The winter 2016 edition saw the greatest amount of content submissions for the year, and we look forward to being able to continue to bring ideas, news and stories from around Wales to our readers with a continual growth in submissions.

Publicity Officer:

Since becoming Press Officer for the WBKA, I have aimed to increase the profile of WBKA, this is working well as Facebook and Twitter accounts have been set up and are slowly but surely gaining and keeping followers. We now have 55 followers on Facebook and 64 on Twitter, mostly non association members.

The accounts have received numerous queries by non-beekeepers on how to deal with swarms and also people who wish to start beekeeping.

Contacts have been made with various Radio and TV journalists

The accounts are currently primarily used to share news that may be of interest to our members and followers. Information about our need to recruit new trustees has also been shared along with our Convention and AGM details etc.

In the 21st Century social media is the main communication method as newspaper and magazine circulation figures plummet, so I'm trying to ensure that the WBKA provides well researched information, news especially focused on Welsh people, and a dependable and correct source of information about beekeeping.

The most popular story we featured was one about the origins of the word Honeymoon, this reached over 3,500 people, who all will have seen WBKA and so our profile improves.

It would be good for non-members, and potential members of the WBKA, and other association members to know more about what goes on in a typical Association; how often meetings and apiary visits take place, details of AGM's and honey shows and any other events you have taking place.

If associations can let us know about what is going on, we'd like to include a taster of these on our Website, Facebook and Twitter pages. You can do this by posting on our page, sending a message, or dropping us an email publicity@wbka.com.

It would be good to profile some associations, so that potential beekeepers see our associations as the best places to go if they want to take up beekeeping or need some advice about colonies that they already own. Another advantage of this would be that we could let the wider community know that our associations are willing to educate communities on the importance of pollinators and what



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they can do to encourage them and so improve our environment for everyone and everything. Please get in touch with me if you would be willing to take part.

Technical Officer:-

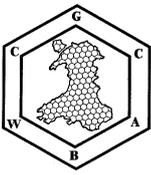
Bee Inspection Service: The Bee Inspection Service (BIS), the responsibility for which was moved from the National Bee Unit (NBU) to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) in 2015, has continued to work closely with WBKA. There have been a few changes in staff and Frank Gellatly will be reporting on those and the disease statistics for Wales during the 2016 season.

Queen Problems: There have been numerous reports of queen problems this year; colonies failing to re-queen, drone layers, early supersedure, queens stopping laying or simply disappearing for no obvious reason leaving no provision for a replacement. Poor mating due to the weather and defective drones have been widely blamed. It is likely that deformed wing virus (DWV) is heavily implicated and recent research has confirmed that queens can become infected during mating with drones that are carrying the virus. It was previously assumed that infected drones were likely either to be incapable of mating or at least suffer a disadvantage when in competition with uninfected drones – this has been shown not to be the case. Is the problem getting worse? Maybe, but one year's experience is insufficient to come to any conclusion. WBKA put out a questionnaire to allow beekeepers to share their experiences in the hope this might shed some light on the problem but there were few respondents.

Small Hive Beetle (SHB): In late July 2016 SHB was found to have spread from the original infected area in the province of Regio Calabria in southern Italy. The new area is about 100km north in the province of Cosenza. Beetles were found in several apiaries of an unregistered beekeeper and the evidence was that they had already bred. Beetles have also been found in several sentinel nucleus colonies which are being deployed to detect the spread. The policy is still one of attempted eradication but this long distance jump is undoubtedly a severe blow to that strategy. No new cases have been found in Sicily where eradication seems to have worked.

NB – In the report some emphasis was put on the fact that the spread was found in the apiaries of an 'unregistered' beekeeper. This is likely to put more pressure on the UK to introduce compulsory beekeeper registration (further discussed below).

Asian Hornet (AH): I am sure that all beekeepers will be aware that an incursion of the Asian hornet to the UK occurred in 2016. In September hornets were reported in the vicinity of Tetbury, Gloucestershire. The location of the nest was found by staff from the APHA Bee Inspection Service and was destroyed. The nest was recovered intact and is currently under investigation by the National Bee Unit (NBU) in York to try and discover whether it has reached the stage in its life cycle when new queens had been produced. Apparently this is not quite as easy as it sounds and the verdict is not available at the present time. An individual hornet was caught in a beekeeper's trap north of the Mendip Hills in Somerset. No sign could be found of a nest site but there is still a suspicion that one might have remained undetected. There should be an update on all this at the March 2017 meeting of BHAF. Just out of interest, try Googling 'Asian hornet UK' and you will be almost overwhelmed by panic stories and misinformation.



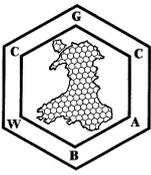
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Bee Health Advisory Forum (BHAF) Meetings: Four meetings of BHAF were scheduled for 2016. The spring meeting received a presentation on the methodology that was to be used for a pilot hive count for the UK. You will recall the aim was to produce a figure for hive numbers (using an accepted methodology) in order to claim the UK share of the EU Apicultural Fund (usually just over £400k). Part of the process was NBU sending out emails asking beekeepers to update their hive records on BeeBase. The summer meeting of BHAF, when we were supposed to get a report of the pilot count, was cancelled because of the fall-out from the Brexit vote. Neither John Bowles nor myself were able to attend the late September meeting because of other commitments (holidays). Again the pilot hive count was not on the agenda for that meeting and the minutes indicate that the main topic was the recent find of the Asian hornet in the UK but little information was available at that time. Both John and I attended the December meeting where there were lengthy presentations on both the pilot hive count and the Asian hornet.

In mid November we were informed through the Welsh Government that the pilot hive count carried out earlier in the year was to be repeated for 2016 and that emails to beekeepers would be sent out during the following week. Neither the BHAF delegates nor the WBKA were informed direct and, as stakeholders in the Healthy Bee Plan, we have registered a serious complaint about the lack of consultation. We also complained about the short notice and the fact that the outcome of the pilot count had not been discussed with BHAF prior to the decision to repeat the process. What sort of response NBU will get this time (see next paragraph) is anybody's guess? At least this time the method of updating was made more user-friendly. The present proposal is that updating will be an annual event but whether this is being done for the benefit of the EU or the UK Government is not clear at the moment.

The report on the pilot count presented to BHAF in early December (3 weeks after the repeat count had commenced) revealed that of the emails sent out to beekeepers 48% were never even opened! Of the 52% that were opened it is not known how many beekeepers actually responded by updating their records – a serious over-sight in the methodology. Taking the apiary records at their face value (whether they were up-to-date or not), the average number of hives per beekeeper was calculated and found to be 5.05. When multiplied by the number of beekeepers registered on BeeBase, which is just short of 38 thousand, and adding just under 1 thousand hives for Northern Ireland (which is said to be a serious underestimate) this gave a grand total of about 192 thousand. No estimate for the hives run by beekeepers not registered on BeeBase was given. This remains an unresolved problem and is one of the arguments for introducing compulsory beekeeper registration. A number of criticisms of the methodology were expressed but no real answers were given.

The point made by the WBKA representatives was that BeeBase was not designed for this purpose and that its original and most important role was as a source of information to guide the work of the Bee Inspection Service. Beekeeper registration on BeeBase has been steadily increasing over the last few years and has almost doubled (which is to be applauded) but it is our fear that this annual update (repeated snooping by Big Brother in the minds of many beekeepers) will prove to be a disincentive to registration. What the proposed scheme actually amounts to is Beekeeper Registration by the back-door.



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Oxalic Acid: On the basis of recent research, some beekeepers are starting to use vaporisation as an alternative to the trickle method for delivering oxalic acid to colonies. The fact that vaporisation can be repeated several times at 7-14 day intervals without apparently damaging the colonies has a considerable strategic advantages for the control of Varroa. However, there are health risks for the beekeeper if it is not done carefully with adequate precautions in place. There are pros and cons to vaporisation which will be discussed in an upcoming article in the Welsh Beekeeper.

WBKA Technical Publications: The booklet entitled *'There are queen cells in my hive – what should I do?'* has been updated and re-published by WBKA. The new version was distributed at all members and there are reserve stocks available for association to give to new members. A new booklet in the WBKA series entitled *'Harvesting Honey'* is in an advanced state of preparation and will be distributed to all members shortly. I can also report that the *'Honey Bee Disease Identification Cards'* are being revised and re-printed by WBKA.

Insurance Officer's Report 2016

The Welsh Bee Keepers Association Insurance Policies were renewed through the same Brokers - Coversure Insurance as from the 1st October 2016. The premiums for the year had risen by a little under 5%.

During the year a number of queries regarding what may be covered under the policy have been forwarded to us and as these help to clarify who and what is covered and for general interest they and our responses are set out in brief below. There is other information as part of the policies which are published on the WBKA website. These queries are about the General, public, employer and product liability insurance not the BDI cover

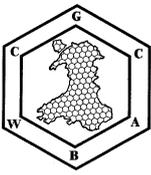
Who is covered by the WBKA Insurance?

The Local Beekeeping Association which is a member of the WBKA. Anybody who is a full fee paying member (Indirect member) of their local Association and who either pays, or has paid on his or her behalf, the WBKA capitation fee as set for the year and Individual members (not members of an Association) are responsible for paying this sum as part of their individual member's fee. The cover will be for harm caused by their negligent activity (but not penalties for criminal activity) or for harm caused by their products from beekeeping. There has been some misunderstanding about this and we are currently looking to see how we can best amend the wording of the Constitution to remove the possibility of a member not being covered.

A query was raised about the liability for a pony which was injured when it became frightened as the result of the noise generated by a colony beginning to swarm on land adjoining its field.

The initial view is that while horses and bees do not make for good companions it is difficult to see how such a situation could be foreseen and that the beekeeper would be found liable. It is equally possible that a swarm could land in a tree or on a fence near where horses are kept but which has come from some distance away. Again this is a natural process and it is difficult to see how liability could attach. We have been gathering information on this specific incident and I'm sure that our insurer will inform us of their decision in due course

Requests for clarification of cover for events held on sites other than Association apiaries e.g. gardens, private land or land in the ownership of other



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If an Association event is held in a members' garden then it is likely that liability would be shared on merit between the WBKA cover for public liability and the householders home insurance. It would be sensible to enquire of your home insurer as to whether such events would be covered as it is possible that an insurer may see it as a business activity particularly if this is a training event or taster session.

If the event is being held on another's property e.g. National Trust then again cover will be shared dependent upon the cause of harm. If the management of the event by the Association or its members is proven to be negligent then the WBKA insurance would cover. If the incident and harm was the result of negligence by the landowner then their insurance would be liable. It is always advisable to check with the landowner that they are covered for such activities. (NT should be OK!

▪Status of volunteers

As members of an Association most of us volunteer for a number of functions - officers of the association, trainers, members who help to care for the bees and maintain the apiary. The insurer considers all these volunteers to be "employees". In terms of criminal legislation e.g. the Health and Safety at Work Act, we would normally have to have a minimum of one employee before our volunteers would become subject to the regulations. In our case our insurers require us to provide a similar duty of care for our volunteers as if we were an employer. This is not unfair when you consider that some of the processes that we undertake can be quite dangerous. Not only do we need to ensure that volunteers are protected far as reasonably practicable, against being stung (suits, gloves), we have the same duty of care when they undertake other functions such as the use of motorised equipment, pesticides e.g. weedkillers, oxalic acid and manual handling.

We therefore need to ensure reasonable efforts are made to carry out and record effective risk assessments and provide our volunteers with protective equipment and trying to safeguard against the more serious risks. See the brief report on Health and Safety included as part of the Annual Report.

▪Members who have significant reaction to bee stings

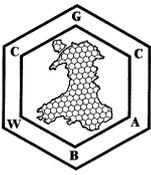
At least one Association has a member who has been advised by his Doctor to carry an EpiPen when dealing with bees including when in the Association apiary. Naturally some of the individuals who were providing training sought clarification with regard to their Association's and their personal liability should an incident occur.

Our insurers have assured us that provided the Association carries out and records an assessment of risk and takes reasonable control measures both the Association and individual trainers (provided they are full members of their association) would be covered. Reasonable control measures would include having someone take responsibility for administering the EpiPen injection should an incident occur where the affected person was not conscious and even more basic, but equally important, had the individual brought his EpiPen with him or her. The ability to call for professional help i.e. someone has a mobile phone , there is reception or a landline nearby and you are aware of the postcode and latitude and longitude of the site should be common to all situations.

▪Training children

No cover is provided for penalties or compensation payable in the event of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult. Each Association should have a policy which deals with the special risks associated with training or mentoring children or vulnerable adults. Where this is extensive the use of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) should be considered. Where training is requested by a school or other such organisation it will be up to them to apply for a DBS reference.

Health and Safety Trustee's Report 2016



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During 2016 John Pilgrim very kindly volunteered to undertake the role of Health and Safety Officer for the WBKA. One of his first duties was an “on the day” inspection and risk assessment of the WBKA Convention at the Royal Welsh Showgrounds in Builth. Although the organisers had already done a sterling job, John was able to make some recommendations.

Later in the year John wrote out to all Associations to try to obtain any Health and Safety related documents which they had created that could be used to develop templates for use by all Associations in Wales. After all why reinvent the wheel! The response, to say the least, was disappointing. We are not sure whether this was merely down to lack of interest or whether most Associations had given little thought to Health and Safety issues and had not progressed any formal policies, procedures and risk assessments. Many thanks to those Associations who did respond.

It was agreed that despite the circulation of the WBKA Health and Safety Policy to all Member Association Secretaries with the recommendation that they use the template there may be a lack of understanding of the basic requirements for the control of risk in Associations and their activities. Beekeeping is not, with some notable exceptions, a high risk craft/pastime but some acknowledgement of the risks that may be faced by our volunteers must be made and recognition that the officers of an Association have to take some responsibility for taking reasonably practicable steps to reduce that risk.

To help with this John Pilgrim is in the process of drafting various template risk assessments and risk control procedures which can be “personalised” by member associations for their own use. In drafting some of the template procedures we will, with the permission of the relevant Associations be “borrowing” from documents already in use. We have consulted on these drafts and John and I will meet later in the Spring to finalise the templates. I hope you will make good use of the documents and take particular note of requirements to ensure that volunteers receive the required training and protective equipment when they are asked to carry out the more hazardous activities around honey bee care and treatment and grounds maintenance .

Membership:

Please see the appended document for details of the 2016 WBKA membership.

Declaration: The Trustees declare that they have approved the trustees’ report above

Signed on behalf of the charity’s trustees

Signature:

Full name: Jennifer Mary Shaw

Position: Chair



**THE WELSH BEEKEEPERS'
ASSOCIATION
CYMDEITHAS GWENYNWYR CYMRU**

Date: 28th January 2017