The Annual General Meeting of the South Staffordshire & District Beekeepers Association will be held on March 26th 7.30 pm at Shareshill Village Hall, WV10 7JS.

At the AGM, new Officers and Committee members will be elected and existing serving committee members re-elected.

Please note: all Officers and Committee members are elected for one year, may serve for a period of 3 years in the same role but still have to be re-elected each year.

Nominations are invited for:

- President
- Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership Secretary
- Education Secretary
- Apiary Coordinator
- Asian Hornet Action Team Coordinator
- Health & Safety Coordinator
- Communications Secretary
- Events Coordinator
- Quartermaster

To find out more about the roles, an outline of each can be found on pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter or the SS&DBKA website, AGM section.

If you are interested and want to discuss the roles further, please contact:
Stuart Roberts (07881 234 274) or Alan Greenman (07803 432 599).

If you wish to apply, please complete the nomination form below and return no later than March 21st 2020 to the Secretary:
Lynne Lacey, 21 Fisherwick Road, Whittington, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS14 9LL

Join us on the committee
In taking account of the club survey results from 2018 a lot of exciting changes took place in 2019.

Club members undertook and passed a variety of BBKA assessments last year, the most in one year in the history of the club.

Please consider joining the committee and help us to run the club for the good of all the members. Attend on the 26th March and support your club.

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**NOMINATION FOR SS&DBKA COMMITTEE 2020**

I wish to nominate................................................................. if s/he agrees to serve if elected
as (Position).................................................................

Name: Signed: Date:

Please note: You may nominate yourself. Under the constitution, no seconder is required. All nominees must be members of the SS&DBKA at the time of the AGM.

I would like to raise the following point for discussion at the 2020 AGM:

Name: Signed: Date:
The job role descriptions for committee members shown on this page came from the discussions that took place on Saturday 7th December last year when a mixed group of club members met up to take a fresh look at all things ‘club’ at a meeting in Stafford.

The four priorities that come together to meet the stated aims of the association are:

**Association, Members, Education and Apiary.**

By reviewing the tasks associated with these four priorities a clearer picture has emerged.

It is considered that the following roles will produce a committee structure to ‘make it happen’.

The plan is to build ‘teams’ to support each of the key roles.

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**Committee Roles and Responsibilities**

**Officers**

**President:**
- Ensure the association has clearly defined goals and objectives
- Provide leadership and help to build and maintain an effective association that works well
- Support the development of the association’s structure to meet the goals and objectives
- Promote the association and support the growth of its membership
- Represent and promote the association at local, regional and national levels
- Chair the committee in the absence of the chairperson, and support the committee members to achieve the association goals

**Secretary:**
- Notify all Committee members of the time and place of meetings
- Prepare an agenda in consultation with the Chairperson and ensure that minutes of the previous meeting(s) have been circulated
- Check that members have completed tasks agreed at previous meetings
- Take a note of all present, apologies for absence and take a minute of the meeting, recording all decisions and actions made and circulate
- Deal promptly with correspondence between meetings forwarding to committee members by email

**Chairperson:**
- Chair committee meetings and AGM
- Assist the secretary in producing meeting agendas
- Head the committee in making decisions for the benefit of the club
- Abide by the club’s constitution, legal obligations, aims and objectives
- Support the committee in working together and help set committee roles and responsibilities
- Ensure that the committee is effective in implementing the club’s stated strategy

**Treasurer:**
- Accepts on behalf of the association all monies and records it appropriately
- Pays on behalf of the association any authorised expenditure
- Ensure all income and expenditure records are kept up to date and an appropriate third party examines the end of year accounts
- Keep the committee informed of the current situation with respect to finances
- Complete annual returns to Charity Commission
- Assist the President and Chairperson in preparing budgets for the association priorities

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Results from the Workshop

If you feel you could help in any of these areas, please nominate yourself or get in touch with either Stuart or Alan to discuss further.

We will provide training and support across all roles to ensure a successful outcome.

The future success of the club depends on the full commitment of all the members.  

*AEG*
Committee Members

Apiary Coordinator:
• Chair Apiary Work Group meetings with responsibility for setting an agenda and completing minutes
• Manage the running of the Associations apiaries
• Report to the main committee regarding the running of the apiaries
• Ensure Codes of Practice and procedures are in place and updated and that they follow best practice
• Liaise with the Education team to facilitate the smooth running of the Training and Learning Schedule
• Liaise with the quartermaster regarding the provision of equipment and consumables

Education Coordinator:
• Identify teaching and learning opportunities for members with a range of practical and theoretical beekeeping experiences
• Take an overview of the Beginners Course and advise on gaps, developing ideas and harnessing the expertise of others in delivering the course
• Take responsibility for co-ordinating BBKA examinations
• Take responsibility for facilitating the training needs of those taking BBKA examinations, modules, and other courses
• Advise the SSDBKA Committee of the resources needed to complete learning opportunities
• Attend any national initiatives involved in beekeeping practice and education

Quartermaster:
• Manage the safe storage of the association’s equipment, arrange cleaning and repair parties as required to keep the equipment in good order
• Carry out stock takes in a timely manner, organising bulk purchases and distribution of consumables for members at discounted prices
• Communicate to committee equipment requests from AWG and Education group
• Buy equipment needed within set budget taking advantage of sales
• Ensure there is enough equipment to run the T&L schedule effectively
• Organise and record equipment hire

Membership secretary:
• Oversee the ER2 database with respect to membership, subscriptions and enrols new members and renewals
• Confirms payment of subscriptions with the aid of the Treasurer
• Creates and sends out emails regarding membership through ER2 and SSDBKA email.
• Updates Swarm List and contact information
• BDI and BBKA capitation
• Extract Contact information from ER2 for use with SSDBKA contact list on Google mail.
• Add additional items to members records as required (GfAid, GPDR, Child protection, Basic completed, Beginners completed etc

Communication Lead:
• Co-ordinate the website and posting of content Facebook page
• Support the production of the Newsletter
• Support the sourcing of content from other areas of the association
• Ensure that the website and social media are updated regularly
• Co-ordinate regular communication with members through the email database
• Promote the work of the association in the local media

Events Coordinator:
• Develop the association’s annual calendar of events
• Plan events to meet association and members needs
• Co-ordinate the refreshments for members at the apiary and at ‘paid for’ events
• Co-ordinate the annual members survey
• Ensure that venues and speakers are hired, and refreshments arranged
• Monitor the success of events and feedback to improve future events

AHAT Coordinator:
• Keep up to date with developments and training with regards to Asian Hornet
• Share information throughout the association via all communication links.
• Undertake any training and research with regards to the Asian Hornet in the UK.
• Provide suitable training, and information to the association with regards to the developments of Asian Hornet in the UK. Such as identification, tracking, and possible tracking where required.
On Saturday 8th February over 100 people met at Myton School in Warwick to discuss the status of the Asian Hornet in the United Kingdom.

It was organised by Anne Rowberry who is the Chair of the Education Committee of the BBKA. She opened the conference with some introductions and a quick run through the days’ agenda.

The day was essentially to cover the research and current knowledge of the Asian Hornet and the experiences of neighbouring countries.

The first presentation of the day was from Professor Stephen Martin on the ‘Biology of the Asian Hornet’. This was fascinating and covered things like multiple matings help the hornets to establish from a single mated queen. The hornets produce more queens and drones than workers.

He went on to describe how they build the primary nest and then move onto a secondary nest which rapidly expands in July and August. He showed a photograph of a nest that was over 7 feet in length.

Sexual reproduction occurs in September and October. Once mated, the queens are constantly fed then leave the nest about 2 weeks later.

The nests are very hard to find and the hornets seem very well adapted to an urban environment with nests often found on high-rise buildings.

There was then a short tea-break and we reconvened for the second lecture. This was given by a researcher from Spain called Xesus Feas. He is based in Galicia in northern Spain and gave a very passionate talk.

He has spent 8 years researching Asian Hornets and one of the things that he had discovered is that sometimes the hibernating queens could be found in the abandoned secondary nests.

The rate of growth of the hornet population had been 4 nests to 10,000 nests in 4 years with an estimated cost to the Galician government of 4.5 million euros. They now have something like 25,000 nests and the estimated medical costs over the last 5 years were approximately 3.2 million euros.

The main task of Galician firefighters has become the removal of hornet nests. The losses of honey bee colonies was estimated at 65% with the main negative impact of the hornets being the effect on fruit crops leading to the loss of the entire crop in some instances. Especially affected were apples and grapes.

This was a really insightful and passionate talk in a second language with many of the beekeepers saying “his English is way better than my Spanish”. One of the outcomes was the realisation that our local pest controller will be trading in his van for a second-hand fire engine.

Another tea-break was followed by Alastair Christie talking about his experiences in Jersey. His talk entitled “Asian Hornets Jersey” outlined the organisation needed to have some chance of preventing the hornets getting a foothold in the UK.

One of the things he mentioned that others hadn’t was tertiary nests. These are formed when the secondary nests are removed badly allowing a number of hornets to escape. The escapees go off and form a small nest (tertiary) which in-turn has to be dealt with.

He also spoke about the importance of using the media well and engaging people such as estate agents (builders were mentioned later too) because they are often looking at houses where nests could be located.

Just before lunch Peter Kenedy told us about the current research that is being funded. However, there are only 2 research streams currently and both are being run through Exeter University with a number of external partners. The aim of the research is to prevent the spread of the hornets and to minimise the impacts that the hornet may have if eradication is unsuccessful.

A packed-lunch was the order of the day and much networking across the counties and indeed countries was happening.

Following lunch there was supposed to be a presentation from someone from the National Bee Unit (NBU). However Nigel Semmence was ill and an ‘understudy’ stepped in at the last minute. She gave a very brief outline of the procedures making it very clear that it was illegal for the beekeepers to catch and release a hornet unless they were under the direct supervision of the NBU.

She was followed by Belinda Phillipson also from the NBU who talked about government policy. In short, the policy remains the same which is eradication.

continued on next page...
Anne Rowberry then gave a presentation entitled “Gaining Recognition for your Position as an Asian Hornet Co-ordinator and Team members” which basically covered the offering of a special insurance covering the involvement of beekeepers in the hunt for Asian Hornet nests. The area association Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT) coordinators will invite area association members to take a short on-line test to ensure competency in Asian Hornet recognition and what to do when one is spotted. Up to 15 members will be invited per area association. She showed us some example questions which were relatively easy. Following the successful taking of the on-line test a certificate will be issued and the insurance will be in-place.

The day was concluded with a panel Question & Answer session with all of the speakers being asked to return to the stage to give their views. There were lots of questions, as you might imagine, but the most telling question was from Dave Coates from Burton & District Beekeepers. He firstly thanked the panel for the day, which gave rise to huge round of applause. He then went on to ask what the chances were of us being able to stop the Asian Hornet establishing in the UK. Professor Stephen Martin was first to answer with one word: Zero!

The others answered somewhat more positively by saying things like “if we take the learning from Jersey and Spain then we might have a chance”.

The day was really good apart from some minor IT issues and a rubbish sound system. However, it seems that the writing is on the wall and we can only hold them back for a period of time. But the longer we can hold them back the better – in my opinion.

SR

You too can have a club cap
The latest addition to our club merchandise is this very smart baseball cap in navy blue with gold lettering.

One size fits all. Just £10 buys this very special item. Buy yours at the AGM on the 26th March.

And don’t forget the smart enamel club badges at £5.

We will be taking new orders for a range of club merchandise when the season starts.
NOTICE TO BEE-KEEPERS.

Arrangements have been made with the Staffordshire County Bee-keepers' Association, by which they will provide their Bee Tent and Expert to give demonstrations during the Afternoon.

The following Additional Prizes, Open to All-Comers resident in Staffordshire, are offered by the Committee.

For the best 24 One Pound Sections of Honey in the Comb gathered during the current year by the Exhibitor’s own Bees, and taken without destroying them.

FIRST PRIZE, 20s.

To which the S. B. K. A. have kindly offered to add their Silver Medal.

SECOND PRIZE, 10s.

To which the S. B. K. A. have kindly offered to add their Bronze Medal.

ENTRANCE FEE, 2s. 6d.

Both the S. B. K. Association and the Trent Valley Committee reserve to themselves the right of withholding either or both of their Prizes if there are less than five Exhibitors, or if the Exhibits are not of conspicuous merit.

Persons entitled to compete for the Cottagers’ Prizes may compete for the above with the same Honey, on paying the Entrance Fee.

Intending Exhibitors must give notice to the Hon. Secs. the Rev. J. Tomlinson, or Dr. Tylecote, Great Haywood, not later than Wednesday, July 27th.

R. & W. WRIGHT, PRINTERS, STAFFORD.

This old copy of an original advertisement shows the long association that Shugborough has enjoyed with local bee keepers. It gives a fascinating insight into the world of beekeeping 130 years ago.

Thank you to Stuart Roberts for kindly loaning it for reproduction.
New way to catch a swarm

Man gets swarm of bees stuck on his bum

Reporter, Jimmy Nsubuga - Saturday 24 Aug 2019

This man must have a pretty sweet backside because a colony of bees decided to make it their home. A video showed Velelhu, 25, standing in Kohima, Nagaland, India, with the swarm around his jeans. A beehive took a fancy to his nether regions while he was driving to a garage.

His passenger, who recorded the video, said: ‘We were on the way to garage when their queen came flying to me to eventually rest on Velelhu’s backside.

‘Soon, scores of them joined her. After struggling for a while he managed to grab the queen and put her in a container and the rest of them soon flew into it.

Velelhu eventually managed to get the bees off but they continued to swarm around their queen for another 30 minutes.

For fear of attracting more of the insects to his backside, he locked himself up in a car. The passenger added: ‘We were amused and lucky to capture the rare natural phenomenon.’

Burger and flying bees...

Fast food giant McDonald’s has expanded in a different kind of way in Sweden.

In an effort to save the dwindling bee population, the McHive, a miniature replica of the of the restaurant, has been fixed to the roofs of at least five stores in the country.

Complete with a drive-thru, patio tables and the classic golden arches, the McHive is a fully functional Hive.

Swedish locations are replacing the grass around their restaurants with flowers and plants that are important for the wellbeing of wild bees.
Say Thank You...

This year at the AGM, we want to celebrate and say thank you to the amazing volunteers that have supported the bees, club members and the association during 2019. This will be an opportunity for the association to say thank you to its members, but also give individual members the opportunity to say thank you to beekeepers who have given their time, support and expertise during last season to help them.

Award Categories

1. Do you know someone who has supported you with your bees or learning over the last season? This could be someone who has for example:
   • Helped you with inspections
   • Given you advice and guidance
   • Helped you out with equipment
   • Supported you in a difficult situation

2. Do you know someone who you feel has supported the association over the last season? This could be someone who has for example:
   • Helped as a member of the association for many years
   • Been passionate about bees and shares their knowledge and understanding with many members
   • Gone out of their way to support the association

How to nominate

• Association members may nominate category 1 and 2 once. You can nominate the same person for both categories.
• Complete the nomination form on the association website - scroll down the home page to Volunteer Awards section.

Can you Find the Queen

In the last edition of the newsletter our queen bee had joined the other bees on the ARP - Best Bee Day image on page 8, see picture, top of second column, bottom left of image.

But where is she now? Just where is she? Have a good look round the March Newsletter and see if you can find her.

Join an apiary work group

Why don’t you come and join us on one of the apiary working groups. The groups operate at Shugborough on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. You will join a small team of beekeepers inspecting the bees and carrying out bee related procedures. You could learn a lot to help you with your bees. Contact Paul Twibill for more information at paultwibill@blueyonder.co.uk

Club bulk honey for Sale

The club has approximately 100 Lbs of last seasons bulk honey, in buckets, for sale at £3 per 1lb. First come, first served. Please write or email Lynne Lacey, club secretary, if you are interested in purchasing some honey.
Getting ready for the new season

Late February and a small team of hardy members gathered to clean up boxes and frames so as to be ready when the bees want more room in the hive. As well as Brian and Phill braving the elements were Penny, Paul, Claire Alan B and Alan G. Rain finally stopped play so it was a welcome cuppa and leave the rest for next time.

New queen identifier (red disc) shows the hives where last years new queens are located (bought as part of the re-queening programme) Thanks to Chris and Alan Bewin for the photograph.

What’s on - diary dates - 2020

March
14th - Bee Tradex - Stoneleigh - 9.00am - 4.30pm
26th - Club Annual General Meeting. Lecture by Clive Stewart and presentation of awards and certificates.

April
2nd - Stafford Bee Group - Peter Bell - ‘Bee keepers question time.’
3rd, 4th & 5th - BBKA Spring Convention - Harper Adams
21st - Beginners Theory sessions commence at Wolsley Bridge for 6 weeks

May
7th - Members Thursday night sessions start at apiary
9th - Members Saturday open apiary sessions commence at apiary
9th - Bee Safari - details to be confirmed
17th - Honey Bee Experience Day - 12 noon to 4.00pm
27th & 28th - Stafford County Show

June
2nd - Beginners practical sessions commence at the apiary
6th - Bee Safari - details to be confirmed
11th - Honey extraction demonstration - to be confirmed

July
12th - Honey Bee Experience Day - 12 noon to 4.00pm

August

September
13th - Honey Bee Experience Day - 12 noon to 4.00pm

October

November
8th - Combined Honey Show and Convention Day

Please check club website for the latest information on all events...

Items for the newsletter
If you have any stories, pictures or information that you would like included in the newsletter, or if you have items for sale or wish to comment on the content of previous newsletters, please send to: ssbka-mail@southstaffsbeekeepers.com and make the subject “Item for the newsletter”.

SS&DBKA Links
Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/SSBKA
Website: http://southstaffsbeekeepers.com
E-Mail: ssbka-mail@southstaffsbeekeepers.com