

Trustees' Report

For the Year Ended 31st December 2015

Legal and administrative details

The *Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association* is registered with the Charity Commission (No 273827) and governed by the Constitution dated 19th April 2009. Its principal address is the *National Beekeeping Centre*, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG.

The Charity's working name is the *Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association (BIBBA)*.

The Association's bankers are *Santander*, Customer Service Centre, Bootle, Merseyside, L30 4GB, *CafBank Ltd.*, P.O. Box 289, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TA and *PayPal*.

The Independent Examiners are Rawlinsons Chartered Accountants, Ruthlyn House, 90 Lincoln Road, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE1 2SP.

Organizational structure

The Charity is administered by a Central Committee comprising three officers, President, Secretary and Treasurer, and a maximum of twelve committee members elected at the AGM for a renewable term of one year. The officers and committee members agree to act as Charity Trustees. At its first meeting following the AGM the committee elects a chairman and deputy chairman from among their number. The committee may co-opt up to three additional non-voting members to serve on the committee. The committee appoints members to represent the association on other bodies and organizations and posts of responsibility. The committee appoints, as non-voting members, representatives from national beekeeping organizations. The committee appoints one or more Custodian Trustees for the purpose of holding any monies or property belonging to the Association.

During 2015/16 the Charity was administered by a Central Committee comprising:

Brian P. Dennis	President
Kevin Lincoln	Chairman
	Shows Secretary
Roger Patterson	Deputy Chairman
	Conference/Workshops Secretary
	Website Editor
Roy Norris	Secretary (resigned Jan. 2016)
Iain Harley	Treasurer
Nicholas Mawby	Membership Secretary
	Website Manager
Joseph Widdicombe	Groups Secretary
Terence Hitchman	
Philip Khorassandjian	
Patricia Marlow	
Stephen Rose	

Co-option: Philip Denwood, Editor of *Bee Improvement and Conservation (BIM)* magazine.

Representatives:

Enid Brown (*Scottish BKA*), Mervyn Eddie (*Ulster BKA*), Roger Patterson (*British Beekeepers Association*), Steve Rose (*Welsh BKA*).

Roger Patterson (*BBKA Annual Delegates Meeting*), Philip Khorassandjian (*Defra Annual Meeting*), Brian P. Dennis/Kevin Lincoln (*National Honey Show*).

Custodian Trustees: Brian P. Dennis, Brian Milward.

The Central Committee met three times between April 2015 and March 2016. A *Google Group* was initiated to enable electronic discussion & decision making between meetings.

Record of Trustee attendances (actual/possible):

B.P. Dennis 3/3, I. Harley 2/3, T. Hitchman 2/3, P. Khorassandjian 3/3, K. Lincoln 3/3, P. Marlow 1/3, N. Mawby 3/3, R. Norris 2/2, R. Patterson 3/3, S. Rose 3/3, J. Widdicombe 2/3.

The Charity has no paid employees and relies entirely on the goodwill and voluntary work of officers, trustees and members.

The Charity's main income is from members' subscriptions and sales of publications & merchandise. Further funding is obtained from donations, bequests and sponsorships

Charity's Objectives

The objectives of the Charity as set out in its Constitution are "*the conservation, re-introduction, study, selection and improvement of native or near-native honey bees of Britain and Ireland*".

Governance

The trustees have ensured that the operation of *BIBBA* complies with the Charity Commission requirements. In particular, they have reviewed the Constitution (Governing Document) and undertaken a risk analysis review.

Risk Management

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that a risk analysis has been produced to demonstrate that we as responsible trustees have considered the risks associated with running the organization. The identified risks, their impact and mitigation have been reviewed.

Investment Policy

The trustees have the power to invest in such assets as they see fit. Monies not required for immediate running costs are held in an interest bearing account at the *Charities Aid Foundation* in a *CAF* Bank account.

BIBBA does not have a defined level of reserves but the current Unrestricted Reserve of £45,117 equates to approximately four years of operating costs and is reviewed quarterly. A further £3,990 is held as a Restrictive Reserve and represents the balance of the funding received from the *Co-operative Society* for *Project Discovery*. This is being used to support the establishment and equipping of individual breeding groups to accelerate the process of raising native and near-native queens.

Activities during 2015

Membership

Total membership at the end of 2015 was 372, compared to 328 in 2014 (13.4% increase). This figure comprises 335 Ordinary, 12 Honorary and 25 Life Members.

The membership database management has been completely changed. Previously it had been held on the personal computer of one committee member. It is now held online in a Google sheet. This enables the treasurer and membership secretary to edit data and the secretary and chairman can view the data. Should one of the key officers be incapacitated then another can take over management of the database.

Gift Aid

In past years we have been able to claim *Gift Aid* using the paper based system. *HMRC* discontinued this several years ago and a series of problems occurred when trying to get the electronic claims processed. We are now addressing this and aim to recover *Gift Aid* dating back to 2012.

We have moved the *Gift Aid* records to an online system. Any member, who is a UK income tax payer, and has not already done so, can make a declaration by going to <http://bibba.com/giftaid/>

Groups

There are now nineteen bee improvement/queen rearing groups listed on the website that support the principles of improving local bees. The *BIBBA* committee has clarified that it is not necessary for every participant in a group to be a member of *BIBBA*. Some of the groups are actively publicizing their activities, others just quietly do their own thing. Group size ranges from two members to over forty. It is through support of groups that we aim to move forward with bee improvement.

The online map and group contact information enables prospective members to find their local group or to set one up.

Queen rearing grants (£963.54) have been made to seven groups in Cheshire & Wirral, Lanarkshire, Lancashire, Llangollen, Stratford, South Warwick and Upper Dee,

A grant of £1,517.42 was made to the *Sunart, Ardnamurchan, Moidart and Morven Beekeepers Association (SAMMBA)* in Scotland to help propagate bees from Colonsay on the mainland.

Publications

Two issues of the magazine *Bee Improvement and Conservation (BIM)* were produced during the year. The original intention to produce a quarterly magazine has again not been achieved. This is of great concern to the trustees & members. The persistent problem of obtaining sufficient suitable articles has always been the main restriction. Any contributions by members would be welcomed – serious, light-hearted, practical or anecdotal. If a potential author considers that their writing skills are insufficient, any contribution can be *ghost written*. However, at present, it seems unrealistic to publish more than two issues each year. To address communication with members (and provide a benefit), *BIBBA-Buzz*, an electronic newsletter was published four times.

Website

After the death of David Cushman the *BIBBA* website remained virtually unchanged for several years. It has now been totally revamped and moved to *WordPress*, which offers many new facilities. It allows multiple authors so that individual groups can edit their own page. In the future a *Members Only* area will be possible.

The online shop has been reinstated and currently offers a small number of books & a grafting tool.

The website has on average 140 unique visitors a day and a total of 266,000 hits in the year.

Communication

We are moving forward with online communications and now have e-mail addresses for 94% of our members. This will enable us to send out more frequent but shorter communications by e-mail. The increasing costs of printing and postage, together with a limited supply of new articles, have restricted the number of *Bee Improvement and Conservation* magazines produced each year.

This year we have made the *Members' Handbook* available as a downloadable pdf file, issued twice a year. This saves on printing and postage and provides a more up-to-date reference, which can be searched electronically.

Representation

BIBBA is a specialist member of the *BBKA* and a representative attended the Annual Delegates Meeting (ADM). *BIBBA* was represented at the *National Honey Show* AGM.

Publicity

BIBBA had stands at several shows including the *BBKA Spring Convention*, the *National Honey Show* and *BIFA* days.

FIBKA Summer Course

It has become traditional at the annual *FIBKA* Summer Course at Gormanston in Ireland to have a meeting of *BIBBA* members. In 2015 it was a joint meeting with the *Native Irish Honey Bee Society (NIHBS)*. The objects of both groups are similar; both experience the same threats, which were discussed by the attendees. Continued importations of bees and queens are a major concern to those who are trying hard to improve local bees, whether they are pure native or near-native. Several members mentioned aggression creeping into colonies that had previously been docile. This was blamed on beekeepers moving non-native bees, sometimes in quite large numbers, in close proximity to queen mating apiaries. It was felt that education of beekeepers, especially those new to the craft, was very important, so efforts should be made in that respect.

Conference

Arrangements are progressing well for the Conference to be staged in the Isle of Man from 20th to 22nd September 2016. The last time *BIBBA* held a conference there was in 1973. Initial interest is very positive and it is hoped this will be translated into a high attendance and a successful conference.

Courses

There has been much more teaching activity than there has been for many years, with several events being held.

Over three winters we have held 35 *Bee Improvement for All (BIFA)* Days, when participants were encouraged to raise their own queens. Each event has been hosted by a local *BKA*, with each association organizing local publicity and *BIBBA* providing national publicity and tuition. Associations were given a reasonably free hand to organize their event as they chose, but still within guidelines to maintain consistency. The feedback has been positive resulting in some very good publicity. It is hoped that the goodwill between *BIBBA* and the host associations can be built on and that more events can be arranged. The benefits are two-way with *BIBBA* having the opportunity to publicize their activities and the local association providing tuition for their own and local beekeepers.

In the summer of 2015 a small number of one and two day practical *Bee Improvement* courses were piloted. These were largely apiary based, hosted by *BKAs* or individuals, but to give adequate individual supervision places were limited to fairly small numbers. These went very well and sometimes attracted attendees from far afield – e.g. beekeepers from Dorset and Jersey attended a course in North Wales. More of these courses are being planned for the summer of 2016, with the first two day course selling out within 48 hours of it being announced.

Thanks are given to all those involved in hosting events & enthusing beekeepers. It is hoped that we can continually improve events.

Archives

The archive material was collected and housed. A search for a suitable permanent location is ongoing.

Future Plans

In the next year the trustees will continue efforts to improve benefits to members and communication, provide courses and support breeding groups. In particular, consideration will be given to:

- Improvement of links with Scotland and Ireland.
- Sourcing articles for *BIM*.
- Archive repository & access.
- Review of publications.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare a financial statement for each financial year, which gives a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year and its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing the statement, the trustees are required to select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently, make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Signed on behalf of the trustees

Kevin Lincoln
Chairman