

Trustees' Report

For the Year Ended 31st December 2018

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 10th April 2016. Its principal address is the *The Chairman*, BIBBA, Old Trelabe, Linkinhorne, Callington, Cornwall, PL17 8QL.

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.

Organisational 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 members to fill vacancies amongst Officers or Committee members who shall serve as Trustees with full voting rights on the committee. The Committee appoints members to represent the association on other bodies and organizations and posts of responsibility. The Committee may appoint, volunteers, advisors or guests as non-voting members.

During 2017/18 the Charity was administered by a Central Committee comprising:

Joseph Widdicombe	President
Iain Harley	Treasurer
Nick Bentham-Green	Chairman
Roger Patterson	Deputy Chairman
	Conference/Workshops Secretary
	Web Editor
Nicholas Mawby	Membership Secretary
	Website Manager
Peter Jenkins	Acting Secretary until April 2018
Stephen Rose	Technical and Scientific Committee Coordinator (until resignation in April 2018).
John Chambers	Technical and Scientific Committee Coordinator (until resignation on 6 th December 2018)
Kevin Thorn	Groups' Coordinator/Facebook

David Ledger	B4 Liaison Officer (until resignation in July 2018).
Tom Law	BIBBA Forum
Terence Hitchman	
Kathy Wallis	Secretary (from April 2018).
Karl Colyer	
John Chadwick	(until August 2018)

Co-options:

Kevin Lincoln	Shows' Secretary (until April 2018).
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Volunteers

Editor (<i>BIM</i>):	Philip Denwood.
BIM design/Artwork	Roger Cullum-Kenyon

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.

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*.

Meetings

The Central Committee met once between April and December 2018. In addition, 8 teleconference meetings were held together with electronic discussions via *Google Groups*.

**Record of Trustee attendances (including teleconferencing)
(actual/possible):**

N. Bentham-Green 7/9, I. Harley 6/9 T. Hitchman 8/9, N. Mawby 8/9 R. Patterson 8/9, S. Rose 1/3, J. Widdicombe 6/9 Peter Jenkins 7/9, D Ledger 5/6, T Law 5/9, K Thorn 9/9, J Chambers 2/5 K Wallis 6/6 K Colyer 9/9 J Chadwick 3/4

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. Some funding consists of the surpluses from training events.

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*'.

Constitution

The new BIBBA constitution, using the Charity Commission's GD3 template as a guide, was approved by the membership at the 2018 AGM, subject to approval by the Charity Commission.

Governance

The Trustees have ensured that the operation of *BIBBA* complies with the *Charity Commission* requirements. In order that the Trustees carry out their duties, to the best of their abilities, it is essential that they keep themselves up to date with the latest Charity Commissioners' guidelines, which are contained in '*The Essential Trustee What you need to know*'.

They have reviewed the Constitution (Governing Document) and undertaken a risk analysis review.

President's Report

BIBBA held a very successful conference in September at the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester. Some BIBBA members also attended the international SICAMM conference in Finland in July.

BIBBA continued to run one-day ‘bee improvement’ events at various venues around the country. The success of these events was down to a big commitment, in terms of time and effort, by some Committee members.

Buzz and Humm, the electronic newsletters, went out with some regularity, helping to keep BIBBA in the spotlight. Production of the Bee Improvement magazine was a bit more erratic due to the slowness of collecting enough material for an issue. This has been an ongoing problem, but efforts are being made to address this factor.

In the beekeeping world BIBBA’s message of improving one’s bees, as much as possible from local stock and using native/near-native bees, as opposed to importing other sub-species, is becoming more widely accepted.

BIBBA’s membership has risen to over 500 for the first time in its history. We hope our membership will continue to support BIBBA and make the prospect of better bees a reality for us all.

Chairman’s Report

2018 has seen BIBBA achieve remarkable successes, most notably the Conference at Cirencester, the Conference at Eden, and the Bee Improvement days throughout the country, which have had very high attendance. I make the assumption that this is the case because beekeepers have now concluded that importing bees is not sustainable and is not a sensible way to go about their business.

I am keen that BIBBA develops a coherent Strategy, up until now our efforts have been, perhaps, a little reactive. So I have had part of the Committee working hard to produce a Strategy, which will help us plan our activities for the next 5 to 10 years.

I am also keen that BIBBA works more closely with the scientific community, so that research into Amm, is not done in isolation from the beekeeper, and remains relevant to our needs. This is why the work being done at Plymouth University, by the PhD student Victoria Buswell, looking at Amm phenotypical behavior and how it links with the bees genotype is so exciting!. BIBBA members will have key input into her 4 year study.

The Committee are putting a huge amount of work into keeping BIBBA functioning as a relevant and vibrant organization, but we could do with more help. So if you are interested in joining us ,either on the Committee or as a volunteer, then please email me and let me know.

Investment Policy

The Trustees have the power to invest in such assets as they see fit. Monies not required for immediate running costs were held during 2018 in our CAF Gold account bearing 0.05% interest. In addition £50,000 of reserves were placed in a 95 day notice account with Redwood Bank yielding an interest rate of 1.35%.

The Treasurer elected at the AGM in April resigned in August and the previous Treasurer, who had remained as a Trustee, stepped back into the role. It is hoped that a new Treasurer will be recruited and trained in the association processes in time to take full responsibility in 2020.

BIBBA does not have a defined level of reserves but the current Unrestricted Reserve of £76,280 equates to approximately seven years of operating costs and is reviewed quarterly.

A further £2,585 is held as a Restrictive Reserve and represents the balance of the funding received from the Cooperative Society. This is being used to support the establishment and equipping of individual bee improvement groups to accelerate the process of raising native and near-native queens.

A further Restrictive Reserve of £4,359 is held as the balance of donations from Essex and Suffolk Water and the Tesco Local Charities scheme via Groundworks to support the 'Essex 4 Bees' project based at the Abberton Reservoir in Essex

Activities during 2018

Membership

Total membership on 31st December 2018 was 502; we gained 106 new members during 2018 offset by 41 who failed to renew by 31st March 2018.

The membership dropped in 2013 when the Native Irish Honey Bee Society was inaugurated. The overall growth of membership is gradual – each year the increase in new members is offset by non-renewals. Retention is an issue.

There are 35 Life or Honorary members (5 have not responded to letters); 14 family members (4 were previously full members); and one junior member.

		TOTAL MEMBER S		PAYING MEMBER S		
31st Decembe r	MEMBER S	CHANGE	PERCEN T	MEMBER S	CHANG E	PERCEN T
2012	339			298		
2013	297	-42	-12.39%	254	-44	-14.77%
2014	328	31	10.44%	287	33	12.99%
2015	376	48	14.63%	338	51	17.77%
2016	415	39	10.37%	379	41	12.13%
2017	437	22	5.30%	401	22	5.80%
2018	502	65	14.87%	467	66	16.46%

Gift Aid

Money reclaimed through Gift Aid has increased; for 2018 £1,276 was reclaimed.

Those who have not already done so can go to bibba.com/giftaid

Website

1. **Shop.** We are out of print of some books including Beowulf Cooper's book. The business of arranging reprints is ongoing. The shop has been taken offline while the committee decides on policy for reprinting and sales.
2. **Subscriptions.** Payment by direct debit via GoCardless has been setup and was used by 35 members to renew on 1st January 2018 and 61 on 1st January 2019. It is also possible to use PayPal, and a card reader has been purchased for the odd member who wishes to pay by phone, although this is time consuming and costs us more.
3. **Members' Area.** The 'members only' content currently includes:
 - i. **BIM online.** Past issues of BIM back to number 1 (Spring 1998) have now been scanned and are online. Issues 1 to 25 are available for anyone to download, and issues 26 to 51 are available only to logged in members.
 - ii. **Members' List.** The member's list has been taken offline until we have GDPR compliant consent from all members. Since the requirement to state consent for sharing was introduced on 25th May 2018, 42 new members have agreed to share and 19 have declined.
 - iii. **Future Plans - Map.** This has not been progressed and there are no current plans to take this forward.
4. **Speed & Security.** The website has been much faster since moving to Siteground and there have been no further episodes of malicious code injection.
5. **Groups Page.** In view of concerns over GDPR, the contact information was removed from the Groups page. We are in the process of updating consent so that this information can be restored.

In the last year there were 78,000 visitors by unique IP address with 192,000 visits. This is slightly down on 2017.

Communications.

Bee Improvement Magazine

We only managed to produce one issue of BIM in 2018. We aim to produce two this year.

Buzz/Humm emailed news

We sent out 11 emails in 2018. It is hoped to develop this method of communication into a more substantive newsletter.

In addition to the 458 members who received 'Buzz' there are now 732 non-members who have signed up to the cut-down version, 'Humm'.

Groups' Report

This has been a good year again for Groups with 7 more registered in 2018, mainly in the South West. Newer groups tend to be small with just a few members and BIBBA will be aiming to support them to achieve their goals.

BIBBA is very impressed with the conversations on the activities individual groups are undertaking and the knowledge that exists within our organisation. A number of people with particular knowledge and stories of interest have contributed to articles for publication in our Bee Improvement Magazine so please look out for these in future publications.

The advent of GDPR last year meant that after getting the group's website up to date BIBBA needed to remove personal contact information and would be grateful if all groups could re-register so that we have the correct details and permissions in place.

We would like to see more groups producing a surplus of queens and making these available to beekeepers in their areas, the aim being to reduce beekeepers reliance on imported queens and to build a sustainable mating population. We have been successful in helping groups raise finance to expand their capabilities and BIBBA is happy to help make applications. We have been particularly successful with applications to Tesco within their groundworks scheme. We can apply as BIBBA where groups are without a formal constitution or bank account. Please let me know if we can help with this.

A lot of time has been taken up working on the new 5 year strategy with Jo Widdicombe, Roger Patterson and Karl Colyer. This puts groups and our membership at the core of our activity and BIBBA will be looking to expand the number of groups particularly in England where we are underrepresented outside the South West. We want to get more of our membership engaged in Group activity so that ideally when we have new members there is an active group nearby they can be involved with. Please see the strategy document being launched at our AGM for more information.

We would like to see the current round of Sustainable Bees and Queens events around the country developing into annual or biennial events involving our members in organising these and Bee Improvement groups coming from these.

If anyone is interested in working with other BIBBA members on Bee Improvement and Queen rearing and might want help with this then please contact Kevin Thorn who can advise on this. It can start from very simple methods and a few hives to working with a larger group with many colonies and more advanced techniques. Whatever your plans or development stage there is a method that will suit you.

Kevin Thorn, Group Coordinator groups@bibba.com

Publicity

The newly formed role for managing publicity and the associated activities was filled by Karl Colyer in November 2018.

Purpose of publicity, trade stands and advertising

As a charity, there is an obligation to only spend money where required. There is also a duty to grow the organisation membership, to help maximise the number of people trained and to have a visible presence and impact at the major bee-related conventions and shows in the UK. There is a cost to this but this investment will be offset and possibly equalled by:

- Increased BIBBA membership numbers
- Sales of leaflets, booklets and books from the trade stand
- Attracting higher numbers of beekeepers to training events

In addition to the essential face of *BIBBA* at shows and other events, a significant input was made to the success of the *BIBBA/B4* Conference at Eden, behind the scenes using social and other media to advertise the event. The success of this was monitored using ‘short links’ which will be effective in increasing the effective reach for future events.

Our *Facebook* group has yet to reach critical mass at 500 *Likes* and needs to be developed further by the committee.

In addition there is further collaboration needed with the website team to optimize its reach and ensure it ‘speaks to search engines in an effective way.

Conference and Activities Report

This was formerly called ‘Conference and Workshops’, but the committee changed it to better describe what we do, as it now goes beyond just workshops.

‘Conference and Activities’ delivers tuition in several ways. Attendances at events is usually very good, showing that BIBBA are satisfying the needs of beekeepers of all abilities. For over 50 years BIBBA has concentrated on the improvement of honey bees that suit their locality, something that is becoming more important to all beekeepers.

The highlight of the year was the BIBBA conference in Cirencester. There was an ambitious programme, with three simultaneous lecture streams over three days, together with workshops and seminars. These were delivered by 34 presenters. There were 47 lectures, all of which were well attended. The event ran very smoothly showing that beekeepers can unite to make it work. Feedback showed that attendees were very appreciative.

Several one, and 2 day 'Bee Improvement' courses were run and remain popular. The weather in 2018 was well suited to these. Although these have limited attendance the practical nature and content is greatly appreciated by attendees who can learn from experienced beekeepers.

The increase in the importation of queens seems to be causing aggression problems in some areas. This has led to a request for instruction in Instrumental Insemination. Four courses were held in various locations. All went well, with attendees learning new skills.

Bee Improvement (BIFA) days continue to be popular, with over 50 being delivered. These are designed to encourage beekeepers to assess their colonies and raise queens from their more desirable ones. There are several simple techniques described that all beekeepers can use.

BIBBA supported the B4 'Sustainable Beekeeping. A future without Imports' event at the Eden Project in Cornwall. This was very successful, with presentations by scientists/researchers and practical beekeepers.

Many beekeepers are looking towards keeping bees that are best suited to their locality, an interest that is growing fast. More experienced beekeepers realise that many imports don't perform well and beginners are often seeking home produced bees and queens. The production of bees and queens is not always taught, with some BKAs buying in bees to supply beginners. BIBBA has responded by introducing 'Sustainability - Bees and Queens for Everyone using low-cost, simple methods' days early in 2019. Initial indications are that these will be successful.

All activities rely on help from others. The organisation of BIBBA Publicity is something that has been ineffectual for many years. This has now been addressed and is quickly making great improvements to distributing information. Events need local help in setting up or hosting, with offers of help freely given. Thanks must go to them all.

Academic collaboration

BIBBA Technical Committee

BIBBA are working on a series of guidance notes for beekeepers based on current scientific thinking. The intention is to keep these notes up to date by including new research results as they become available.

Central to this work is an assessment of the DNA assays currently favoured by various institutions. Some of these institutions are already cooperating with BIBBA or its members so their methods of purity assessments should be readily available and will be a great interest. Amongst these are the Roslin Institute and the Universities of Plymouth and Bangor (Wales). We are also speaking to Harper Adams with a view to future collaboration.

Results from this work and details of the other collaborative projects will be made available to members as they are finalised.

BIBBA continues to work with B4 (a BIBBA Group) on a 4 year Phd with Plymouth University, 'Investigating the phenotypic and genomic basis of local adaptation in the UK native honey bee (Amm) traits'. This project involves not only BIBBA groups within the SW but also groups across the whole UK.

BIBBA Committee has approved the funding (€4k) of some DNA analysis on a number of potential Amm breeder queens as part of an ongoing project in the SW to examine whether it is possible to not only conserve, but to produce a significant number of pure Amm queens.

Archives

At present housed with a committee member, there is a need to safeguard them for the future and form an electronic repository.

Future Plans

In the next year the Trustees will continue efforts to improve benefits to members and communication, provide courses and support bee improvement groups. In particular, consideration will be given to developing the *Facebook* group & the website, reprinting books, forming an electronic archive repository.

The Trustees aim to produce a BIBBA Strategy document ready to mail out to the membership prior to the 2019 AGM

BIBBA will continue to support academic institutions wherever possible, where the work should provide benefits to the BIBBA members.

BIBBA will continue to support DNA research where the Trustees see that there are tangible benefits to BIBBA members

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Nicholas Bentham-Green.
Chairman