

SOMERSET BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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Photo from personal archives of Sophie Prestige

Please send any copy for the April 2024 edition to me by the 15th March 2024

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Editor SBKA



Want an idea for a new year resolution? GET LEARNING !

The next online study groups start on Tuesday, January 9, 2024.

This time we are offering BBKA Module 3 – Honey bee diseases, pests and poisoning; and Module 8 – Beekeeping and honey bee management.

Module 3 is suitable for all members who have been keeping bees for a couple of years.

Module 8 is restricted to those who have completed all the other modules. Module 8 must be the last module to be taken, otherwise the modules can be tackled in any order.

Click here for the current [syllabi](#).

Studying for a module requires significant commitment – participants are expected to work through the course papers which are discussed at weekly group sessions.

The study groups are preparation for the exams held on Saturday, 23 March 2024 - but there is no obligation to sit them! Studying together help us all to become more knowledgeable and, hopefully, better beekeepers.

If you are interested in taking part, email with your name, the module you would like to study and your mobile phone number (for the course WhatsApp group). We will email you with course materials: eventsofficer@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

NEW YEAR – NEW CHALLENGE ?

Join the Somerset BKS team !

We are looking for a new Secretary and a new Treasurer to take over from Maggie Norris and Peter Derbyshire respectively when they complete their terms of office at the 2024 AGM in March.

These are key roles in the running of the association and you will receive help and support to get up to speed.

Taking up one of these posts is a great way to get involved with an association which is at the forefront nationally of beekeeper education and Asian hornet preparedness. Somerset has more than 1,000 members and has attracted associate membership from beekeepers around the country and internationally.

There is more information plus full jobs descriptions on the website: <https://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/vacancies.html>

If you are interested, please send a summary of any relevant experience to: secretary@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

We hope you want to join our team of beekeeping enthusiasts!

Job Specification for County Treasurer (Revised April 2020)

County and Charity Accounts

The main day to day role of this job is to manage the banking and funds for Somerset Beekeepers Association, i.e. the County Funds.

This involves

- management of the Charity's current and deposit account and bank signatories
- Prompt payment of due accounts upon receipt of invoice or proforma as approved in the budget or by Council resolution
- Quarterly production of accounts and bank reconciliations
- Maintain records of designated and restricted funds in accordance with the Charity Commission guidelines
- Liaison with the charity's bankers as necessary
- Safeguarding and obtaining a return on surplus funds in accordance with the Charity's investment policy and proposing any changes to investment arrangements to full Council for consideration and approval before putting in place. Bearing in mind, deposits are spread across all twelve Divisions and County and the total holding for the Charity as a whole in any one institution should not exceed the current Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) limit, currently £85,000.

At 30 September each year to close the accounts and prepare the County accounts for the year end with comparative data from the previous year. At the same time request and obtain accounts prepared in a consolidated format from all divisions to produce the Charity Accounts. A format has been established, divisions should also forward an independent review of the accounts and copies of bank statements to substantiate the balances in their

accounts. These are then provided to the Charity Independent Reviewer as evidence of the accuracy of the divisional information included in the consolidated accounts.

The Treasurer should also compile the Report to the Charity Accounts for approval by the Chairman before sending to the Independent Reviewer in November. This process needs to be completed before Christmas if possible, to allow Council to approve the accounts for adoption to the AGM at the January meeting. If it can't be achieved, then the accounts would have to be approved by e-mail resolution in January as no further meeting is scheduled until May.

County Meetings

January Council Meeting – provide the quarter accounts to 31 December (or as near as possible). Provide the Secretary with the Accounts and Treasurers report for the County for approval at the meeting and for inclusion in the Year Book. Produce the Charity Accounts and Report and Independent Review for approval by Council so this can be presented to the Members at the AGM.

March Annual General Meeting – present the annual report and accounts for adoption by the members and be prepared to take questions on the content. Take relevant documentation for signature to make changes to bank details if there are any changes to the three officers; Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer who are the main signatories on the bank accounts.

May Meeting– Provide accounts to 31 March and any update if there has been any relevant issues in the interim.

September Meeting – Provide accounts to 30 June and any update if there has been any relevant issues in the interim. Provide a draft budget for the following financial year for approval by Council

November Meeting – Provide County Accounts for the Year End to 30 September and final version of budget for current financial year.

Divisional Treasurers

Provide support and guidance to divisional treasurers relating to financial matters, including the payment of BBKA, BDI and SBKA subscriptions and closure of the Spring and Autumn Returns.

Compliance – GDPR

To renew the Charity's GDPR registration annually and ensure its content is up to date. To act as the County GDPR officer and give guidance on GDPR issues relating to membership and the safe handling of sensitive data. Review divisional membership documentation annually to ensure compliance.

Charity Commission – To keep the register of Trustees up to date at the Charity Commission and file the Annual Return and Report and Accounts in a timely manner. To advise the Charity Commission of any notifiable events e.g. police involvement in a safeguarding issue.

Website – To provide to the Webmaster, the Charity Report and Accounts with the Independent Review in pdf format for display on the website and ensure the privacy statement is maintained in accordance with the GDPR registration.

General Administration

To review the assets of the Charity, including divisional assets and review the Charity insurance to ensure that assets are adequately protected. To bring to Councils attention any issues that require a change in cover or relate to a claim on the Charity's policies.

To ensure the BBKA Trustee liability cover is in force and remains adequate to cover the liabilities of Council delegates and all trustees.

To advise Council immediately of any potential fraud or digital ransom attack.

To deal with general enquiries by post, email or via the website addressed to the Treasurer.

To attend and participate in Executive Meetings.

Skills/ abilities

Computer skills using Microsoft Office and Adobe

Some knowledge of Charitable Accounting requirements

Ability to use excel spreadsheets for accounting records

On line banking

Job Description for Secretary (Revised August 2023)

The principle role of the SBKA Secretary is as a conduit for information between members, the management team and external bodies. You will be working with the Council and the Executive using the SBKA Rules which inform the structure. See the Rules (in the Yearbook - either online or paper copy) for the definition of the Council and the Executive teams which make up the management structure of Somerset Beekeepers' Association.

Trustees

Trustees are the people responsible for controlling the work, management and administration of the charity on behalf of its beneficiaries.

Somerset Beekeepers' Association is registered with the Charity Commission (Charity no. 277803) and currently has 18 Trustees listed. These are the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and 13 Council delegates representing the 12 divisions (Taunton division shares the responsibility between two people).

The Tasks of the Secretary

You will have instruction on using the eR2 system. This is an online, secure GDPR compliant membership admin system which gives access to members' details and is also used for sending group emails.

- Manage the secretary's email account: secretary@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk , by regularly answering queries and/or passing them to the appropriate person.

- Arrange formal meetings as outlined in the SBKA Rules. There are four Executive and four Council meetings (May, September, November and January) a year. The Executive meetings take place a month before each Council meeting.

There is also an Annual General meeting which take place in March.

- Work with the Chair to set dates and formulate agendas for all formal meetings.

- Book venues (traditionally Ash Village Hall for Council meetings) or Zoom calls and organise refreshments for face-to-face meetings.

- Keep both paper and electronic copies of all agendas, minutes and relevant paperwork for reference.

Executive meetings

- Send the agenda with the minutes of the last meeting to all members of the Executive, along with any other relevant papers. It is usual to send the agenda to all Executive members 14 days before the meeting.
- Take part in and take the minutes of the meeting. The minutes will constitute a report for the Council either as they are or as a report based on what was decided. The key element is to include any recommendations that the Executive is putting to the Council. Send the draft minutes to the Executive for any corrections before they are distributed as part of the Council papers.

- Council meetings

Notice of a Council meeting needs to be sent at least two weeks beforehand.

- Send the agenda with the minutes of the last meeting to all SBKA members, along with any other relevant papers or reports. Invite all to attend, although only Council members are able to vote on any recommendation.
- Take the minutes and consult with the Chair for accuracy/ omissions before sending them to all members within 21 days of the meeting.
- Publish approved minutes on the SBKA website. You will be shown how to do this.

AGM

The AGM is organised by each of the twelve SBKA divisions on a rotating basis. The division organises the venue and lunch and liaises with the Education Officer (currently Richard Bache) to find a speaker.

As secretary you will:

- Help and support the relevant division to organise the day (send relevant emails, check all appropriate arrangements have been made etc)
- Send the agenda, the minutes of the previous AGM, the treasurer's report and accounts (which will have been agreed at the January Council meeting) to all members at least 14 days before the AGM.
- Take the minutes and check them with the Chair before sending them to all members within 21 days of the meeting.

Trustees

Each division has an AGM around November and confirms the name of its Council Delegate for the following year. This person will become a Trustee of SBKA. The Treasurer sends forms for completion to each Trustee and publishes the list of names on the Charity Commission website.

- Work with divisions and the Treasurer to keep the Trustee list up to date.

CAF Bank

The Secretary and the Chair are nominated to approve payments arranged by the Treasurer. The Treasurer will sort out the bank mandates for you.

SBKA Website/Yearbook

There is a lot of information in the members' area of the website, which includes the Yearbook, and each of the 12 divisions has its own webpage.

OTHER NEWS

Foulbrood inspections

The number of foulbrood inspections carried out in Somerset by the National Bee Unit (NBU) in 2023 rose slightly bucking the national trend.

Year	Number of colonies inspected	Percentage of inspected colonies with American foulbrood	Percentage of inspected colonies with European foulbrood
2023	697	0	5.6
2022	679	0	5.3

Somerset's figures are the reverse of those elsewhere in England where the number of inspections fell by 28 per cent. The drop was driven by bee inspectors being deployed to deal with the huge rise in Asian hornets.

The NBU publishes a live colony inspection report online: <https://bit.ly/3SUtFN1>



Lecture Day – 10 February, Bridgwater

Somerset's annual Lecture Day offers a packed programme of talks, workshops and a trade hall in a spacious conference centre with ample parking and refreshments. It is aimed at beekeepers at all levels.

Lectures:

- Beekeeping techniques for the better beekeeper: Gerry Collins
Catch it if you can! Gerry Collins



- A honey bee solution to Varroa: Stephen Riley



- Bees and how we care for them - translating bee research into real world conservation: Professor Juliet Osborne



Workshops:

- Microscopy: Bridget Knutson, Master Beekeeper
- Beekeeping & climate change: Geoff Blay, Master Beekeeper
- Asian hornets - monitoring traps & bait stations: Colin Lodge
- Pests & diseases

Plus a raffle with great prizes!

Refreshments can be ordered from the venue in advance or purchased on the day. See Eventbrite link.

When: 9.30am – 5.30pm, Saturday, 10 February

Where: The Canalside, Marsh Lane, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 6LQ

Cost: £10.00

Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/somerset-bka-lecture-day-2024-tickets-737983086277>

Somerset honey authenticity campaigner on TV

Lynne Ingram, NDB, Master Beekeeper, Chair of the Honey Authenticity Network UK (HAN UK) and the BBKA's honey authenticity ambassador, brought national attention to the subject of adulterated honey.

She appeared on the BBC's Countryfile programme and joined presenter Adam Henson on his farm to talk about 'dirty' honey which is mixed with cheap syrups. She invited him to taste some of her own honeys from apiaries in Somerset.

"Genuine honey can represent a snapshot of time and place," she said. "Adam certainly loved a taste of the 'good stuff!'"

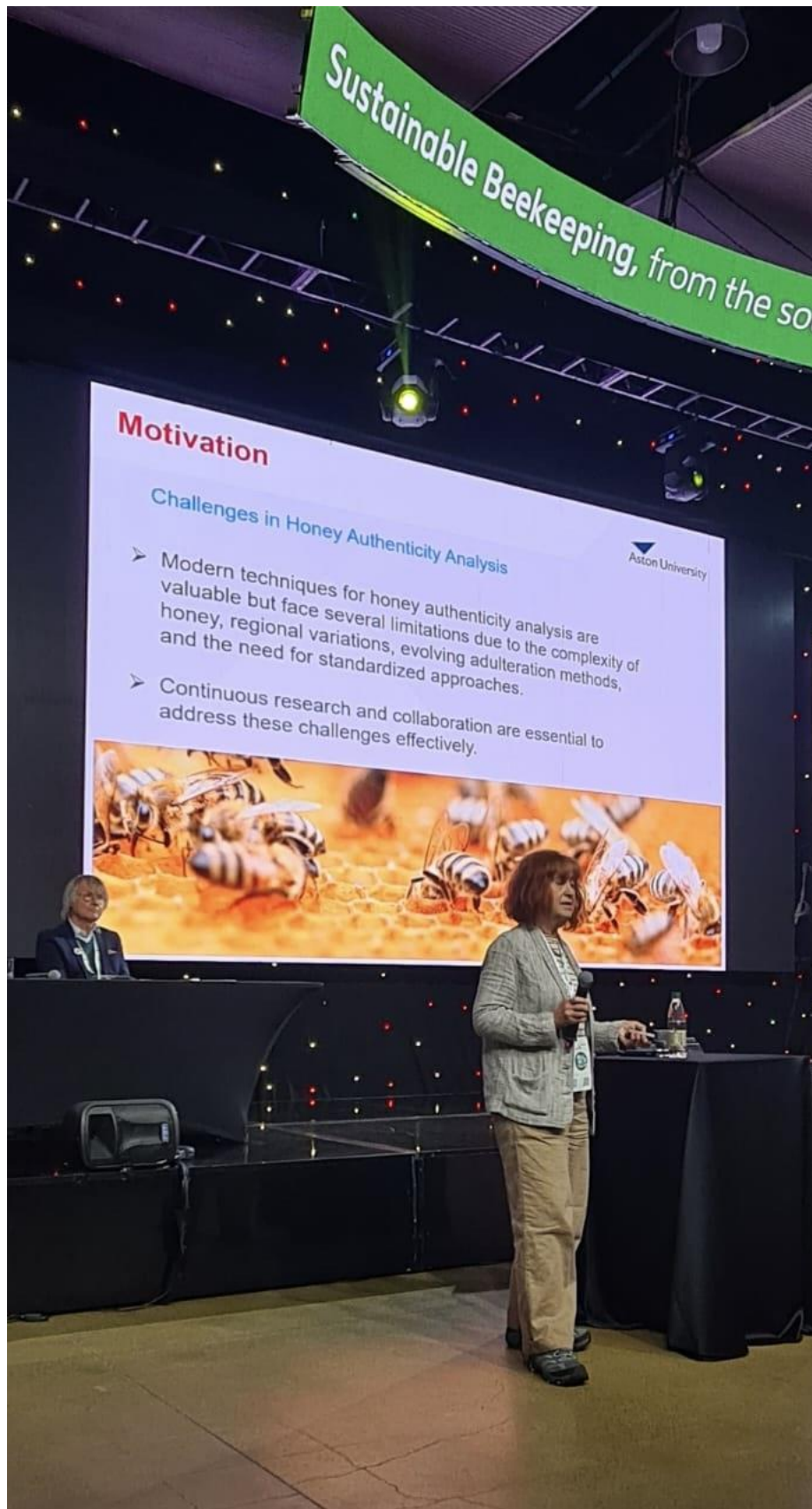
"Good honey is more than just taste," she added. "Globally, honey producers are experiencing a depressed and blocked honey market, and there is a growing call to restore authenticity, fair prices and remuneration for producers."

Adam Henson also visited Aston University, which is working with HAN UK, the Scottish Bee Company and the BBKA to develop a new, reliable test for honey authenticity using fluorescent spectroscopy and machine learning.

Lynne talked about the University's research work at the Apimondia International Beekeeping Congress in Chile in the autumn. The technology is still being tested and is already showing some very promising results. The ultimate aim is to access the test through a mobile phone, without the need for costly and complicated laboratory processes.



Lynne Ingram and TV presenter Adam Henson sample some Somerset honeys



Lynne Ingram outlines the Aston University research

