MBBKA Report for the Bucks County AGM – 8th December 2023.

We have had a number of changes in the committee taking effect from our AGM in October.
Jonathan Palmer has helped us greatly over the last year while we had no elected chairman and he was coopted into this role until the AGM by the committee. He now steps down to be replaced by Jane Newman, while he takes up the Secretary post.
Steve Hamilton takes on the vacant post of Vice Chairman.
Andrew Smith has completed 6 years as treasurer and steps down to be replaced by Rob Spiller.
Helen Palmer comes back onto the committee as Apiary Manager and Honey Show Secretary.
Simon Knatchbull becomes our Novice Beekeeper for this year.
Jon Theobald becomes a trustee of the Association in recognition of the huge amount of work he has done, along with George Bull, Helen and other members of the committee on the apiary relocation project.
Other members of the committee remain the same.

We need to record huge thanks to Jonathan and Helen Palmer, and to Andrew Smith in particular for many years of service to the association. Andrew was given a framed certificate of recognition by the Association at the AGM.
It goes without saying that we couldn't survive without so many volunteers.

Membership
MBBKA membership remains constant. At our last AGM in October 2023 membership stood at 256.

Finances and Apiary Development
The Association is on a sound financial footing. We do hold a significant reserve in our apiary development fund which has been built up in response to the Hampden Field housing development which includes the land on which the apiary sits. Planning approval for the development has now been granted, the sale of the land has now gone through and our new landlord is Taylor Wimpey. We have been informed that we will need to move from our current site but a new site has been offered by TW. It is expected that it will be 2025-2027 before we move as we are not in the current phase of the project.

Association Meetings
Our monthly Association meetings returned to the Church of the Good Shepherd. Initially attendance levels were down on the zoom numbers but this did recover as the year went on. The practical summer meetings were once again held at the apiary and these were very well attended.

Our honey show this year was a joint show with the County Honey show. The show was successful both in terms of the honey show itself and the talks and presentations that were held whilst the judging was taking place.

Education, School Visits and Fairs
The beginner's course was fully subscribed and was held in-person at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Stoke Mandeville and the Association apiary.

Two candidates attended the training sessions for the BBKA basic assessment both of whom passed with a credit or distinction. We also had one member pass the Honey Bee Health Assessment.

We were able to re start the school visit programme as Maria Ward very kindly volunteered to take on the co-ordination role. Volunteers from MBBKA have visited three schools, one nursery school and a cub scout group this year. Arden Marshall has volunteered to help Maria with the school visit program in 2024.

Local fairs were held again last year and Mid Bucks attended 6 events over the summer months and supported the County stand at the Bucks County Show.

Asian Hornet Preparation

We have been encouraging members to educate themselves and prepare for possible AH attack in 2024. This will be coordinated by the Apiary Manager.

Jane Newman

MBBKA Chairman