2024 - Year in Review – Chalfonts Beekeepers Society

We have had an extremely busy and successful year in 2024:

- We have helped run the Bucks Spring Seminar, organised the fantastic auction, had stalls at all our regular fetes and fairs and organised both the Chalfonts Honey Show and hosted the Bucks Honey Show. Thanks go to all involved , but in particular to Bill Fisher, Mike Tucker, Sue and Dave Carter in addition to our Events secretary Peter and Fiona Matheson.
- In education, we have run a Module 1 training course, the Beginner's course (32 attendees), the Developing Beekeepers Course and organised various exams and assessments – 4 achieved the Basic Asessment, 1 achieved Qualified Beekeeper and General Husbandry and 7 took and passed Module 1. Thank you in particular to Steve Troll, Deborah Campbell, Jim and Fiona.
- The Hyde Heath apiary has been very well attended throughout the season, the Chesham apiary not so well but both are open to all members and provide great opportunities to learn and help the Club. Thank you to Arnold Desandere (Chesham) and Jim Liness (Hyde Heath) for all their work.
- We have had a few changes on the committee:

  o Steve Troll has taken over trading from Mike Walters. Trading will now be more seasonal with a focus on frames, foundation, fondant and jars and will generally be based at the Hyde Heath apiary.

  o The education role previously run by Steve has been taken over by Julian Keen-lyside, a very recently retired teacher and experienced beekeeper.

  o Dorothie Jones has stepped down as Programmes Secretary after a great year of speakers – we are looking for someone to fill that role and in the meantime speakers will be organised by the Committee.
- The AHAT team has been luckily quiet – but thanks to the hard work of Jilly Ellson and her team we had a great effort on early season Queen trapping and great communication throughout the year so we are well prepared for when the threat inevitably becomes a reality.
- Financially we have had a good year - from trading, speaking at events, running courses and honey sales, the Club has actually made a surplus this year of £5,380 and as a result we are delighted to be able to invest in the Club going forward, buying more equipment for members to borrow including a honey extractor and solar wax extractor. (Main highlights of the accounts: Payments to members for honey sold through the club increased from £5,318 to £6,106. Commission from these sales, together with sales of club honey, raised £2030.

Receipts at the auction were £6,534, which after payments to sellers of £5,937 resulted in an additional net surplus to the club of £597. Gift aid reclaim receipts from HMRC amounted to £1,143 and trading turnover increased this year by 16% to £8,537).

- Outside the Club, we have been speaking at local schools and communities, sourcing out apiaries for members and Sarah Peterson in particular has run a fantastic project with the Slough Youth Group, 'Together as One' with Rob Deeks and 16 young people. They now have 2 hives overwintering and we look forward to continued involvement in their beekeeping journey.
- In addition Jilly Ellson has led an exciting project abroad, running a Beginners Course together with Jim Liness, Steve Troll and Deborah Campbell at the Almond Hotel in Northern Cyprus. Twelve locals attended the course which was held over 4 days and involved classroom and practical sessions with the hotel's 72 hives. It involved a huge amount of work from all, was very successful and hopefully will lead to new associate members for our club, and possible future teaching opportunities.
- All of the Club's activities involve a great deal of work behind the scenes and we are very lucky to have a fantastic Committee and a core group of volunteers who help at all events. Particular thanks to Chris Bromwich who was awarded the President's Salver this year in recognition of all his help.