



# Preveiling Wind

Spring 2022

Newsletter of the Kendal and South Westmorland Beekeepers Association

Every picture tells a story as they say.

Jackie Kerr sent this one in. Those were lucky bees, and on the night of storm Arwen, there were plenty of lucky people as well of course. Rosie and I had about 8 fairly substantial sycamore and ash trees fall in the land behind us here in Kendal. At first sight it was very disheartening but having had a chain saw at work for a couple of days, there is now a real sense of renewal about the small wood. Ivy often gets a bad press, but it seemed clear



that those trees which held a lot of this plant in their crowns were the ones that were brought down by the wind, and that this has allowed the light to flood in. This will mean a host of opportunistic flowering plants will now appear, before new trees force their way through..... and trees, as I have realised, since keeping bees, are flowering plants themselves of course. Huge, multi layered flowering plants. On my way into town I saw 3 pigeons looking miserable, sat on top of a wall of ivy eating the miserable looking black berries which nature provides for them in January/February when there is little else to go at. So apart from providing a feast of late nectar and pollen for the bees (and other insects), helping to create sun filled glades in old woods, creating shelter and habitat for a host of species, and providing winter food for the local pigeons, what has the ivy ever done for us?

The other issue apart from a direct hit from a falling tree, is hives getting blown over themselves. I mentioned this to Julia who sent me a slide of their Mark 5 (?) version of a hive stand. Wooden posts rammed into the ground, metal runners screwed to the tops, and a matting on the ground to stop the vegetation growing through. A sort of belt and braces approach. Improving the efficacy of my stands is another one of those jobs I keep meaning to get around to.

So that just leaves us all hoping that the bees in the hives left standing, are still safely tucked up in the middle of their 4 month hibernation.

**Phil**



## Informal Apiary Visits

Apiary visits must be our raison d'être. We join an association to learn from each other, don't we? Kendal Beekeepers organises one formal apiary visit each month during the spring and summer. Sally and I hosted one last year here in Burneside, and we've offered to do another this year. We'd also be happy to see beekeepers at our apiaries on other occasions.

We all inspect our hives about once each week during the spring and summer. There's no reason why we shouldn't invite a few fellow beekeepers to join us. Last year we mentored several new beekeepers and of course invited them, from time to time, to come round to watch us do some particular job.

We think it would be a good idea if we got into the habit of telling other members, admittedly at short notice, when we are going to look at our hives and invite them to join us, if they are free. If other members would like to do the same, we'd all be visiting more apiaries and learning much more.

Of course these would be work meetings, so it would be expected that we'd be having suitable refreshments after the inspections!

If you like this idea, and would like to be invited round to one of our apiaries sometime, please send me an email, to [dicktowler49@gmail.com](mailto:dicktowler49@gmail.com). Sometime before April I'll ask Ali to circulate an email to everyone, repeating this invitation. Then, when we're going to do something that we think members might find interesting, we'll send individual emails to say when, where and what we're going to be doing.

**Dick Towler**

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## **Meetings, Learning Groups, Bee Buddies and Social Get Togethers.**

After all the problems of Covid, K&SW BKA met together, for real, no Zoom, for the December meeting. We talked about how to move the group forward, partly because Covid vaccinations free us up a little bit but also because we are keen to involve new (and younger!) members of the group. We discussed venues; everyone wanted to continue to use Cumbria Wildlife Trust at Plumgarths, Kendal, and that is booked now but is not available in February. We hope to Zoom from Plumgarths so everyone can still meet as they prefer.

**Meetings in the winter months** are on the **2nd Tuesday** of the month at **7.30pm**:

**February 8th 2022 7.30pm Zoom meeting** talk by Keith Bartlem Master Beekeeper & ex-pilot – Bee Flight v. Human Flight & a bit about Asian Hornet Flight.

**March 8th 2022 7.30pm Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Plumgarths, LA8 8LX & via Zoom** demo and talk – hives and beekeeping equipment choices, how to assemble flat pack bee boxes – members of Kendal BKA supporting our new members.

Thorne 'shop' equipment available to look at & buy.

**April 12th 2022 7.30pm Cumbria Wildlife Trust, Plumgarths, LA8 8LX & via Zoom** Managing Varroa & moving to chemical treatment free beekeeping. Prof Steve Martin, Salford University (to be confirmed).

**Summer Meetings** – usually Saturday or Sunday afternoon – host's choice of date.

**May 2022** Sally Buckley & Dick Towler Burneside.

June, July, August, September **Please offer your apiary for a meeting**

### **Bee Learning Groups 2022**

Learning Level 1 (Basic Assessment Syllabus) running already contact [julia@bcs.org](mailto:julia@bcs.org)

Via Zoom Feb 7th, Feb 28th, Feb 14th from 8 to 9.30pm

Honey Bee Health Certificate – apiary sessions start when the weather is good enough.

**Furness BKA annual convention Saturday 26th March 2022** at the Malt Kiln, Bardsea, details to follow by email – talks on pollen and propolis.

**Cumbria Honey Show Saturday 5th March 2022**, Keswick – details to follow by email

**National Bee Unit - Bee Health Day Saturday 23rd July 2022** Lancaster Grammar School, hosted by Lancaster Beek's <https://lancaster-beekeepers.org.uk/> Booking opening date to follow by email. This is an opportunity to see real frames from colonies where the bee inspectors have found disease, so you will see European & American Foulbrood and the non-notifiable diseases. The North West team of bee inspectors will explain how to identify disease, how to manage and treat with an up date on Varroa treatments, how to keep beekeeping equipment clean and sterile, how to barrier manage colonies.

**Melissa Lovett & Julia Hoggard**

Thanks to all the contributors to this edition of the Preveiling Wind. **Dick, Julia, Melissa, Meg, and Alison.** If anyone is able to plan ahead for a contribution for the next edition, I will ask for offerings in the middle of April. Thanks.

## **ADM Meeting Saturday 15th Jan 2022**

I volunteered to be our ADM delegate taking over from Phil and thought it would give me a better understanding of the BBKA, its work and its ambitions. There are currently approximately 27,000 members across nearly 70+ associations. Prior to the meeting on the above date, we had 2 practice sessions to get used to the technology and to learn how to take part in the procedural side of the meeting. I joined the meeting as a complete novice, but I have learnt a great deal through participating.

Due to current restrictions the meeting was held remotely using Zoom (on my iPad), and my mobile phone was used to vote on your behalf. There were 65 delegates in all, but only 3 were in attendance in Stoneleigh (BBKA's office).

We started to log in at 9am to make sure our voting system was working via our mobiles, and the meeting started formally at 10am with Margaret Wilson the outgoing chair guiding proceedings. She started by saying that holding the meeting remotely had saved £9k in expenses and 14,000 miles in terms of carbon footprint. It later became apparent that some, but not all, would prefer face to face interaction.

Associations were represented from as far afield as Northern Ireland, Gwent, Cornwall and Sussex.

The first report that attracted commentary from the delegates was the Education Report prepared by Anne Rowberry (AR) who is now the new chair of BBKA going forward. Discussion centred around the cost of the individual modules, the difficulty of some modules where the knowledge required was 'more than a GCSE examination', and that we should be testing the application of knowledge rather than the ability to memorise terms e.g., as in module 5. Beacon schools are part of the remit of this committee, so I took the brave step of mentioning our schools. AR acknowledged the wonderful set up at Heron Hill and that communication and an overdue visit will happen asap. After that we went on to discuss the financial reports (Income is roughly £870k) and next year's budget, which was followed by the election of an Honorary Member, the President (AR) and the election of Trustees.

Interestingly the application from Laddingford District in Kent for associate membership attracted discussion from the delegates. Whilst the application had the full support of the BBKA committee, as they have demonstrated that their constitution is in order, their finances are sound and they have 100+ active members, some larger associations felt it should remain part of the larger association of Thanet. Thanet had no objections as they understood the difficulties some members faced travelling large distances for meetings. However, a membership vote was called for following the delegates vote and happily the members voted overwhelmingly to support their application. Welcome to the fold Laddingford!

Lunch break followed....and once we reconvened discussion centred on the propositions raised by individual associations.

The first 3 propositions centred around the importation of adulterated and fake honey and that Government, Food Standards and other trade bodies needed to be contacted to improve the quality of imports. (China has imports of 36,000 tonnes into the EU of 'honey' which is generally unripe). Improved methods of analysis, testing, labelling and public awareness, all need action. These propositions were all

passed and BBKA will take action. Whilst other propositions included constitutional changes and improvements to forthcoming events, the lengthy discussions centred around the importation of honey bees and queens and that Government urgently needs a plan to counter the spread of the Asian Hornet before the NBU resources are overwhelmed.

All propositions were passed, eventually, and the meeting closed around 4pm.

It was a very interesting and informative insight into the workings of the BBKA and although a long day, there is no doubt that all beekeepers are passionate about their bees. I am looking forward to representing us next year, and you never know it might just be a face-to-face meeting.

**Meg Wroe**

**At the recent AGM**, the following people were voted in to represent the club in the coming year:



<b>Chairperson</b>	Geraldine Dawson	<b>Secretary</b>	Alison Crumbie
<b>Treasurer</b>	Pat Malone	<b>Meetings secretary</b>	Julia H / Melissa Lovett
<b>Education Officer</b>	Julia Hoggarth	<b>Assessment/Examinations Sec</b>	Julia H
<b>Honey Show Sec</b>	Crystal Gallagher	<b>Webmaster</b>	Andrew Brown
<b>ADM Delegate</b>	Meg Wroe	<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Phil Whiting

**Further committee members** Diane Elphinstone, Jacqui Cottam, Denis Hudson  
 It was very reassuring to see new people volunteering to take on different roles, bringing new energy and insight to the association.

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Do others agree that Chris Packham does a great job at both celebrating our wildlife and informing us of the damage we are doing to it and what we stand to lose? In the news this week it seems that our Minister against the environment is permitting the use, in extremis, of the chemical thiamethoxam. The RSPB responded : "Across England, the wildlife we love is in decline, even the buzzing of bees in our farmlands and countryside is becoming quieter every year." The charity Buglife said : it is "shameful" no action had been taken to make sure "bee and wildlife destroying pesticides are properly assessed as being pollinator safe". Keeping bees I think, helps me support those who I see as being part of the solution. **Phil**

## **Gardening for bees.....The Right Depth**

Did anyone know this? I decided to move some bluebells from a corner of our garden into a new area. I pushed the hand fork into the ground to lever them up but it just came up with thin air and a few green leaves ripped off the still submerged bulbs. 'These are buried deep' I thought. So I got a spade and it helped me extract them from a cosy position about 5" down in the soil. Now, I'd seen the seeds that had been produced last year.....little grey ball bearings which, when fallen from the old flower casings would obviously land on the surface. So how does the mature bulb end up so deep underground? A



contributor to a gardening forum told me that they have 'contractile' roots. The roots go down into the soil, and are condensed and wrinkly. Over the year, these contract, and gradually pull the bulb into the soil, away from the reach of predators such as squirrels. On googling 'contractile roots', I saw that it was true. It told me that tulips have been found to have pulled themselves up to 2 feet underground. So it seems, bulbs can plant themselves.

**Phil**

## **Bee Buddying.**

At the recent AGM, and at the December meeting, we discussed the idea of bee buddying again. Jackie Kerr's photo certainly makes it look idyllic. It seems that many of us have experienced the

benefit of meeting up to manipulate the bees, passing on and sharing expertise, especially when there is a new beekeeper involved. There is a feeling that with just a little bit of organisation it would happen more frequently and really help things move on. Julia and Melissa agreed to put some thought into how to do it. They have met up and are encouraging others to get involved:



**We're exploring Bee-Buddying to help new Bee keepers gain confidence and experience. If you might be interested in becoming a Bee Buddy please send an email to [melissajanelovett@gmail.com](mailto:melissajanelovett@gmail.com) and we will add you to the discussion.**

**Melissa**

For those who didn't attend or haven't read the minutes of the AGM, various people were thanked for supporting the club over the last year, including Stuart, who sources the Ambrosia, and Ken who comes up with the fondant. Mmmmm.

# BOOK NOW!



## Spring 2022 Convention

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For further information, **and to book** from 31<sup>st</sup> January  
see the Spring Convention pages at [www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk)

### 'Building Back Better'

As we know, there were a heck of a lot of trees brought down by Storm Arwen. When it comes to replanting, I think the government slogan above wants us to refer to a chart you may have seen on the internet which tells us how many insects each variety of tree can support when it reaches maturity. Most of us know that the oak is at the top. It is worth reminding ourselves of a few others. The master chart lists all the commonly known trees.

**Oak 284** (associated insect species)  
Willow 266 Hawthorn 149  
Scots Pine 91 Ash 41  
Larch 17 Sycamore 15  
Yew 4 **Rhododendron 0**

Let's agree to go easy on planting more Rhododendrons : )

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