

STOWMARKET & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Chairman's Report for AGM February 2019

Stowmarket & District Beekeepers have enjoyed a successful season in 2018, commencing on those cold winter evenings in February 2018 with the first of our training course sessions for those entering the hobby that year. The course was well attended by an enthusiastic cohort, of whom a significant proportion went on to join the Association and get their own Bees

The club apiary continued to be well attended throughout the summer with a selection of beginners, and older members, showing interest in a diverse programme of activities that proved both educational and enjoyable. Feedback from those attending provided some very good suggestions for the type of activity that might prove interesting for next seasons programme

On the social front we held our normal range of events confirming that Stowmarket Beekeeper's favourite pastime is definitely catered social gatherings, with the numbers attending exceeding that of any other type of event held. Our annual BBQ was held at Richard Martin's place with excellent fare, and very well attended. A splendid way to spend a summer Sunday afternoon

President's Day proved to be equally successful later in the summer with another good turn out to take advantage of the excellent catering of Angela and her team of helpers

A relatively new addition to our social calendar is our Christmas buffet and Quiz Night which seems to be growing in popularity, year on year, at the moment. This may be because the opportunity to meet up with fellow apiarists for a chat and some excellent food on a cold winters evening is proving just too enticing to resist

We put on a programme of members meetings throughout the winter covering a variety of aspects of Beekeeping, both educational and entertaining, but we do struggle with numbers on these events and are constantly searching for ideas and suggestions of topics that the membership would like to see added to the programme.

On the administration front the Association continues to strive to improve communication with members and ensure everyone has the most up to date information on all matters. To that end we have now appointed Roger Chapman as our Membership Secretary to coordinate all membership issues and ensure that points of contact for all members are up to date, and that everyone is receiving all club communications. Meanwhile Felix Oliver maintains our club website which has received several accolades throughout the year for quality and content, as well as providing the most up to date information on all club events and activities.

The Stowmarket Association continues to look into setting up series of practical meetings to develop member's beekeeping skills, and knowledge, along the lines of British Beekeeping Association educational syllabus. Unfortunately, this has not progressed as well as had been hoped in the last year but remains a target for the coming year as it will provide opportunity to increase knowledge through structured courses of learning that could, in turn, lead to recognised Beekeeping qualifications.

I would remind Stowmarket members that their membership of the Association entitles them to free entry to most events run by the other 5 associations that form Suffolk Beekeepers. I would also encourage our members to take a look at the Suffolk Beekeepers website to see the programme of events being run by other associations in the area. There are a lot of attractive events going on across Suffolk

Suffolk Beekeepers are running their own Spring event in 2019 for all affiliated association members This year's event is being held at Moreton Hall Prep School on Saturday 30th March 10.00 till 4.00 with Clive De Bryn coming along as Keynote speaker. Clive, and the other presenters, will be talking about building up colonies in the spring and rearing your own Queens. I would encourage all members to check out the programme for the day as the £20 entry price is good value

Finally I would welcome you to the 2019 AGM for Stowmarket & District Beekeepers, and thank you for attending. The AGM is the venue for appointment of our Committee and Officers for the forthcoming year and we are always looking for new candidates to help with the running of the Association. We have struggled to maintain members on the Committee this year and so have decided to change Chairman in an effort to stabilise the Committee and encourage newcomers to join. If you feel you would like to step forward and make a contribution to the running of the Association please feel free to approach any of the Committee present at the AGM and let them know, as your offer will be very warmly welcomed

Alan Seager Chairman Stowmarket & District Beekeepers 2017~2019
24th February 2019