

HBKA AGM minutes, held on 16th October 2025

Church of the Good Shepherd. Mytholmroyd

1. Apologies for absence

Liz Bolton

Chris Dale

Tim Plant

Richard Elliott

Ian Woodhall

Andy and Deb Garnett

Jen Horsley

There were 26 members present.

2. Minutes of 2024 AGM – agreed as a correct record

3. There were no matters arising which were not on the agenda.

4. Correspondence. None relating to AGM.

5. Chairman's report

Roger thanked many key members of the Association:

Mark Millard, current chair of YBKA and examiner for practical exams.

Beginners course tutors - Chris, John, Elaine and Ian.

Mentors supporting the beginners for their first year of beekeeping.

Chris was also thanked for his work running the Basic preparation course.

The 20+ members who volunteered and helped at the Halifax Show.

A special thank you went to Sarah and Matthew (Apiary managers) as they faced unexpected challenges at the site:

Poor vehicular access to the Apiary

Aggressive bees

Wasp invasion

Outbreak of European Foulbrood

Rowena was thanked for her work as treasurer.

A special thanks was given to Andy Evans, who gave practical help to another member who was struggling with his bees due to ill health.

RP also thanked the Committee members.

6. Secretary's report

As previously described, all communication is now digital so involves email and website management.

We now use the BBKA system of ER2, which although dated, avoids maintaining different databases. Most users only send plain text emails, but I use a simple process to add pictures and change font sizes etc.

Although I try to send as few emails as necessary, there are quite a few indiscriminately circulated by both BBKA and YBKA. Unfortunately a few people in response have unsubscribed, which cuts them off from all emails including HBKA as this process is unselective, all or nothing. If anyone wants resubscribing then we can do this. We would encourage members to just delete those messages they do not want.

ER2 is also used for the renewals process, including a new payment system on ER2 itself, which Rowena, the Treasurer, will be able to describe. Alan admitted there had been some issues when members had tried to renew, but hopefully most had now managed.

A further attempt has been made to relaunch the Facebook page, now private to HBKA members only, but it seems that few of us want to use social media.

There is a WhatsApp group for Association Apiary users, which can be periodically busy. It is quite easy to switch off notifications from this group alone, meaning you only see the traffic if you look for it.

7. Treasurer's report and membership

Rowena gave details of the annual accounts, receipts and payments document. This can be seen on the website.

She stressed the importance of confirming Gift Aid if appropriate (check box on membership renewal form), as approximately £1000 was received from this source.

The Halifax Show had been a success, making a profit of £45, but this does not reflect that considerable money had been spent on new equipment / sundries for the honey show, including new show benches, grading glasses and polo shirts.

The Committee had recently considered increasing membership fees, as BBKA has made changes to capitation fees. After some consideration the decision taken was to keep HBKA membership fees the same as last year and absorb the costs from the HBKA current funds.

A discussion followed regarding whether some funds should be labeled as a contingency fund but it was noted that it is YBKA which hold a contingency fund. The Association has to pay bank charges as HBKA is not deemed by them to have charitable status as such.

HBKA has 141 members, 23 fewer than last year.

Members were reminded to renew membership by the 7th November if not already done (for £10 saving).

8. Apiary Manager's report

Matthew thanked Kay for her help this year with inspection visits and advice. He thanked Tim for help with much donated sugar.

He spoke of the difficulties of an apiary under lock-down conditions, and said members had followed the rules.

Wasps were a considerable problem this summer.

From starting the beekeeping year with only a couple of association hives, it is likely that by next summer there will potentially be eight or more thriving association colonies on site, and it can be properly used as a "Training Apiary".

Following MB contacting the land agent for the apiary site, the rutted road track into the apiary has been repaired with Tarmac, courtesy of Marshalls, and will be named "Baldry Way".

A request has been made by some local residents that the gate nearest to the road should be kept closed at all times.

9. Education and Exam officer's report

A brief report was delivered in the absence of Chris Dale.

Excellent results for the Basic exam, and more beginner beekeepers took the exam from HBKA than in any other association in Yorkshire.

MM mentioned the George Knight Memorial Award from BBKA, which is given to the regional association that has succeeded in the greatest number of exam passes above the basic. He believed YBKA will win this again, as the number of passes is not pro rata. The award comprises £200 of vouchers.

MM also stressed that HBKA has an excellent reputation at the YBKA, thanks particularly to the teaching efforts of Chris Dale, Liz Bolton and Elaine Robinson.

10. YBKA Area representative's report

Josh has attended YBKA meetings and has been working on a Code of Conduct for beekeepers document. This is in keeping with The Equality Act.

Hopefully the document can be adopted by local beekeeping associations, with an expectation that members will sign up to this code.

Sadly this has become necessary following a few occurrences of bullying in other associations.

The process will be staged, initially informal, then escalation, then potentially suspension.

11. 12. 13. Election of Chair and officers and other posts - Ian Bairstow

Ian congratulated and thanked Roger for yet another successful year as Chairman of HBKA, and asked if any others were keen to take over the role, but none were forthcoming.

No other members put themselves forward for committee roles, and the following members were duly re-elected to serve for another year. All were re-elected en block; proposed by Marcella and seconded by Kay.

Roger Pool	Chair
Ian Bairstow	Vice Chair and Program Secretary
Alan Brook	Secretary
Rowena Bairstow	Treasurer
Sarah and Matthew Baldry	Apiary Managers
Paddy Walker	Special ops
Peter Nicholls	Honey Show Secretary
Jacky Brook	Minutes Secretary
Richard Searle	Asian Hornet Action Team lead
Chris Dale	Education and Exam secretary
Liz Bolton	Safeguarding officer
Josh Jones	YBKA representative

Ian stressed the Committee was open to all HBKA members, and that if they wished to join the Committee they should speak to Roger or other committee member.

14. Award of BBKA Certificates

Mark Millard, current Chair of YBKA, presented the certificates and badges.

15. Award of trophies from the Halifax show

Peter announced the winners and Mark presented the trophies.

16. YLA Hornet update and plans for next year

Richard informed the meeting that as of 10/10/25 there had been 143 confirmed nests of YLAH in the UK, mostly in the south, and some in Ireland.

It has become easier to track the nests using small blue-tooth transmitters on the hornets.

Genetic tests on hornets discovered in Kent and Sussex have revealed some second-generation hornets are being produced in Great Britain.

The strategy set by DEFRA and the Government is still one of Eradication, not containment. This may change in time in certain areas.

Plan to deal with YLAH locally -

Continue to raise awareness of YLAH among general population.

More use of YLAH app.

Local monitoring with bait stations widespread across the Association. (Currently 13 members on list, more asked to volunteer)

Honey buzzards naturally prey on hornets, but they are not a local native species.

17. Update on EFB and AFB cases in West Yorks

Kay (Seasonal Bee Inspector) shared Foulbrood statistics for Yorkshire and nationally, and detailed how incidence rates of detected European and American Foulbrood cases have changed.

There has been a disproportionately high number of cases of both diseases in apiaries in Yorkshire over the past year.

Kay has agreed to speak on the subject in detail at the meeting in February 2026.

Kay provided copies of the new updated NBU Advisory Leaflets:
Foulbrood Disease of Honey Bees and Managing Varroa for members to take.

18 . Program for 2025/26

Ian detailed the forthcoming program, as structured so far. Details will be available on the website when all the sessions have been confirmed, but the evening meetings planned are as follows:

November	Reflections on Queen Rearing
December	Fermenting with Honey and Beekeeping on Sicily
January	The nucleus option (zoom)
February	Foulbrood disease in bees
March	Nosema

The Beginners course will start in March.

19. AOB

Jerry informed the meeting that the Beekeepers Quarterly won first prize at the World Beekeeping Awards at Apimondia for the best Beekeeping magazine.

The meeting closed at 21.20