

Halifax Show 2026

There were 21 entrants for the Honey Show and 64 individual entries over the 23 classes. This compares with 26 entrants and 118 individual entries over the same 23 classes in 2025.

The Honey Show judge was Josephine Anderson. The judge's comments during the judging are shown below. The standard of the entries continued to be high.

Honey Show Results

Class 1 – Two jars of light honey. There were 5 entries in this class.

1st – Alan Bewsher

2nd – Alan Brook

3rd – Jan Takhar

Judge's comments: Granulation and bubbles in the honey are undesirable. A cloudy appearance may suggest early granulation or crystallisation.

Often find bubbles on the surface. To avoid this, overfill jars initially, then 'skim' the top a couple of times.

Using paper towels to wipe the jar removes fibres.

Class 2 – Two jars of medium honey. There were 7 entries in this class.

1st – Kay Phillips

2nd – Ian Bairstow

3rd – Chris Dale

Judge's comments: Honey on the inside of the lid may be secondary to transport of the honey, but there should not be debris on the inside of the lid.

Class 3 – Two jars of soft set honey. There was one entry in this class.

Judge's comments: Standing the jar of honey on a cold surface for a period of 14 days may help the honey to set.

Class 4 – One jar of honey labelled as for sale. There were 8 entries in this class.

1st – Alan Brook

2nd – Roger Pool

3rd – Richard Searle

Judge's comments: There are two slight vertical ridges on the sides of round 1lb honey jars, and the label should be neatly positioned between these, and on the side away from the raised mark near the bottom of the jar.

If the honey is obviously heather honey, this can be mentioned on the label.

Pictures of flowers on the label should be representative of flowers the bees may have visited to collect nectar.

Class 5 – Two jars of ling heather honey. There was one entry in this class.

2nd – Chris Dale

Class 6 – One jar of flavoursome local honey. There were 9 entries in this class.

- 1st – Chris Dale
- 2nd – John Williams
- 3rd – Alan Bewsher

Class 7 – Chunk honey. There were no entries in this class.

Class 8 – Novice class. There was one entry in this class.

- 1st – Julia Pollard

Judge's comments: The clarity of the novice honey entered (one jar only) was exceptionally clear, but on tasting the honey the body was very light, suggesting the honey hadn't finished maturing.

Class 9 – Cut comb in a clear lidded container. There were no entries in this class.

Class 10 – Honey frame suitable for extraction. There were no entries in this class.

Class 11 – Six identical wax blocks. There were 3 entries in this class.

- 1st – Veronica Williams

- 2nd – Alan Brook

Judge's comments: The wax blocks were weighed, and those outside the +/- 10% of the desired weight were not considered further.

The smell of the wax is important.

Some wax blocks had specks of debris/dust embedded in them.

There were horizontal ridges on the edges of some blocks, suggesting the wax had not been hot enough when poured into the moulds.

Class 12 – Wax cake between 8 and 16 oz. There were 3 entries in this class.

- 1st – Alan Brook

- 2nd – Roger Pool

- 3rd – Jan Takhar

Judge's comments: If the wax is mounted on a fabric-covered base, some fibres can stain the wax.

Class 13 – Two identical beeswax candles. There were 2 entries in this class.

- 1st – Roger Pool

- 2nd – Alan Brook

Judge's comments: The wick should be centred at the base of the candle.

If the candles are lit, the duration of smoke from the extinguished wick should be short.

Class 14 – Beeswax wrap up to 30cm square. There were 3 entries in this class.

- 1st – Jan Takhar

- 2nd – Veronica Williams

Class 15 – Bottle of dry mead. There was one entry in this class.

1st – Veronica Williams

Judge's comments: There should not be residual debris settled in the bottom of the bottle.

Class 16 – Bottle of sweet mead. There was one entry in this class.

1st – Veronica Williams

Class 17 – A snapshot photograph, connected to bees / beekeeping. There was one entry in this class.

1st – Richard Searle

Class 18 – A macro (close-up) photograph. There was one entry in this class.

1st – Jacky Brook

Class 19 – Flowers in a vase. There were 3 entries in this class.

1st – Amanda Pears

2nd – Jan Takhar

3rd Hermione Berry

Judge's comments: The flowers chosen should all be ones visited by honey bees (not ragwort).

The floral arrangement is judged on their appeal to bees, not flower arranging skills.

Class 20 – Handicraft or bee product related gift. There were 4 entries in this class.

1st – Kay Phillips

2nd – Richard Searle and Jenny Aveyard

3rd – Jan Takhar

Class 21 – A piece of home-made beekeeping equipment. There was one entry in this class.

1st – Alan Brook

Class 22 – One jar of jam or preserve. There were 5 entries in this class.

1st – Alan Brook

2nd – Jan Takhar

3rd – Jacky Brook

Class 23 – Honey cake

1st – Rowena Bairstow

2nd – Jacky Brook

3rd – Hermione Berry

Judge's comments: The cake is judged on appearance, smell and taste.

One cake had a metallic smell on the base, presumably from the tin.

Best in Show – Honey cake – Rowena Bairstow

Where no specific comments were made by the judge, mostly the non-honey classes, no notes were taken.

Hope this helps for next year!

Remember not all judges judge the same!

Notes to stewards

Inform exhibitors that the identification stickers should be placed one inch from the bottom of the jars, and offer them the template to help achieve this.

Consider whether the items are being entered into the correct class.

Before the judging commences, check the judge is happy with the sorting of the honey jars in the first two classes, i.e. the light and medium honey.

.Halifax Trophies

The Limetree Apiary Rosebowl (for the most points in classes 1 to 23 inclusive)

Alan Brook – 18 points

(Based on the score of 3 points for 1st position, 2 points for 2nd and 1 point for 3rd.)

The Winifred May Badger Challenge Cup (for the most points across all honey classes 1 to 7 and 9-10)

Chris Dale – 6 points

Northern Bee Books Trophy (for the best exhibit of a photograph in Class 17 or 18)

Jacky Brook

The John Phillips Award for Beeswax (for the most points in the wax classes 11 – 13)

Alan Brook

The Jeff Gill Cup (for the best home-made piece of beekeeping equipment in Class 21)

Alan Brook

Novice Cup (for the winner of Class 8)

Julia Pollard

Best tasting honey as voted by the public.

Veronica Williams

Best in Show (for the best exhibit selected by the judge across all classes.)

Rowena Bairstow – Honey cake

Peter Nicholls – Honey Show Secretary