

A letter from your President January 2021

Dear Members,

This letter is later this month at the request of an Area Association Secretary, it will allow them to distribute it with their local news at the end of each month.

It is also more convenient as we have now had our annual ADM which takes place each January. This year was no exception, despite the lock down, but it was a different ADM as your delegate will be able to tell you.

Having a virtual meeting for so many people was not without its problems. We needed everyone to be able to speak if they wished, we wanted to be able to take questions and to give answers electronically, and we needed the delegates to be able to cast their votes.

Well, thanks to Stephen Barnes, Trustee, Leigh Sidaway our General Manager and Martin Smith, Advisor on Standing Orders, we managed to provide all those things. The start was delayed as one member of the team was delayed behind a major accident on the M6 and was several hours late getting to Stoneleigh. However, with Leigh working like a demon changing all the controls, we did manage to start the meeting even though it was ten minutes late.

The usual reports were seen and passed, the proposals all heard and voted on. I will leave it to your delegates to give you the full details of the results. All in all, the meeting went very well. We have had lots of feedback stating that even though it was virtual this year, it was still a good meeting allowing delegates to have their say; although there was one delegate whose microphone did not work well enough for us to hear what he was saying. Apart from that, everyone who wanted to speak was able to do so.

There was one proposal for an increase in capitation of £2.00. This is the first increase for 5 years and the main reason is that for 2021, we will have more spending than income. Because of the Covid situation, we are unable to raise funds as we have in the past because of the lockdowns we have endured. As a Charity we have to be sure that we are able to cover all costs going forward, so it was important that we took steps to make sure that we could do that. I have to say, the delegates were very understanding and after a debate about either a

£1 increase or a £2 increase, the vote went through. So, a big thank you to each and every member.

Next year, if we have the same format, I have suggested that we have an advance practice session with the delegates speaking on the system to make sure their own equipment works satisfactorily.

We recently sent out a questionnaire regarding the BBKA News asking for your thoughts, this was in the December edition. Thinking about it now, perhaps it was not the best month for a questionnaire as everyone would have lots to do, so we have extended the date for completion by the end of February 2021.

If you have not completed the questionnaire, can I ask that you please do. This will give us an idea of what you want in your future magazines and how you prefer it to be delivered.

We have welcomed a new trustee to the Executive Committee, Jenny Morgan who has had a successful career in teaching. Jenny has been keeping bees for ten years and is a very well qualified beekeeper. I am sure she will be able to bring lots of new ideas into the BBKA. I hope you will join me in wishing her all the best in her new role as Trustee.

I would like to send a get-well message to Sarah Snelson, BBKA's Deputy Manager. You may know Sarah as she is involved with the exam systems and is one of those who regularly answers the phone if you call Stoneleigh.

Sarah had a fall recently and has broken her shoulder in two places, so is obviously on sick leave, she was unable to help at the ADM this year and she was sorely missed. I hope she is feeling a little better and, in less pain than she was. Sarah is a very important member of the BBKA management team, and we all miss her.

We started last weekend with the regular Executive Committee meetings for 2021. We are always trying to make things better for the membership and I would like to think we are managing to do so, even if only in small steps.

Keep safe.

Margaret Wilson