



# **Buzzworks Association Hitchin**

AGM Report for year 2019

18<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Charity N° 1166441



# Annual Report Summary

The overall objectives of BAH are, as stated in the constitution:

- To education the public in the importance of bees to the environment
- To promote and further the craft of beekeeping

The trustees have agreed that BAH should interpret its educational objective more widely to include other bees, not just honeybees. We will also address the increasing interest in the whole spectrum of approaches to beekeeping, including natural beekeeping.

President: Robin Dartington

Trustees: Paul Calvert (Treasurer & Chair), Mari Stevenson, Chris Parker, Giorgio Martinelli, Anne Taylor, Rachel Scanlan, Andy Cooper.

At present, trustees are recruited from our own membership.

## Structure

BAH is a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) governed by trustees who are elected annually by its voting members.

As in many small charities, all the trustees (and the president) carry out operational activities as well as fulfilling their strategic responsibilities.

A huge thank you has to go to all the trustees, members and other volunteers who contribute to the running of BAH. Of course, the charity could not exist without this support.

In 2019 there were eight trustee meetings addressing both strategic and operational matters, and an AGM on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. We are going to try separating strategic from operational matters more clearly by holding an operational meeting for the leading active volunteers in each area after the AGM. If it is agreed this could be a regular meeting, Trustee meetings may then be less often and address only matters such as strategic planning, review of all activities against BAH objectives, income generation and budgeting.

Monthly 'Winter' meetings have been well attended and a good mixture of information, debate, an opportunity to discuss BAH activities and plans as well as socialise. The summer gathering and BBQ were also very enjoyable social occasions. The two Open Days were a huge success, very busy with the Buzzworks site operating at full capacity. Unfortunately, the July Open Day had to be cancelled due to very feisty bees presenting a risk to anyone on site.



## Area Updates

**The stall** has had a successful year, increasing its wider pool of volunteers to 12 so that there is rarely a problem covering the rota, with Anne, Andy, Giorgio and Mike taking a lead. Just under £6,500 revenue was generated, with well over half contributing towards BAH income after costs. There were 12 Farmers Market stalls plus 4 extra stalls, which will be repeated next year. Most of the sales were honey but an increasing part of income is beeswax wraps and other items, helped along by setting up a card facility. There has been an increased effort to engage in conversations with customers, promoting our educational activities and answering questions about honey, bees and beekeeping. Next year the plan is to develop this with printed information about bees which can be given out with every sale.

**Membership** at the end of 2019 is 26 paying members compared with 30 at the end of 2018. A further twelve volunteers have run or supported activities but are not paying members. Seven of these are new to BAH.

**Education** We hosted 5 very well-received educational visits to the Buzzworks site. We also visited a Hertford school for World Bee Day and had a pitch at the Herts County Show. The education team is slowly growing so that we hope to re-introduce Beaver Group visits next year, while continuing to host initially six school visits. We will visit a local school for World Bee Day.

**Marketing** We have made a good start refreshing the facebook page and setting up twitter and Instagram accounts. It is hoped that we can find more time to really use these more actively and regularly next year. The website remains an important way for people to contact us, but also needs updating and will include links to the social media sites.

**Training** Paul and Robin ran two Taster Days and two Beekeeping Experience sessions at Honeyworks, all well received. Three of our own volunteers took part in one of the Beekeeping Experience sessions to extend their own knowledge. We now have a feedback form which helps to improve the sessions. It is hoped to repeat these next year, updating the programme and resources, and distinguishing more clearly between them. Robin will also be offering 1-1 mentoring sessions.

**Beekeeping & Hive Management** Chris and Robin have kept things going through the year but we have started the process of changing to a team-lead approach, with opportunities for new and developing beekeepers to be mentored on site. The number of hives will also need to be reduced, though it is hoped this will not affect honey production as some hives will be largely 'left-alone' so should be more settled and productive.

**Site Management** It has only been possible to carry out the most essential maintenance (eg re-felting) as we still have no new volunteers to take responsibility or carry out basic maintenance tasks. A new metal grill has been installed on the Buzzworks site. Working parties have been important for getting basic gardening and maintenance work done at the Buzzworks site.



**Gardening** Janet has done a wonderful job of continuing to plant out the Buzzworks garden. We also have a bug hotel and solitary bee homes. 2020 should be a year mostly of maintaining this.

The Honeyworks team have also had a very productive year enhancing the garden there, and this work is budgeted to continue through 2020.

\*\*\*\*\*

The two longest-standing trustees must resign at each AGM but can stand for re-election. This year Paul and Mari will resign, both are standing for re-election. Mike deSouza will also stand as a new trustee.

2019 has seen the stall, education and Honeyworks gardening teams slowly grow and consolidate. The Honeyworks apiary is being re-organised for 2020. However, there is still a need for someone to take responsibility for site maintenance, and Janet could do with more help maintaining the Buzzworks garden.

2019 saw a sound year financially. Income covered costs and allowed us to hold around £10,000 reserves, which is one year's basic running costs plus a contingency for any major works required. The 2020 budget predicts a similar pattern.

We look forward to another year of building on our developing educational and beekeeping activities.



# Finance Report

During 2019 BAH both revenue and expenditure was higher than 2018 and the 2019 net position of £1,682 is significantly higher than the previous year's outturn.

We carry forward a cash balance of £10,225 into the new financial year, up 20% on 2019.

We also secured a number of grants, totalling £1,465, to support specific investments in the education activity at the Buzzworks Site.

## 2019 Accounts (Provisional)

REVENUE	2019	2018	Variance (B/W)
Administration	£ -	£ -	
Apiary Materials - Resale	£ -	£ -	
Education	£ 336	£ 592	£256
Marketing (including Stall, Open Days etc)	£ 6,824	£ 4,864	£1,960
Membership	£ 250	£ 285	£35
Training	£ 1,200	£ 1,020	£180
Donations	£ -	£ 100	£100
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>£ 8,610</b>	<b>£ 6,861</b>	<b>£1,749</b>
<b>GRANTS</b>			
Grants Received (specific expenditure for Education)	£ 1,465	£ -	£ 1,465
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Administration (including insurance, hall rental)	£ 1,081	£ 902	£179
Apiary Materials	£ 1,139	£ 708	£431
Education (including Grant commitment)	£ 1,530	£ 71	£1,459
Marketing (including Stall, Open Days etc)	£ 2,280	£ 3,142	£862
Site Maintenance & Gardening	£ 2,482	£ 846	£1,636
Training	£ -	£ 125	£125
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 8,512</b>	<b>£ 5,794</b>	<b>£2,718</b>
<b>2018 Profit &amp; Loss</b>			
Current Year Surplus/(Deficit)	£ 1,563	£ 1,067	
Previous Year Surplus/(Deficit) - brought forward	£ 8,543	£ 7,476	
<b>Current Balance - surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>£ 10,106</b>	<b>£ 8,543</b>	
<b>ASSETS &amp; LIABILITIES</b>			
Asset - Buildings & contents (based on insured value)	£ 40,642		
Asset - Sales Stock (jars, labels etc)	£ 1,820		
Asset - Honey stock (estimated)	£ 800		
Liabilities - Equipment on loan (estimated Value)	(£500)		
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>£ 42,762</b>		



## Revenue Analysis

BAH revenue, excluding grants (£8,610) was generated from 4 main areas in 2019, up around 25% on 2018. Marketing, principally stall sales, continues to be the largest revenue contributor, accounting for around 80% of BAH income.



The average sales at the farmers market was £407, which is higher than the average sales in 2018 (£355). We also supported a number of additional stalls at events such as the Health & wellbeing day and these proved very popular, generating around £1,400 revenue.

The total revenue from the Education was lower than 2018 and was generated from a mix

of home educators & school visits to the Buzzworks site. In addition, we took a pitch at the Herts County Show to promote Buzzworks to a wider area.

The Bee Fun Days proved popular as ever, with revenue generated through honey sales and contributions towards activities and refreshments. The Bee Fun Days generated revenue of £454, despite having to cancel the July day due to a large number of angry bees.

In 2019 we focused our training on running 2 taster days, in May & September and introduced the concept of a 'Bee Experience Day', where vouchers could be purchased on our stalls. These were all run from our Honeyworks site, proving popular with a total of 25 attendees across the 2 activities

## Grants

In 2019 we were successful in securing a number of grants to support the investment in the education area at the BW site, in preparation for the 2020 plans.

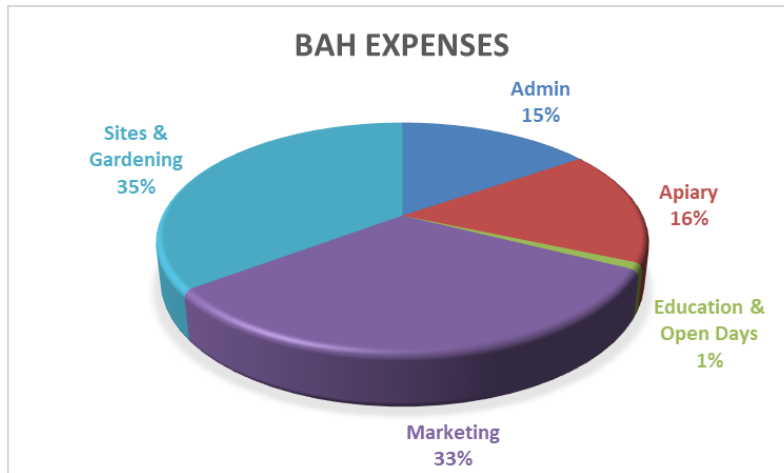
- North Herts Council (£915) – Purchase and installation of a new roof mounted projector at the BW site
- Wax Chandlers (£300) – Purchase of wall mounted, retractable, projector screen
- Herts CC (£250) – Purchase of educational materials such as, flip chart & pens, the design & printing of pop up banners

Going forward we will look to request additional grants to support specific investments where possible, particularly around the educational area.



## Expenditure Analysis

Most areas within BAH incur a level of expenses, the largest being the marketing area that includes the costs associated with stall materials, such as jars, labels and in 2019 costs for additional items such as the new wax wraps that we have introduced to the stall. We also invested in a card reader, which now allows us to take debit & credit cards payments, although there is a small charge per transaction 1.75%, but taking cash only payments was no longer seen as an option.



BAH has some general administration costs associated with running the charity, the largest outlay being the annual insurance premium to cover the Buzzworks & Honeyworks sites.

The expenditure on sites increased significantly in 2019, largely driven by the reroofing of the 2 main buildings at the Honeyworks site (£1,128) and the agreement to allocate a

budget to the gardening teams, allowing them to replant and make improvements to both sites. In addition, we have built a more secure store area in one of the sheds at the Honeyworks site, where honey and stall materials are kept.

Apiary spend in 2019 was also higher than 2018 as we chose to purchase a number of hives & bees from Chris and invested in some new queens to hopefully reduce the 'nuisance bee' problem we have seen at the Honeyworks site in 2019. In addition we have built a Solar Melter, which will allow us the extract wax from our old frames.



## 2020 Budget Summary

Based on input from each area, together with the historical spend we have developed a 2020 budget which has been discussed and approved by the Trustees.

Each area will be expected to operate within their allocated budget, recording expenditure and submitting receipts.

The summary below shows the net position of 2020 and estimated BAH position at the end of the year.

Note: there are a number of items in the education and marketing budgets that have been submitted by the teams, included for budgeting purposes, but will require an additional approval by the trustees prior to expenditure (total of £1,275 across the 2 areas)

2020 Budget Summary		
REVENUE	2020	Comments
Administration	£ -	
Apiary Materials - Resale	£ -	
Education	£ 720	
Marketing (including Stall, Open Days etc)	£ 6,175	
Membership	£ 280	Based on 28 members @£10
Training	£ 1,000	
Donations	£ -	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>£ 8,175</b>	
EXPENDITURE		
Administration (including insurance, BBKA subs)	£ 1,100	
Apiary	£ 925	
Education	£ 1,424	£975 (investment in cupboard, additional tables & chairs) is included but subject to additional approval
Marketing (including Stall, Open Days etc)	£ 2,649	£300 investment 'bee image' rights is included, but subject to additional approval
Site Maintenance	£ 1,419	
Gardening	£ 550	
Training	£ 260	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 8,328</b>	
<b>2020 budget Net estimate</b>	<b><u>£ (152.72)</u></b>	
<b>2019 Outturn</b>	<b>£ 10,255</b>	
<b>BAH 2020 net Position</b>	<b><u>£ 10,102</u></b>	

The budget will be reviewed against actual expenditure and revenue on a quarterly basis, updated and published.





# Beekeeping Report

2019 proved to be a good year, we were fortunate to have an early spring which provided us with ample Hitchin honey stock for the early Farmers Market Stalls. We were then able to provide enough summer stock to meet demand and along with honey from Buzzworks we have sufficient stock to support a good number of market stalls in 2020.

## **Honeyworks Apiary**

We had a busy year servicing the 23 hives which now comprise of; x9 Dartington long deep hives, 1x Beehaus plastic long deep hive, 10x National hives, 2x poly nukes, 1x top bar hive and a single Warre hive. We had three colony losses throughout the year resulting from a combination of old queens, depleted colony size and infiltration of wasps.

Sparky bees created problems for our volunteer gardeners, the troublesome hives were identified, and the queens replaced. We bought in five new queens throughout the year and generated replacement queens for the other hives. Robin and Alex were in contact with Peter Folge the District Seasonal Bee Inspector who confirmed that our action to alleviate the problem was correct.

Several methods of swarm control were used which included the placing of bait hives around the apiary, other method was using artificial swarming.

During 2020 we are looking to restructure the Honeyworks apiary, reducing the number of hives and as Chris looks to step back from the Apiary move towards a number of groups managing the hives, including some allocate to research (x6), training (x4) and managed by a small number of beekeeping members.

## **Buzzworks Apiary**

Managed independently from Honeyworks with its own apiarist it has 6x Dartington long deep hives used for honey production and queen rearing and to support the educational activity and Open days. In 2020 the number of hives will be reduced to 4 and will be managed by Andy & Paul.

## **Offley Apiary**

Contains 2x Dartington long deep hives

## **Training**

During 2019 we ran 2 Taster days, which were well attended with a total of 13 attendees across the 2 days. We also introduced an 'Experience Day', which included a general talk about bees & beekeeping, before we ventured into the Apiary to look at the bees. This also provided our volunteers who were not beekeepers to get more familiar with bees and beekeeping. The intention is to run these again in 2020, publicising them on the stall and website and we will revisit the bee experience day content and structure following the feedback (thanks to Mike for organising the forms)

## **Mentoring**

Available on a one to one basis by arrangement. Ideally for those beekeepers who have attained the British Beekeepers Association Basic Assessment or similar or for those who want to improve their practical knowledge using a variety of beekeeping techniques. This was completed weekly on a Sunday (weather permitting) and covered all aspects of beekeeping on at least two design of hives.



# Education Report

This year has seen us involved in three areas;

1. One outreach school visit and one school visit to Buzzworks
2. Home School groups visits to Buzzworks with the opportunity to visit the Apiary.
3. Promoting Bees to the public at the Hertfordshire County Show

The Education aim is to include the importance of all pollinators and wider environmental issues with reference to the decline in Bees and forage. We did contact local schools to mention the added possibility for the children of 'getting up close to the Bees in the Apiary'. Unfortunately, this was not taken up by the schools this year.

Even though we did not have replies to our initial invitations -the outreach, specialist school visit and home school visits were enough for the volunteers available to cover.

We are still short of volunteers either with or without bee experience.

## **Outreach**

A visit to a school on World Bee Day. We spoke to the whole school about importance of bees and what we can do to help them. Chris brought in an observational Hive so the children could see bees close too.

## **Buzzworks**

'To educate the public about the importance of Bees for the environment'.

### **Buzzworks school visit**

A school for the deaf visited Buzzworks. This gave us all the opportunity to use other senses and provide opportunities for the children to still experience what the site can offer - video clips showing waggle dance for instance and touch and smell -honeycomb, wax. Imitating how proboscis works and how the bees see. Visiting the garden and looking at the observational hive and feeling difference in temperature around the brood.

### **Home school visits**

Several home school groups visited Buzzworks, which gave us the possibility of offering the extra opportunity of a visit into the Apiary. This was very popular, and we provided a certificate to those who went into the Apiary.

We also introduced a new section entitled 'what if there were no Bees'.

Improvements to Buzzworks in 2020;

1. Install the projector bought with funds from North Herts Council
2. Filming of Buzzworks
3. Rearrangement of the Apiary Paul and Andy to help-reduce number of hives so visitors have better opportunity to see the bees.Bring up the top bar hive from Honeyworks and erect a small fence.
4. Put a viewing section in the fence so hives can be observed.
- 5.3D anatomically correct bee to be completed
6. Complete pop up posters
- 7 develop a library than can be used with the projector
8. Train up possible volunteers who might take over visits from Beavers etc



## Stall Update

The stall has maintained its good performance through 2019, with total takings of £5705, compared with £4864 in 2018. This was for 12 Farmers Market stalls, the Hitchin Priory Rotary Club Spring Fayre in May and Health & Wellbeing Day in June, Triangle Community Garden's Apple Day in October, the Hitchin Tilehouse Rotary Club Food & Wine Festival in November and Open Days. We broke another record with the best-ever takings of £479 at a Farmers' Market stall – more than three times as much as the December 2018 Christmas Market!

We are looking at reporting actual gross profit as well as (or instead of) revenue. This will mean arriving at a cost for producing a jar of honey, taking off cost of jars, lids and labels. We will also deduct the cost of buying English honey from the sale price. Wider overheads will not be deducted eg honey processing equipment, but it should still give a more accurate measure of how much sales of different products are contributing to BAH.

We are looking at extending the variety of honey-related products sold, to reduce the reliance on honey supplies for maintaining profits. This will include investigating honey marmalade.

Big thanks have to go to the core stall team: Andy, Giorgio, Mike and Anne, plus regulars Howard, Janette, Fran and Les and all the others who come whenever they can, plus Robin and Chris who are on standby always ready to help if needed. We now usually have enough people to cover the rota without anyone doing a long stint in bad weather (and we've had a lot of that this year!).

We hope to run a get-together/information session for all stall volunteers early next year. It will be a chance to get to know each other (some have never even met!) and tell us how we can improve the efficient running of the stall.

Roughly 85% of sales are honey, most of this our own Hitchin honey. Supplies should continue to meet demand despite the planned reduction in the number of hives next year, as it is expected that the 'left alone' hives will be more productive. This year we have introduced beeswax wraps, which are going very well. They are designed and made by Velvet Cooper. More expensive items like this are made easier by us now being able to take payment by card. We have also started to sell natural soap made using our own honey as an ingredient, as well as seasonal candles rolled by our own members. We make a small amount from the sale of local apple juice and Christmas cards made by Triangle Community Garden. We also promote our Taster Days and Beekeeping Experience Days.

We want to thank Andy for his inspiring re-vamp of the stall display. Next year we want to improve the A-frames.

It's always much easier to get into conversations with our customers on fine weather days through Spring and Summer, especially when we also have the Observation Hive as a draw. We use these opportunities to tell people about our activities and to pass on a bit of the wonderful world of bees. Next year, we want to extend this with printed information that we can give out. We see the stall as a vehicle for supporting and carrying out the educational objective of Buzzworks, not as an end in itself.