

Dunblane and Stirling Beekeepers Association (SCIO), SC048615.

Stirling University Apiary Report for

Annual General Meeting

Individually we have all endured another difficult year and it has been no different at the Association apiary located at the 'Gardens and Grounds' within Stirling University. For a significant portion of the winter the dedicated team of volunteers were unable to meet to work in the apiary grounds or look after the colonies, due to social distancing requirements and this task again fell to Morag Fraser and me.

As the months passed and restrictions started to be lifted the volunteer team were able to meet to develop the infrastructure at the apiary site and look after the increased number of colonies, all of whom made it through the winter.

As various points there was a vain hope that we would be able to start Hands on Beekeeping offering it to the 2020 and 2021 New Beekeepers. However it became clear at an early stage that the indoor venue of the cabin was unlikely to be a good location. We therefore devised a plan to install an external covered area with a clear roof which doubles as an outdoor teaching and work area. The cost of this work was offset by a successful grant application from Arnold Clark Automobiles Limited. This addition has proved to be extremely useful and meant that as further restrictions were lifted, we did manage to offer seven weeks of Hands On Beekeeping to the New Beekeepers. This coincided with the removal of supers and preparation for winter including the feeding of colonies. As several participants were looking after their own colonies this proved extremely helpful and timely.

In preparation for Hands on Beekeeping we also installed additional concrete paths, moved the entrance gate, again – hopefully it's in the correct location this time! and dug drainage ditches to help alleviate a flooding problem at the entrance to the apiary site.

The Associations' colonies are now well set up for the winter with their insulation and feeding in place.

In addition, we have replaced the entrance doors to the cabin as a step to improving disabled access. Again, this work was made possible by a successful grant application, this time to Dunblane Windfarm Community Fund.

In the coming year we plan to further enhance disabled access with the installation of a ramp and paths and undertake work on the cabin roof to stop wasps from accessing the area and producing large nests, obviously in addition to the hoped-for return of Hands On Beekeeping.

Ewen Cunningham, Apiary Manager.

18 October 2021