



DEVON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity No 270675



DBKA Bees & Honey Marquee at the Devon County Show Background Brief

The DBKA Show Committee is a sub-committee of the DBKA Executive Council (EC) and mandated to conduct its own business. The Chairman & Secretary is an officer of DBKA, selected by the Show Committee members and elected annually at the DBKA AGM. The present committee comprises five DBKA trustees, the two Devon County Show Stewards to the Bees & Honey Marquee (both DBKA members), two recipients of the Downing Memorial Bowl, a trainee National Honey Judge, and six other well respected members of DBKA. Namely:

Chairman & Secretary & Marquee Manager	Ruth Neal, Holsworthy
Vice Chair; Schedules & Exhibits; & Devon County Show Steward	Stephen Ide, Exeter
Treasurer	Richard Howes, DBKA Treasurer, Tavistock
Live Bee Handling; Chamber	Jim Mogridge, Torbay Branch Chair
Property & Transport Manager	Bob Tucker, Exeter
Schools Exhibits; Observation Hive	Bill Pyle, Tavistock
Candle Rolling Manager	Wendy Ashley, Torbay
Honey Sales Manager	Jack Mummery, North Devon
Table & Marquee Preparation	Alicia & Bob Normand, Newton Abbot
DBKA Chief Steward & Devon County Show Steward	Barry Neal, Holsworthy
Floating Member	Colin Sherwood, DBKA Chairman & East Devon
'Taste of Honey' Manager	Liz Westcott, Torbay
Asst 'Taste of Honey'	Steve Westcott, Torbay
Information Stall Manager	Andrew Kyle, Exeter
Co-opted (non-voting) Minute Secretary	Dan Basterfield, East Devon

The Devon County Agricultural Association (DCAA) is responsible for the County Show which runs annually for 3 days in the second or third week of May at Westpoint Arena, Exeter. The 2 County Show Stewards are the primary POCs for the DCAA, reporting to the Show Secretary i/c Showground Features. The Bees & Honey Marquee is a County Show 'Feature' and is DBKA's annual flagship event. The Marquee competes with 30+ other Features for the Most Attractive Showground Feature; and has been awarded the Gold Medal in 2004, 2007, 2008, 2010 & 2011.

The Marquee is sponsored by Adams of Exeter, Home Hardware, (a Show Sponsor) and heavily subsidised by the DCAA in respect of the marquee itself, the electricity and water used throughout the Show; and tickets for all the DBKA Stewards. As a 'quid pro quo' we pay the prize monies - a considerably less amount than the cost of the marquee, electricity and water. DBKA is also a County Show Sponsor; albeit at no cost to DBKA.

DBKA's participation in the Show is not intended to be a profit-making venture; but it does aim to at least break-even; and monies allocated to the show are to underwrite it. In the last 3 years the show income over expenditure has resulted in a net surplus overall. A request is made in the autumn to the EC for funds to underwrite the following year's show; presently £1250 for running expenses and £1250 for capital expenditure - with the ability to use some of the c/f funds (surplus) if necessary. The actual income cannot be predicted from year to year. It depends on

the National economy, individual disposable income, ticket prices, weather, etc. As a rule, DBKA receives 20% of sales income. Our accounts are audited annually.

The Marquee exhibits include the DBKA Honey Competition (42 Classes - honey, cookery, wax, mead, cosmetics, flower arranging, cream/polish, photo, art & crafts, inventions); an Observation Hive; a Live Bee 'Chamber'; the 'Taste of Honey' Stall; Honey Sales Stall; Candle Rolling Stall; DBKA Stevenson Trophy Branch Competition Entries; an Information Stall; a Childrens' (Schools) Competition; and a Live (flying) Bee Handling demonstration area outside the Marquee. Also present are stalls for Adams of Exeter; West Country Bee Suits; and Lakehayes Organic Plants. St Bridget Nurseries of Exeter provides a display of plants, etc, and a skep-making demonstration runs throughout the 3 days. The competitions are assessed by nationally renowned judges. Competition exhibits are staged on the afternoon of the day before the Show. Branches and individual members donate honey to the 'Taste of Honey' Stall; approximately 95lbs is required.

There are 14 trophies to be competed for in the DBKA Honey Competition for various classes and combination of classes entered; including the British Beekeepers' Association Blue Ribbon for the exhibit judged to be the highest grade in the competition, the Stevenson Trophy for the Branch winning the Branch Exhibit class, and the Furze Cup to the winner of the School with the highest aggregate points in the Children's classes. Details of the trophies and their previous winners can be found elsewhere on this website.

The Marquee is stewarded by members who volunteer their services to the DBKA Chief Steward. All levels of knowledge of beekeeping are welcome as there is always someone of more experience to hand, should a difficult question arise. Stewards have a dedicated area to rest and eat/drink, where refreshments are provided. Some white coats are available for Stewards, but it is advisable for Stewards to bring their own.

Over the last 2 years we have been trying to improve the show equipment by adding new items and upgrading old ones. The average age of the Show Committee members is 68 years old and, even with help from a small number of additional people of similar ages (the same ones every year), the physical effort of staging the show is taking its toll. The Marquee is prepared on the Sunday before the Show; tables covered and laid on the Tuesday before; stalls set-up on the Wednesday before; the Show runs from Thursday to Saturday; and break-down takes place on the Saturday evening and Sunday. All the Show equipment and Competition Trophies are owned by DBKA, insured, and stored securely in the Exeter area. The equipment is not available for any use other than for the County Show. Additional help on any of the days is always welcomed.

All Branches are provided with a copy of the DBKA 'Devon County Show Information for Branches' Booklet.