

# KENT BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

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## Honey Show Committee

Chairman: David Wood, Secretary: Peter Baker



I would like to clarify the position being considered by the Honey Show Committee (HSC) regarding the Competition element of the display presented at the Kent County Agricultural Show (KCAS) in 2009.

The KCAS are faced with the possibility of a £300 000 operating deficit in 2009. This situation cannot be allowed to continue and a number of economies have to be made. To this end we (KBKA HSC) were presented with the problem of saving money along with all the other sponsored events. There will be no centre ring major attraction: there will be no military band: no Spitfire flypast and KCAS sponsored events, of which we are one, have been asked to consider cost cutting. It was suggested by the David Goff (showground manager) that we consider a number of alternatives put to him by his financial adviser. The least painful of these while preserving a beekeeping presence, which was at no time in any doubt by David Goff, was to cut the number of free tickets allocated and reduce the size and type of marquee that they supply free to us. Amongst the other alternatives suggested by David's financial adviser was to charge us for the marquee, electricity and stewards tickets, alternatives which he agreed would mean that beekeeping would disappear from the event, and not an acceptable proposition. The acceptable alternatives would mean less space in the marquee for displays and hence fewer stewards would be required. Since the Competition element was of interest to a relatively small number of the member branches and our main aim is to promote beekeeping and raise public awareness of the importance of bees in the environment; omitting the Honey Show Competition is felt the only reasonable, albeit regrettable, step to take. The competition element of beekeeping WILL be displayed, but no competition will take place, and those few who have competed in the past are encouraged to concentrate their efforts on the National Honey Show Kent Classes.

The KBKA Council has been acquainted with this information and Branch members have been consulted and asked for feedback, some of which has been received, but no one has volunteered to take on the task of Show Secretary, a post that is fundamental to the running of the Competition. I am sad that the Honey Show will have to be abandoned, but it seems that this is the only way that we can continue to represent beekeeping at the County Show under the present circumstances. Some Branches run their own Honey Shows quite separate from the County Show, and this is perhaps the way forward, apart from the National, for those branches that at present do not organise their own shows.

This decision has not been taken lightly, and I am sorry that those who have made a great effort to produce entries in the past for the Detling show will as I be disappointed.

David Wood