

North Somerset Bee Keepers



Committee meeting to be held on 14th May 2018 at The George Inn, Backwell

AGENDA

1.0 Present

Annabel Lewis
Janet McCulloch
Heather Pitch
Rob Williams
Stan Wroe
John Banks
Garry Packer
Paddy Brading

Apologies were received from: David Welham, Rob Francis, David Capon, Keith Brand, Adrian Wells

2.0 Minutes of previous meeting after small amendments they were accepted as an accurate reflection of the meeting

3.0 Matters arising

3.1 Action: Add link to BBKA booklets to our website. JB Completed

3.2 Action: Contact David Barrett and Simon Jones to see if bee disease day can be moved to 12 May 2018. Once date agreed, post details on website. AL

The May date was considered too early in season to see diseases so needed to be moved to 2nd June. Facilities can be used free of charge, up to 10 vet school will be offered free places. An application for the £100 BDI grant was approved, it will be necessary to promote BDI during the event. The location at the vet school for siting the bees needs to be agreed and 6 colonies need to be found to be inspected at Langford on the day. GP, AL and possibly JW have offered colonies.

A £5 charge has been levied and it was suggested that a donation is made to Langford towards a teaching apiary. This was agreed by committee.

Action: Draft publicity for the bee diseases day. AL

Action: Advertise the event with other Avon branches. JM

4.0 Chair's report

4.1 Action: Inform Treasurer of Shirley Stevens's membership status so she is not charged. SW. Completed

4.2 Action: Ascertain if Shirley wishes to receive the BBKA Magazine. AL

To be completed. It was suggested we need to check any rules as to whether we need to vote for this at the AGM.

Action: Check rules on awarding honorary membership. JM

5.0 Treasurer's report

- 5.1 Action: Add future use of the Designated Fund to next Committee Meeting's Agenda when RE is in attendance. JM, RE and Committee. Not completed.
- 5.2 Action: Update Committee on the bank mandate for online payments and access by all signatories. RE. Not completed.

We have a good bank balance but we need to discuss how it will be used when RE is present. We may need to retain funds towards a new apiary. There were concerns that any land purchased by the branch will be owned by Avon. It was agreed that the constitution should be consulted. Avon may have a copy.

Action: Add land ownership to next agenda. JM

Action: Obtain a copy of the constitution and share with the committee. JM

Action: Add future use of branch funds to next agenda. JM

5.3 Treasurer's update

We have a healthy balance of £14216.75. We have receipts of £9124.40 for the year to date and have spent £6682.42.

We have made the first payment to the BBKA, ABKA and for insurance. A total of £3546.10.

Some payments that have not yet been cashed, including £348.53 payment made to BIBBA for the January event.

Action: Chase up uncashed cheque with BIBBA. JB

David Capon, John Banks, David Welham, Stan Wroe and Richard Ellis are now authorised to sign cheques.

Funds will be needed to move the apiary hives into a more permanent position. Details have to be agreed with Solersense.

There is no reason to increase subscriptions for next year.

6.0 Membership secretary update

6.1 Update on GDPR

SW outlined latest information from the BBKA. They are trialling a system with some associations which will meet all the GDPR requirements, will allow electronic completion of forms, have built in email for secretaries and will enable payment via Paypal. There is an Autumn deadline. The branch has already asked members if they are happy for us to share information, but we need to ensure we protect members data in the interim.

Action: Update members via a newsletter item. JM, SW

6.2 Membership secretary post

As SW is taking over as Apiary Manager, he will relinquish the role of membership secretary. Heather Pitch expressed interest in this post and will liaise with SW.

Action: Liaise with SW regarding role of membership secretary and start shadowing. HP/SW

8.0 Secretary's report

- 8.1 Action: Liaise with JM to send list of swarm collectors to BBKA. AW

This is in hand.

8.2 Promoting the committee

JM had suggested that the next newsletter focusses on the committee to promote our roles and work. AL had suggested this could be used as an opportunity to raise awareness of upcoming vacant posts. Members without portfolio are invited to consider moving into vacant posts.

Action: Committee focus in next newsletter. JM

Action: Members without portfolio to consider volunteering for committee officer posts

9.0 Apiary Manager's report - Report from David Capon

Apiary induction sessions for the introductory course members have been completed after a couple of postponements due to poor weather. Regular sessions will be every Sunday at 10.00am. The rota has been sent to all helpers

Action: Update the website with the new rota. JB

Use of Shed: Solarsense only need the rear wall of the shed to mount some distribution boards and meters, and access. We will share the use of the shed and have temporarily removed some stuff while they install the boards. There will be room for us to share the shed with them.

Toilet facility: Now they are using the top building we no longer have access to the toilet. I did talk to Hans Wilson at the NS show about a portaloos. He could not supply one as they do not do individual units, but said he would make enquiries on our behalf. He seemed to think it would cost in the order of £15 a week to hire, including weekly pump out. My opinion is that for the likely use it is probably not worth it, we just need to point out to new users that there are no toilet facilities (except a choice of hedges). Review if it becomes a problem.

Longer term: Solarsense are negotiating a 20 year lease of the solar panels in the field adjacent to the apiary to the Low Carbon Gordano group. Stephen Barrett (Solarsense Director) raised with me the possibility of siting our hives between the rows of panels, he has also raised this with Low Carbon Gordano and they seem receptive to the idea. There are several advantages to this in my opinion: it moves the hives further away from buildings and the road (their current position is quite visible from the road); there is adequate room between the rows of panels and the hives would get the sun; they would get the sun much earlier in the morning than the present position; it could also potentially give us long term security of a site. These discussions are in an embryonic stage and there are probably some questions to answer, but I feel it is worth pursuing. May need to check whether solar panels are compatible with bees.

9.1 Action: Organise working parties at the new apiary site. DC Completed

9.2 Action: Negotiate sale of shed with Solarsense. DC

No longer applicable.

9.3 SW is taking over as apiary manager from November with a team of volunteers. The team will need to agree how they work together.

Action: Liaise to agree working arrangements. DC/SW

10.0 Programme Manager's report

10.1 Action: Check availability for talk on swarms on 9th June 2018. AW Completed

10.2 Action: Add details of BIBBA Cirencester course to the Club website. JB Completed

10.3 Action: Identify a Press Liaison officer. AL and Committee.
Not yet completed

Action: Volunteer to be sought through the newsletter. AL

10.4 New Programme Manager

JB has been in post for 6 years. Members without portfolio invited to express interest in the first instance. Eric Sortwell has also been approached and has been invited to contact JB for further information.

10.5 President's BBQ

Will take place on 23rd June, coinciding with the WSM Air Show and red arrows will be visiting.

Action: Advertise on website. JM/GP.

11.0 Education Co-ordinator's report

11.1 Action: Establish a working group for a schools project. RF, PB

No response to Avon newsletter. Need to find a school with commitment to having bees on site. Churchill primary school may be interested.

PB reported:

New leaflets were printed by Doveton Press; 4,000 leaflets costs £150. We have an account with them. Remaining leaflets are at apiary.

Basic assessments have been set up and will run in June. A toilet is needed for the assessor

Action: Hire a portalo for the basic assessments. RF

Volunteers are needed to open the apiary on 2nd June and 30th June. AL/SW are available on 30th June.

Queen rearing group is meeting on 23rd May. We are at an interesting stage. More details will be following soon but we are hoping to have queens available for sale by the end of the month BUT we need to work out the logistics for this.

There was an unfortunate clash between the day school and a planned branch meeting. It is very important that ABKA publish and promote their plans earlier than they did this year. RF is raising this issue at the meeting this evening.

RF is liaising with Bristol branch about how they manage their bee and equipment auction and will report back at the next meeting.

Action: Report back on Bristol bee and equipment auction. RF

11.2 Action: Suggestions on revisions to the schools' leaflet to be emailed to Rob Francis. These are required urgently in time for the North Somerset Show in May. RF, PB, Committee. Completed.

11.3 Action: Establish a working group to revise the courses and look at the costs. RF, PB

Not completed yet. Volunteers include RF, PB, DC, and Andy Scarisbrick

Action: Group to meet and consider reviewing course content, materials and costs. RF, PB.

12.0 Swarm Liaison report

12.1 Action: Information on nucs to go on to website and in next newsletter. AL

Information on nucs was included in newsletter. The club is not currently in a position to provide nucs. However, this may be possible in future, as part of the Bee Improvement group. We are also building a register of origins of bees with good characteristics.

13.0 ABKA Rep's report - DW not present

14.0 Web-Master's report - Report from Rob Williams

RW summarised discussions at a meeting held on Wed 25/4/18 to discuss the website and membership survey and attended by Martin Gate, Eric Sortwell, Sandra Slater, Tony Slater, Rob Williams.

It was agreed that the club website should be seen as part of the existing BBKA, ABKA web facilities and not attempt to duplicate their information. However, the website and Facebook page did not always offer easy access to details about the club's future activities and events. Although after a bit of searching most information is available. Also, the update of information was not as rapid as some would like. It was noted that all web sites have criticism directed at them, from various angles, and so we can only try our best. There are plans to harmonise our website with Avon, involving Martin Gate and a student. Payment may be necessary.

The report raised concerns about communication of branch event, possibly linking this with small attendance at meetings. The next programme manager should consider offering a wider range of events on different days. The role of the Press Officer could to include wider communications.

One accepted point for improvement would be the "Public Landing Page". The membership survey highlighted the importance of the club website for recruitment. This dual role, serving the local public and enrolled members, needs to be properly incorporated into the structure of the site. The Avon Beekeepers website includes a handbook that can usefully be downloaded by all members of ABKA, especially new members.

To comply with new GDPR requirements, the ABKA website has now been made more secure and can now offer storage for "sensitive" membership data. This could then be made available for the local beekeeping branches.

14.1 Action: Essential purchase items to be added to website. JB

JB is unable to provide garage space for the scheme in future, though he can still order items and collect payments. Around a quarter of a garage is needed. JB had asked the committee members to volunteer garage space but nobody was able to do so. JW may have space but not in a central location. This needs to be raised in next newsletter.

Action: Ask members if they can provide garage space for the essential items stock in a central location. JM

14.2 Action: Send Eric Sortwell's email address to Rob Williams. PB

14.3 Action: Item on membership survey action plan for newsletter. RW

14.4 Action: Send one more email to Mark Barnet and follow another lead. RW

No further action.

- 14.5 JB expressed concern that there are currently only five Asian Hornet monitors recorded on the website. Daily monitoring is needed but monitors can be located away from apiaries. The issue of availability of laminated information leaflets was discussed. It is expected that the Bee Inspector will hand some out in the bee diseases day. We could laminate posters if necessary.

It was also suggested that Asian Hornet posters are more prominent at shows.

Action: Ask Bee Inspector if laminated posters could be handed out at the Bee Diseases Day. AL

Action: Ask show coordinators to make AH posters more prominent at shows. JM

15.0 Shows 2018

- 15.1 North Somerset Show – Report from Sandra Slater (attached)

Action: Send formal thanks to all show coordinators. GP

- 15.2 Bath and West Show

PB, JW and Jane Boss are meeting next week. The organisers would like to borrow our stands and posters – pick up on Sunday and return following Sunday.

- 15.3 Action: Share introductory course draft leaflet with RE and SW, AS, LS and PB. Completed

- 15.4 Action: Check the cost of printing the leaflets. PB Completed

- 15.5 Action: Arrange for the design and printing of flags for shows. DC

Not yet completed but it was suggested we use Doveton Press for the printing.

Action: Send committee contact details for Doveton Press in Bedminster. PB

Action: Use Doveton Press for printing for the flag. DC.

- 15.6 Action: Share Noah's Ark interview with Committee (and Club). AL

For various reasons we were not involved in this event.

16.0 Members without portfolio

- 16.1 Action: Add details of non-NSBKA to website and newsletter. Details to be provided monthly by Jenny Wakenshaw. JW, JB, JM

JW was concerned that the list didn't go on the website, however the information was included in the newsletter for the last two months. JB will ensure any future information is also uploaded to the website. JW agreed to continue to provide the list.

Action: Continue to provide and publicise list of events in newsletter and website. JW, JB, JM

- 16.2 JW also raised the issue of lack of entrants to honey shows and suggested how this might be improved. She agreed to explore this to identify options.

ACTION: Discuss possible ways the number of entries could be improved with DC and someone who enters the show and someone who doesn't. JW

17.0 Any other business

17.1 Action: Enquire about Bristol auction arrangements. RF Not yet completed.

17.2 Action: RF to communicate feedback on clashes in meetings dates to David Welham as our representative with Avon. RF, DW

RF is raising this at the Avon meeting tonight.

17.3 Action: Source another screen for approximately £170.

This issue was discussed again and it was felt that we do not need a second screen at this stage, though we need a system to avoid a clash in future. Andy Scarisbrick, as course coordinator, could host the screen and AL's personal screen can be used as a back-up. Review as necessary.

17.4 Action: Draw up new apiary rota. DC, AL, SW. Completed

17.5 Action: Add information on arrangements for monitoring and reporting Asian Hornets to the newsletter. JM

This was completed but needs to be re-emphasised in the next newsletter

Action: Include further information on monitoring Asian Hornets in next newsletter. JM

8.0 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 16th July 2018 at 7:30pm at The George Inn, Backwell.