

North Somerset Bee Keepers



Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 12th March 2018 at The George Inn, Backwell

1.0 Present

- John Banks
- Paddy Brading
- Keith Brand
- David Capon
- Rob Francis
- Annabel Lewis
- Heather Pitch
- Jenny Wakenshaw
- Adrian Wells
- Rob Williams
- Stan Wroe

Apologies were received from: Janet McCulloch, Garry Packer, David Welham, Richard Ellis

2.0 Minutes of previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record

3.0 Matters arising

3.1 JB said that the link is not there yet. It was agreed that the link should be added to show people these useful booklets.

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

3.2 **Action:** Liaise with Meg and JB regarding the bee safari next year. **AL**

AL had spoken to David Barrett at Langford Vet School who has made three rooms and tea facilities available for a bee diseases day on 19 May 2018. Assuming that some vet students attend, the fee of £450 may be reduced or waived completely. Costs could be covered if 60 delegates attend at £10 each as the association would receive a BBI grant of £100. This date clashes with the Royal Wedding and the FA Cup Final.

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

3.3 JB had not arranged a further visit to Ken Basterfield's farm. This will be considered for the 2019 programme.

4.0 Chair's report

4.1 AL had spoken to Eric Sortwell and he would be happy to join the committee next year.

4.2 Committee agreed to make Shirley Stevens an Honorary Associate Member of NSBK in memory of Reg's 70 years of beekeeping.

Action: Inform Treasurer so that Shirley is not charged. SW Ascertain if Shirley wishes to receive the Club Newsletter. AL

5.0 Treasurer's report

5.1 SW confirmed that he had signed the mandate to become a signatory to the Club's bank account.

- 5.2 RE had sent latest figures in advance to the Committee. SW confirmed that the BBKA fee had not yet been paid. AL said the Club had a very healthy bank balance and that some of the money should be spent to benefit the Club.

Action: Add future use of the Designated Fund to next Committee Meeting's Agenda when RE is in attendance. JM, RE and Committee

- 5.3 RE was to update the Committee on the bank mandate for online payments and access by all signatories. In his absence this was deferred to the next meeting.

Action: Update Committee on the bank mandate for online payments and access by all signatories. RE

- 5.4 The accounts were audited by someone in Clifton and this person is happy to continue as Club Auditor. No Club members offered their auditing skills.

5.5 **Membership update**

JM had reminded members to renew their membership in the newsletter although the date was incorrect in the final message.

SW had chased around 50 people. 33 had dropped out (reasons unknown). The Club has a membership of 169 which includes 31 on this year's introductory course.

5.6 **Finance update**

Deferred to next meeting.

Action: Add to next Committee Meeting's Agenda. JM

6.0 **Secretary's report**

- 6.1 JM emailed Adrian Wells regarding volunteer swarm collectors for BBKA. AW said he did not think the details of everyone on the swarm collectors list should be given to BBKA as some are novices and other are there just to learn.

Action: Liaise with JM to send list to BBKA. AW

7.0 **Apiary Manager's report**

- 7.1 DC updated the Committee on progress. All hives had been moved successfully and bees had been seen flying from their new location. The apiary at the bottom end of the field is workable and has enough matting to provide access ready for the beginning of the season and the introductory course induction in mid-April. Club members can use the same car park because there is still no access from the bottom gate. DC will organise a couple of working parties.

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

- 7.2 DC had talked to Richard at Solarsense about the shed. Solarsense can find a use for the shed and Richard may buy it from the Club.

Action: Negotiate sale of shed with Solarsense. DC

8.0 **Programme Manager's report**

- 8.1 JB was struggling to find a speaker on termites for June. He suggested moving Adrian's Swarm Collection talk to that slot.

Action: Check availability for 9th June 2018. AW

- 8.2 JM had sent out a reminder regarding the bee improvement day. This event went very well. Roger Patterson had offered another course and there is to be a 3-day BIBBA course in Cirencester.

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

- 8.3 A report on the bee improvement day had not been sent to the North Somerset Times. DC suggested identifying someone to act a Press Liaison (and Twitter) officer and AL thought this role could be introduced next year.

Action: Identify a Press Liaison officer. AL and Committee

9.0 Education Co-ordinator's report

- 9.1 The Avon and Club Newsletters have asked for volunteers to help with the Schools Project. RF is visiting Nailsea and Hewish schools next week.

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

- 9.2 RF circulated a leaflet for children. 2,000 had been ordered in the past and supplies were low. He asked if the Committee wanted to have this leaflet reprinted. If so, did it need revising? It was agreed that although the leaflet was intended for schools, it was also good for adults. PB also had a similar leaflet. PB also knew of a cheap printer located in Bedminster.

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

- 9.3 RF reported that thirty people were on the introductory course, twenty on the improver course but he was not sure how many would be taking the Basic Assessment. The queen rearing group starts next week. Six people will be taking Module 1 in a week's time.

- 9.4 Introduction to Beekeeping Course

DC said that some sessions need to be updated and refreshed. For example the first session is disjointed and much is repeated later on. The history section maybe interesting but totally irrelevant where it stands in the course. It was suggested that the course could be reduced to 8 weeks and start later in the year. RF added that areas of the improvers course also need to be updated. PB asked about the questionnaire which DC said needed more open questions which could then be discussed at the next training session.

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

10.0 Swarm Liaison report

AW had no further to report.

DC had asked all those on the introductory course if they wanted a nuc. He had advised them not to start with a swarm. Several members are down-sizing their colonies and some colonies might be split into nucs. These could then be made available to new members.

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

11.0 ABKA Rep's report

- 11.1 DW attended the meeting on 27 February 2018 and said it well attended and with the new committee in place had a more determined outlook in helping associations in the SW. DW sent the following notes:

- It was agreed that propositions for the ADM would be better prepared and the associations should be telling the BBKA what we want, not being led by the BBKA.
- It was agreed to ask the SWBKF associations to donate a one off £50 to the SWBKF to cover future running costs etc.
- Delegates that attended the recent ADM gave their opinion of the meeting. Members thought the meeting was badly organised and poorly handled. It was agreed that the chair of the SWBKF will compose a letter to the BBKA expressing our concerns.
- It was agreed that there should be a delegate pack produced so that delegates understand their role at the ADM.
- Much of the rest of the meeting was taken up in discussing the incursion of the Asian Hornet and what could be done by associations in identifying nests. We were given a very good presentation by the representative from the Channel Islands where the hornet is already established. This was followed by a talk from Pete Kennedy from Exeter University who is studying the Asian Hornet. The conclusion was that the Hornet will arrive and we beekeepers will have to learn to live with it, much as we did with varroa.

12.0 Web-Master's report

12.1 JB is currently producing the 2018 version of the essential purchase items. JW asked for Oxalic acid to be added to the list.

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

12.2 RW said he had not been able to contact Eric Sortwell to join the membership survey action group.

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

12.3 RW said that the membership survey action plan for the newsletter had not yet been completed.

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

12.4 RW said that his initial contacts with Weston College (Mark Barnet, IT Department) had been very positive. However, Mark was not now answering Rob's emails. RW will also try and follow another lead.

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

13.0 Shows 2018

13.1 North Somerset Show

JM reported that Sandra Slater had asked for volunteers for the North Somerset Show. AL had spoken to Hans Wilson and he is more than happy to help again, including the £25 to go with the cup and a marquee. Hans had said that whatever we need just ask him.

13.2 Bath and West Show

JM did not think that any volunteers had been sought for the Bath and West Show. Anne Rowberry coordinates this show.

13.3 Introductory Course

Paddy Brading is handing over the introductory course to Andy and Liz Scarisbrick. Updated leaflets will be needed. SW and RE asked to see the draft leaflets before they are printed.

Action: Share draft leaflet with RE and SW, AS, LS and PB. PB

Someone had volunteered to print the leaflets but Andy Scarisbrick said he could print them. PB was asked to check prices.

Action: Check the cost of printing the leaflets. PB

13.4 JM reported that no-one had offered any auditing services.

13.5 JM was not sure who was going to action the design and printing of flags for shows.

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

13.6 AL said that the Branch Honey Show had been very successful.

13.7 AL had been contacted by Noah's Ark who are organising a Bio Blitz Day on 5th May 2018. They asked if NSBK would be interested in having a stand. This might fit in well as it is only 2 days before the Somerset Show when Caroline Cherry and Jamie Llewellyn will have bees in the observation hive. Also Noah's Ark wanted to do an interview for their social media. AL did this on Friday and pushed education, networking, etc.

Action: Share interview with Committee (and Club). AL

14.0 Members without portfolio

14.1 Other courses in Avon (and beyond)

JM has not yet advertised the Avon introductory courses on the website. Stephen Brain is offering a taster session and that has been advertised on website.

JW described several other local and national courses and auctions. JB said to let him know the details and he would put them on the website.

Action: Add course details to website and newsletter. Details to be provided monthly by Jenny Wakenshaw. JW, JB, JM

15.0 Any other business

15.1 Bristol auction arrangements

RF had not contacted Bristol yet.

Action: Enquire about Bristol auction arrangements. RF

15.2 RF said that the queen rearing talk on 21st April was the same day as the Avon spring day school. He said this clash should not have occurred and it would be unwise to have the two events on the same day. JB said that our Club programme had been set for 6 months and Avon should be told this and asked to give more notice and/or check our arrangements first.

Action: RF to communicate this feedback to David Welham as our representative with Avon. RF, DW

15.3 JB said that the screen needs to be available for all at all times. DC said that for the duration of the introductory course it was agreed to keep it at Churchill. The Committee unanimously agreed to purchase another screen.

Action: Source another screen for approximately £170. JB

15.4 SW mentioned taking over the apiary from DC.

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

15.5 JB mentioned the Asian Hornet monitoring map that was used last year. He asked if details could be added so people can contact someone if they are not sure about identifying the Asian Hornet. AL suggested telling members to contact a member of the Committee if they were not sure and also telling them about the free phone app.

Action: Add information to the newsletter. JM

16.0 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 14th May 2018 at 7:30pm at The George Inn, Backwell.