



# North Somerset Beekeepers

(a Branch of Avon Beekeepers Association Reg Charity No 271717)

## Minutes of Committee Meeting 27 October 2025

By Zoom at 19.30 hrs

### 1. Members attending

Heather Pitch, Rob Francis, Annette Healy, Eric Sortwell, Adam Evans, Claire Daly, Michelle Blackborow, Paddy Brading, Jodi Moger, Jennifer Stallwood, Tony Slater

### 2. Apologies

Michael Batchelor

Tom Francis

### 3. Approval of minutes of 1 September 2025

- a. Annette noted that the minutes said "Backwell Church Hall" for the Improvers/Refreshers course, but she thought it was to be held in St Andrews Hall in Backwell. Heather clarified that it would be held at St Andrew's Church House and that the minutes would be amended accordingly and the final copy sent to Adam for uploading to the website.
- b. It was proposed and agreed that the next newsletter would contain a short piece reminding members that the minutes of committee meetings were available on the NSBK website.

### 4. Matters arising (not covered below)

Eric referred to the discussion at the last Committee meeting about the purchase of an EcoFlow battery unit for use at the apiary. Eric said that when NSBK first occupied the apiary, there was an opportunity to connect electricity from one of the neighbouring buildings, but this was not followed up as it was not thought to be needed. Eric thought we should consider it again as an alternative to buying an Eco flow.

### 5. Arrangements for the AGM

- The AGM will be on Saturday, November 15th at 2pm in Churchill Memorial Hall.

- Rob said he was unable to attend the AGM for personal reasons.
- The minutes of the previous AGM will be circulated to all members in advance. Jodi's apologies for the last AGM were not included in the minutes and will be added.
- The terms of office would also be circulated with the agenda.
- Tony requested that officers reports be sent to him by 1 November.

#### **Elections for officers**

- Heather said that Claire and Michelle had been co-opted to the committee last year as members without portfolio and would be ratified at the AGM.
- Tom was being nominated as Apiary Manager, and Annette was being nominated as Membership Secretary.
- Jen had been working as the Yellow-legged Asian hornet coordinator for some time but had not been formally nominated and elected to the position. This would be rectified at the AGM.

#### **Program Manager Role**

- The program manager role had not been filled yet. Claire asked what it consisted of.
- The program manager is in charge of events. They help to obtain speakers, book the halls and coordinates refreshments.
- Heather said that the program for next year is practically done:
  - January: Chris Morton will discuss hive monitoring systems.
  - February 21st: Branch honey show at Tickenham.
  - March: Lynn Ingram will discuss honey adulteration.
  - April 25th: Speaker to be sorted out.
- After further discussion, Claire and Michelle agreed to be nominated for the joint position of Programme Manager.

#### **Asian Hornet Program**

- Jodi suggested a yearly program about the current state of Asian Hornets, including what's new, and what are people doing to repel them? Annabel did it last year with official figures and guidelines. Jen was happy to try and organize something.

#### **Constitution**

- The updated constitution needed to be distributed to the members for the AGM and would be item 7 on the agenda, with AOB item 8.

#### **Renewal of Chair's term of office**

- Heather's 3-year term as Chair was coming to an end. Heather said she was willing to serve for a second term. It was agreed that this extension did not require ratification at the AGM,

it being a matter for agreement solely by the Committee. Accordingly, Rob nominated Heather to serve for another 3-year term as Chair, and this was agreed unanimously.

#### **Assistant Apiary Manager**

- Jodi is standing down as assistant apiary manager. It is not an “official” position but the need for a replacement or replacements to assist the new Apiary manager required further discussion.

#### **Practical arrangement for the AGM**

Tony said that what had been arranged so far was:

- David Evans would speak from 2:15 PM, and attendees should arrive by 2:00 pm, if not a little earlier.
- Heather will chair the AGM (in place of Rob who cannot attend) and introduce David Evans.
- Tony will send David Evans a Zoom invitation.
- Adam said he could borrow an Owl video conferencing system and arrive at 1.30 pm on the day of the AGM to set it up. This system would greatly enhance the zoom presentation.

#### **AGM Speaker and Recording**

- The talk would be followed by a Q&A.
- In accordance with the permission provided by the speaker, the talk would be recorded and shared with members, taken down after a year, and password protected.

#### **Refreshments and Prizes**

- Michelle would bring the refreshments.
- Tony said he had the cups and trophies and he would bring them. Michael Batchelor won all the trophies this year.

#### **Certificates and Exam Results**

- Sue Hatton would provide a definitive list of exam successes.

### **6. Any other business**

- Eric had eight places left for the Christmas Dinner on December 6th.
- Rob said the Newsletter would be going out next week and asked Eric to provide a brief note about the Apiary.
- Adam raised the question of whether NSBK is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). It was decided to check if NSBK are covered by Avon or the BBKA. He also asked for any content for the website for 2026 as soon as possible so he could upload it and get ahead of the game.
- Paddy greeted everyone and was welcomed back.

### **Skep Making Course Update**

- Claire said 10-12 people were interested in the skep making course. She was having difficulty securing a venue and had tried the usual ones. Heather mentioned The Old School Rooms at Congresbury as a possible alternative venue, at approximately £8 per hour.
- NSBK is covering the cost of the venue and the teacher's expenses. Attendees cover the cost of equipment/materials.

### **Intro Courses & Improvers**

- The Intro course is nearly at capacity for next year.
- There are about 14 people signed up for the improvers' course, with more expected to join later.
- Rob said Avon are doing a similar course, but online. Some people would be interested in that. Adam said that they conduct Zoom meetings at work all the time and offered to help Rob with any technical issues if Rob wanted to pursue it further.

Heather then closed the meeting at 8.15pm. Rob apologised for not being able to attend the AGM and thanked Heather for standing in for him.