



# North Somerset Beekeepers

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

## Minutes of Committee meeting 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023 at 19:30 at The George

**Present:** Heather Pitch, David Capon, Tom Francis, Eric Sortwell, Jodi Moger, Tony Slater, Jen Stallwood, Paddy Brading.

- 1. Apologies:** Annabel Lewis, Garry Packer, Rob Williams
- 2. Approval of minutes of 19<sup>th</sup> June:** With one minor correction to a name, the minutes were approved.
- 3. Matters arising (not covered below):** Apiary WhatsApp group DC, deferred from June meeting. DC suggested a WhatsApp group starting at start of introductory course and including course tutors as well as apiary managers. After some protracted discussion both during and after the meeting we are to leave things exactly as they are, i.e., an apiary WhatsApp group with course members, and Eric and Jodi.  
  
Hive update (HP), this project was progressing well, and Angela Hicks has enrolled on the Introductory course.  
  
Honeyhall farm (TS), Tony reported back to committee via email on 26<sup>th</sup> July.  
  
He proposed no further action on our part, this was agreed by the committee.

**Programme for 2024 (RW)** Rob was not present, and is intending to stand down at the AGM, so discussion was limited. As it stands, we do not have a speaker for the AGM, and no planned programme for next year. Heather to approach Ken Basterfield for AGM, (update, Ken has agreed to talk on global warming, and its effect on bees, at the AGM). Christmas meal: A couple of venues were suggested, it

was agreed that Eric would see if he could book The Old Farmhouse Nailsea.

(Update, this is now booked for 9<sup>th</sup> December).

General discussion around ideas for programme, looking for sessions for new year.

We have the branch honey show in February, and it was agreed to have a session on methods of swarm control in March. This would be targeted at second and third year beekeepers, and two or three members would outline their preferred method, e.g., Adrian Wells, Snelgrove board, David Capon nucleus method.

- 4. Treasurer's report:** Tony has received a list of assets from the relevant committee members, and will compile a full list of the branch's assets. Our current financial balance is £10,137, compared to £8,338 last year.
- 5. Membership secretary update:** Heather supplied updated membership figures, currently a total of 250 members, of which 195 are registered members with bees.
- 6. Secretary's report:** David requested that relevant members submit their Annual reports for AGM to him by 25<sup>th</sup> Sept. AGM planning meeting is 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct, and David will need to collate reports ready for that date.  
  
Stephen Brain to be nominated at AGM for honorary membership.
- 7. Education Co-ordinator's report:** Paddy circulated a report prior to the meeting; the Introductory Course is now up to 30, we now need to stop accepting further entries.  
  
The Ashfield prison project is progressing well. They are keen to pay us back for our investment, by means of printing for us etc, Paddy has sent Asian hornet sheets to them to print for us.
- 8. Apiary Manager's report:** Eric reported a successful year, apiary sessions were well attended with an average of 30. Trainers' attendance was a bit hit and miss, not all trainers reliable. We currently have 11 club hives, and 22 hives in total. All the apiary

hardware has now been updated. Apiary maintenance has all been done, and Eric commented on good commitment from the apiary maintenance team. Eric is extracting club honey for rent to Bristol University. Bulk buys: Invertbee nearly all sold, delivery of fondant shortly. Eric thanked all for help, and especially Jodi.

**9. Programme Manager/ Webmaster's report:** Rob to maintain website as an interim

**10. ABKA Rep's report** Meeting next Monday, Mark Hunter says Avon has a large amount of training money, suggested we look to cover cost of Intro course hall hire.

**11. Members without portfolio** Jen outlined Asian Hornet protocol.

**12. Chair's Report:** Heather welcomed Tom Francis, who had been coopted, Roz Kiley to be invited. David reminded meeting that all coopted members need to be formally approved at the AGM, although this was always a formality. Heather mentioned that eR2 would automatically link members to Beebase, unless they chose to opt out.

**13. Show Tables (DC)** No further action was needed as we were able to hire tables from Winscombe, and it was agreed hiring from each show was the simplest option.

**14. Any other business:** Eric mentioned the fact that if the new electric extractor was run with full frames the level of honey would reach the bottom of the frames, causing drag on the motor and a lot of air being whipped into the honey. He suggested that the instructions be modified to suggest opening the tap as the extractor was running. (Secretary's note: I would strongly advise against this, as if the extractor is vibrating it will spray honey everywhere! A better instruction would be to stop the extractor and run some honey off after a short time.)

**15. Date of next meeting: 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct, final AGM planning**

**16. Meeting closed at 9.13pm.**

**D Capon.**