



Minutes of Committee meeting Apr 24th, The George at Backwell at 19:30

Present: Heather Pitch, David Capon, Eric Sortwell, Jodi Moger, Tony Slater, Rob Williams, Jen Stallwood.

- 1. Apologies** were received from Garry Packer, Annabel Lewis, Judith Ralfs, Paddy Brading.
- 2. Approval of minutes of Feb 13th 2023:** The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.
- 3. Matters arising:** Improver's Course Hall payment, Tony has sorted this, and the venue has now been fully paid.
- 4. Hive update:** We have received a donation of £600, this has been used to purchase a complete hive, Annabel is going to organise a plaque to be mounted on the hive and an existing colony of bees will be transferred into it. Ruth Chadney, plus one** (see AL) to be social media coordinators for this venture.
- 5. Training event:** Annabel had stepped down from sub-committee due to the time commitment of her new role; we need to recruit a replacement, Eric suggested Stuart Millard. There was agreement that Stuart should be approached.
Eric reported that he had sourced suppliers for food, barbecue etc. David expressed concern that we do need to produce a risk assessment for the event, and that although Eric had given reassurances about the barbecue side of things, we had little detail of the actual training events taking place or the timetable for the day. It was pointed out that this was the last committee meeting scheduled before the event. Jodi informed the meeting that she would be demonstrating an alcohol wash, and that Tom Francis would be doing something on Queen rearing, but no other details of training activities were forthcoming. A meeting of the planning sub-committee was to be held in the near future.
- 6. Treasurer's report:** Tony reported we currently have £8061 in account, this includes the donation from Avon for the extractors, which we have paid for. We have also received the donation of £600 from the Hive, previously mentioned. Last year we bought a few quite expensive capital items e.g. new gazebo, we have had no big items this year, so our finances are in a healthy position. David suggested that we could probably keep the price of the Introductory Course at its current level for at least the immediate future.

- 7. Membership secretary update:** All members of the 2023 Introductory Course had now been made full members. We currently have 215 members on roll of which 184 are full beekeepers.
- 8. Secretary's report** David reported on communication re field sports day from Rob Collins, there was no interest in pursuing this further. He also reported a successful day with Langford Veterinary School students' elective session. This has been a collaborative event for a number of years as a cooperation between the Branch and the School, facilitated by Prof David Barrett. Ten very enthusiastic students attended and were given a talk by David, this was followed by hive inspections where David was ably supported by Stuart Millard. Although we had enough beesuits for this event it was suggested that we look at purchasing a few more suits. Eric was asked to compile an inventory of current stock.
- 9. Education Co-ordinator's report:** Unfortunately, Paddy was unable to attend at short notice, but had sent a report prior to the meeting. There was discussion on clarifying the names of the two courses we run, there was a consensus for 'Introduction to Beekeeping' or Introductory Course for the initial course, and 'Improvers Course' for the subsequent course. Heather to check with Rob Francis. Paddy had commented on getting feedback from the Introductory Course later in the season, David commented that he felt there should be an opportunity for feedback immediately after the theory sessions.
- 10. Apiary Manager's report:** Eric and Jodie reported that they had had positive feedback from the initial sessions from the members of the Introductory Course. This had been via a WhatsApp group Eric and Jodie had set up. David requested that he and other regular trainers and leaders of the Introductory Course be allowed to join the group, but this request was rejected on the grounds it may confuse with people offering differing opinions. Eric recorded his thanks to the grass cutters Michael Batchelor, Richard Ellis, and John Molesworth. Eric suggested running the bulk buy scheme again, he could organise but would need assistance to unload. There was a general agreement to continue.
- 11. Programme Manager/ Webmaster's report:** Rob has collected 9 frame radial electric, he noted it was quite heavy and would probably need two people to lift it, it has not been decided where it will be kept, so it will be in the apiary shed in the short term. Rob also stated that it would need to be mounted on some form of board, David recommended mounting it on casters as this was very effective in reducing excessive vibration in an electric extractor. The website was in the process of being updated, a form for booking the apiary open day would be added soon. It was agreed to have a discussion of the program for 2024 at the September

meeting. Rob said we needed a speaker for the AGM, a number of names were suggested, Rob to pursue, email any further suggestions to Rob.

- 12. ABKA Rep's report:** Eric reported the recent Avon spring day was well attended with around 70 people, although he noted it was difficult to hear some of the speakers. Bath and West show, Eric to collect some equipment from shed to take to B and W.
- 13. Members without portfolio:** nothing to report.
- 14. Chair's Report:** Heather suggested that Stephen Brain be made hon member, this was agreed. She drew attention to the new BBKA learning platform and suggested we have a link from our website, and also drew attention to the new Beebase website. She had received a call from Caroline Cherry who is giving up beekeeping, and was offering kit to a deserving member; however, it was felt we should just circulate to members her kit for sale.
- 15. Any other business** Tony will be requesting an inventory of all club assets from relevant parties. Christmas party, Eric suggested we need to liven it up and suggested the Old Farmhouse at Nailsea as a venue and suggested we might have some entertainment, eg sea shanty singers.

Date of next meeting 19th June
Meeting closed 20.56pm