

North Somerset Beekeepers



Minutes of the committee meeting held on 2nd December 2019 at the George Inn, Backwell

1.0 Welcome and introductions

Annabel Lewis

Janet McCulloch

Eric Sortwell

Rob Williams

Tony Slater

John Banks

Lucy Joy

Jodi Moger

Heather Pitch

David Welham

Apologies were received from David Capon, Garry Packer, Jenny Wakenshaw

2.0 Minutes of previous meeting were accepted

3.0 Matters arising

3.1 Action: Raise awareness Asian Hornet week at apiary. ES. Ongoing

3.2 Action: Include an article encouraging participation in BBKA modules this in the newsletter. RW/JMcC Completed

3.3 Action: Speak to Sheila James regarding replacing the white plastic extractor with a stainless steel one. AL In progress

3.4 Action: Ask Sheila about use of extractors and payment. AL In progress

3.5 Action: Service extractors annually. RW. RW to contact SJ to inspect extractors

4.0 Chair's report

4.1 AL has been contacted by David Barrett regarding working together to deliver potential practical sessions at the British Bee Vets annual conference, to be hosted at Langford in June 2020. It may be possible to ask Bee Inspectors to attend and discuss diseases and medicines used.

Action: Inform DB that we are interested in working with them. AL

RW suggested, further to Professor Ratnieks' talk, we ask DB if they would be interested in working together regarding developing hygienic bees.

Action: Contact Professor Ratnieks regarding developing hygienic bees. RW

4.2 Nailsea Christmas Fair

AL reported that we had a stand at the fair and raised money through sale of honey. She also spoke to Crown Glass Centre; they are keen to work with us and have planted bee friendly flowers in the area.

- 4.3 AL and ES met with Langford colleagues last week who had requested that we offer the Langford students a discount of 30% on the introductory course. This was approved.

Action: Inform Langford of the discount. AL

- 4.4 It was also suggested we run a taster session, like Stephen Brain's, at a discount for students and teachers for those who can't attend, possibly 10 or 17 June. This was approved.

Action: Inform Langford of the offer of a taster session. AL

- 4.5 Langford has also agreed that we could use a room for the introductory course and subsequent events. They also have a microscopy room.

- 4.6 As part of the basic course we have invited Meg Seymour to talk on bee diseases on 24 March in Backwell. It proposed this is opened up to other members. Meg's fee has increased to £75 plus travel. This was approved.

Action: Confirm arrangements with Meg. AL/RW

5.0 Treasurer's report

TS had presented the accounts at the AGM. Lots of subs had been received and we currently have 13,700 in the bank.

6.0 Membership secretary update

HP reported that we currently have 177 members on roll, of which 116 are active. 116 have already renewed this year. Only 10 had paid by cheque; the rest have been bank transfer. HP has received good support from the eR2 team.

TS suggested we undertake a survey of members. This could be considered as part of the questionnaire planned around events.

Action: Consider drafting a membership survey - RW/JMcC

7.0 Secretary's report

- 7.1 Action: Ask Monsoon if there can be individual purchase and how long discounted prices will continue; also, if they can provide badges. JMcC. Monsoon had confirmed that individuals can order branded garments at discount prices, they need to state they are members of NSBK. They will not produce badges as they are very expensive, but had not replied whether they would add the logo to the branch beesuits.

Action: Go back to Monsoon re beesuits. JMcC

8.0 Apiary Manager's report

ES reported that the new apiary development is going well. JMo has agreed to be the emergency contact and Martin Spiller has also expressed interest. Jamie Llewelyn finds it difficult to act as deputy apiary manager in the peak of the season so a second may be needed at times.

Action: Discuss role of 2nd Deputy Apiary Manager with. ES and JMo

Action: Contact Martin Spiller regarding future arrangements. HP

- 8.1 Action: Share cost of fencing with the committee. ES Quotes had been £1300-1500, and ES had opted for the Langford company which was also cheaper.
- 8.2 Action: Purchase hedges from Chew Valley. ES. They are being planted now.
- 8.3 Action: Purchase shed from Avril's Fencing. ES. Completed
- 8.4 Action: Check if we can incinerate onsite. ES/AL. ES reported that he had purchased a new incinerator, but was agreed we still need to ask Langford for permission to use it. **Action: ES**
- 8.5 Action: Inform Anne Rowberry, Brian Stedman and Graham Barsby of the expenditure. AL Completed.
- 8.6 Action: Invite AR to visit the site, possibly at an opening event.
It was suggested we include university staff, and one of the Principals, e.g. the Vice Chancellor, could be invited to do a grand opening. Provisional date: Friday 15th May afternoon.
We may wish to do something for NSBK members at a weekend as well. We need to consider a good person to invite, e.g. AR.
- 8.7 Action: Inform AS of intention to add half day apiary maintenance session to the course. Completed and may be delivered again next year.
- 8.8 Action: Prepare apiary rota for next year. ES This will be done after Christmas. All members of the committee will be invited to participate.
Action: Include wider invitation to members in the January newsletter. ES/JMcC

9.0 Programme Manager's report

- 9.1 Action: Develop a questionnaire on this year's programme to be sent to all members. Then convene a sub-group of varied members to consider activities for next year. RW

The proposed event list has been published on the new website. Visits to Buckfast Abbey, with a lecture, and to Jamie Llewelyn's farm have been confirmed. Wax workshop was very good but maybe not every year, unless it has another focus. The pub quiz was fun but small attendance. Clive de Bruin was suggested. A session on Asian Hornet to keep up awareness, possibly led by someone from France or Meg Seymour or link with a practical workshop. JB reported that only 6 members have registered their monitoring traps on our website. Honey extraction session will be delivered at the apiary.

Action: Follow up on suggestions. RW

10.0 Education Co-ordinator's report

No volunteers had come forward at the AGM.

Action: Add item in the newsletter with the job description. JMcC

11.0 Swarm Liaison report

- 11.1 Action: Discuss future arrangements with AW - AL

Arrangements work very well with WhatsApp and BBKA arrangements. AL has agreed to manage the WhatsApp page for the time being until someone is available to take over. He will not be a member of the committee, but this could be revised in the future.

Action: Add information on the swarm WhatsApp to the newsletter.
JMcC

12.0 ABKA Rep's report

DW and AL had attended to discuss the apiary arrangements with the university. The license has been agreed by the NSBK committee, but Avon wanted to consider it. It was now agreed by Avon solicitor, the license is signed, agreed and back with Langford.

13.0 Web-Master's report

13.1 Action: Progress with our own website. RW

The new website is now live. We are on Weebly and their online help is useful. Members have the opportunity to report any inaccuracies.

Immediate feedback: no link to the sign-up form on the new page. People should be able to sign up on line, online booking remains to be developed. and will be developed over time.

Small photos of committee members will be included.

Action: send photos. All committee members

Action: Draft an item on the website for newsletter. JB

14.0 Shows 2020

Action: Include Nailsea Christmas Fair in the list of shows RW

It was suggested we increase the price of honey by 50p and David Capon had agreed. Our leaflets need updating. We also need a leaflet holder and replace the Velcro tabs.

Action: Request volunteer for show coordinator in newsletter. JMcC

Action: Update leaflets, honey prices etc. HP/AL

Action: Speak to DC regarding whether we can change the honey show schedule for the Michaelmas Fair to include wax candle. HP

15.0 Members without portfolio

15.1 Action: Contact SB to ask if she will be happy to deliver a session at the wax workshop. JW. Completed

15.2 Action: Contact David Capon to ask if he is willing to deliver the session on competition wax. RW. Completed

15.3 Action: Meet to discuss issue of female beekeepers' development needs and agree a way forward. JW, AL, HP

The meeting is booked for 13 December.

16.0 Any other business

16.1 Future apiary arrangements - AL

There was an ad hoc conversation with Megan at the Christmas meal regarding bee health and queen rearing. She suggested that, as we have moved to the vet school, we could use it as an opportunity to improve bee health and security. For example, we could restrict bees on the apiary to club colonies used for teaching and queen rearing. We could start to produce nucs for beginners to avoid importing bees and as a teaching opportunity. She had suggested that

Taunton has an apiary model that would be worth visiting. It was agreed this links well with our previous discussions around bee improvement.

Action: Ask Meg to flesh out a proposal for consideration. AL

16.2 Promotion of the introductory course – JMcC

We have 16 booked on the course, some leaflets given out last week and we are likely to have a few Langford students attending the course, but we may have space for more attendees. JMcC asked whether it would be worth advertising the remaining spaces through the media. This was approved. It was considered the Mendip Times would be a good target. Wendy Welham may have contact details for local free papers.

Action: Advertise the beginners' course through local free papers. JMcC

Action: Contact WW for contact details of papers. JMcC

16.4 ES reported that we need somewhere to store surplus equipment on the apiary and a log store would be useful. He has been quoted £700 to supply and erect a stand-alone shed. Approved.

Action: Purchase an equipment store. ES

16.5 ES also reported that he has purchased a WBC hive from Phil Clemente. He proposed that this is painted and displayed at the entrance in memory of Phil's 49 years of contribution to beekeeping and to the club. Approved

Action: Take forward the painting and display of the WBC hive in Phil's memory. ES

17.0 Dates of next meetings 2020

- **Monday 10 February**
- **Monday 6 April**
- **Monday 8 June**
- **Monday 7 September**
- **Monday 5 October - Pre-AGM**
- **Monday 7 December**