

## South Chiltern Beekeepers' Association

### Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> June 2014, 7.30pm

Rising Sun, Witheridge Hill

**Present:** Caroline Bushell, Linda Clarke, Reg Hook, Kate Malenczuk, Sue Remenyi, Max Stone, Meryl Toomey, John White

## MINUTES

1. Apologies: Max Vine. Not present: Margaret Moore, Tim Selwyn, Bev Woodford
2. Minutes  
Committee minutes for April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 were approved with the following amendment:  
Agendum 10: ...Three are lendable and are located with Reg in *Watlington*...
3. Matters arising  
Agendum 11:  
We had previously agreed Caroline would send membership information in a password-protected file, but this facility is not available in the Read version of Acrobat. In future Caroline will send the file to Sue Remenyi, who has the full Adobe software, for onward distribution in password-protected mode.
4. Treasurer's report  
Balances reported:  
Deposit account £2194.73  
Current account £3543.01, with some transactions still to pay, including website charges; but BBKA fees, BDI and Beecraft are all paid.  
Petty cash £102.15 MS
5. Membership report  
116 members; the breakdown is 86 full, 13 partner, 2 country and 15 associates.  
Associates are not BBKA members. CB
6. Federation Update and input for BBKA ADM 2015  
The deadline for submissions to the BBKA ADM is the end of June. On behalf of the Federation, Martin Moore will ask what fee increase would be needed to lower the current insurance excess of £500. CB
7. Website progress; feedback from committee  
Sue reported a technical issue, whereby the current website software does not allow us to provide a fixed link to a sub-page, only to the main home page. She and Dave Moss are looking for alternative software, as this would be a useful facility for the newsletter. Sue asked for us all to look at the website to check ease of navigation,

and report any issues. Meryl asked for syrup and fondant recipes to be included in the recipes section.

8. Association apiary

It's been a very swarmy season, and although Reg and Linda have successfully put off some hives, we ran out of equipment for artificial swarms. It's good for beginners to witness improvisation of kit at the summer experience. At the next one, queen rearing will be tried again; the first batch failed as the queen started laying in the queen-rearing hive. RH

9. Dorchester Abbey event; Traditional Skills in Action

We plan to put an exhibition stand at this three-day event over August bank holiday, for which we will be paid £500, but need to put on a good show. The committee voted to allow the spending of £400 on new display equipment such as lightweight boards and cloths which can be used again in future. Caroline will source free publicity materials from BBKA, and Linda will source and obtain the kit and get some flyers for the committee to distribute as widely as possible. Reg and Linda will attend with Reg's observation hive and bees, but will need help. Dave Moss, Jemima Hume-Humphreys, John, Sue and Max S have volunteered to share the workload over the three days. Duncan Brown will demonstrate skep making, and we need to source and exhibit beeswax candles from the membership. LC

10. Bee Health Advisor

Kate has been asked to identify people to take on this role for SCBKA, as an intermediary to lighten the load on inspectors. They are seeking one per 100 beekeepers, so SCBKA needs two people. It requires one day's training from Nigel Semmence. Reg already performs this role for us unofficially, and is willing to take it on formally. Jemima Hume-Humphreys has offered, along with John White. CM

11. Preliminary swarm report; BBKA insurance

Some of our 13 swarm collectors have been busy; there have been 13 calls since April 6<sup>th</sup> with several successful collections. Most of the 7 who registered to request swarms have been satisfied. A full report will be provided when the swarm season ends. Max wanted to remind us that the BBKA insurance excess is £500, and this is most likely to matter during swarm collection if a collector accidentally damages the private property of a third party. Note that the policy also excludes use of a smoker owing to the fire hazard. It was agreed to put a note on the membership form so that all members are informed of the excess applied. MV

12. Spraying Liaison

Max V had been contacted about night-time spraying near his apiary, and wondered if we should have a spraying liaison officer to make it easier for farmers to inform beekeepers of incipient spraying. The committee decided that although other associations have such a post, it's better done on a personal level, where each beekeeper establishes a relationship with the local farm managers if possible, and we can remind them to do so in the newsletters and website. Martin Moore was contacted by the Forestry Commission before spraying against Oak Processionary

Moth was carried out in Sulham and Pangbourne. There is no current instruction from the NFU on what chemicals farmers should use on forthcoming crops, for which seed will no longer be impregnated with neo-nicotinoids for the duration of the ban.

MV

#### 13. Library

Max V had suggested that the list of library books could be reorganised into more useful groupings, such as “new”, “recent”, “most popular”, and the videotapes disposed of, and Tim was in agreement. Sue has already offered to enhance the list by providing brief descriptions and is happy to do this. It might also be possible to transfer the tapes onto disc.

MV

#### 14. Winter Programme

The committee discussed whether we should have a honey show this year, and possibly combine it with the AGM in October, but in Margaret’s absence no firm decision was taken. It was also suggested that we should ask members for topic suggestions, and perhaps Margaret might be able to do some canvassing. MM

#### 15. Winter workshop

The committee discussed the proposal for a winter workshop to be held in Sue Remenyi’s barn, and possible topics. The barn would hold a dozen people working at tasks, or more for a talk, for a couple of hours on a Saturday. Ideally such workshops would be of interest to different levels of experience, but one suggestion as a starting-point was to host a hands-on equipment display of the confusion of different hive types for beginners to handle and investigate in informal surroundings (and with cake). Sue will liaise with Reg to discuss this further.

MV

#### 16. Any other business

Sue proposed that if the current PA equipment cannot be resuscitated, we should buy a new one for around £100. It’s an invaluable asset at both apiary and summer experience meetings, and is sorely missed when it fails.

John will investigate whether it’s possible to switch his apiary meeting date to Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July, as the current Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> date clashes with two other events for which we would normally provide a stand: the sheepdog trials in Henley and the open day at Chalkhouse Green Farm.

Max had asked us to ensure that at apiary meetings, someone is detailed to take notes and write them up for the newsletter.

#### 17. Date of next meeting: 7.30 pm, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014, Woodcote Community Room