

## St Albans and District BKA Committee Meeting

### Agenda

Thursday 11 June 2020 @ Online meeting - 7.30pm

Present:

Julian Griffiths (JG)

Michael Abbot (MA)

Adrian Small (AS)

Ben Sutton-Jones (BSJ)

Luke Adams (LA)

Gill Ray (GR)

Les Riley (LR)

Jane Pendlebury-Green (JPG)

Andrew Crossley (AC)

<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Patrick Maxwell (PM)</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Approval of minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>30 April, approved subject to 12c (Out Apiaries) being moved to the minutes of this meeting</li></ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters arising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>None</li></ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>Chair's report</b> <p>The glorious spring has finally broken into much needed rain and it is clear that 2020 is having a significant June Gap. Members will need to keep an eye on their colonies to prevent starvation especially where the full spring crop has been taken off. To add to the strangeness of the year, the blackberries are already coming into flower which may help -but surely this is much too early.</p> <p>It was heartening to see the Committee getting firmly behind Richard Peterson's proposal to start a queen rearing programme which can only do good for the Association and the quality of our stock.</p> <p>Speaking of getting firmly behind things it is difficult for decisions to be made when few members of the Committee comment on matters raised. I have put the issue of the cost of jars on the agenda tonight because such matters are a Committee decision.</p> <p>We need to be able to demonstrate a consensus so that the Committee are acting in agreement if not always "as one". I would like you all to make comment and ask questions when matters are raised. If we have all commented and all decided there should be no dissent -or return to the discord of the past -and it is that we must avoid at all costs. Where everyone has had their say and we have decided together we can't really argue -even if we don't all agree all of the time!</p> <p>Lockdown easing a little has changed little for beekeepers. We continue to social distance in the apiaries and public events or even Association meetings look unlikely before the Autumn -even if we are lucky. Fortunately, honey doesn't go off so we will just have to wait and see what we get....</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>Secretary's report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Honey Map on webpage updated</li><li>b) BBKA swarm map included on website too</li></ul>
<b>6</b>	<b>Treasurer's report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Not much has happened in the 6 weeks since the last committee meeting</li><li>b) Our bank account balance is currently £12795.51 with outstanding lodgements of £9.66 from website purchase as @ 10/6/2020</li></ul>

	<p>c) Membership currently stands at 113 full members, 12 country members &amp; 1 junior member. Increase of 2 full members &amp; 1 junior since last committee meeting.</p> <p>d) Freeman &amp; Harding have increased the prices of the jars, therefore we need to increase the price we sell 1lb jars to avoid returning a loss (as was a couple of years back), the other 3 sizes can remain the same. I propose the jars be raised to £24, this will cover the purchase cost &amp; card processing fees leaving 54pence profit. Discussion about the prices and £24 agreed unanimously <b>Action:</b> LR to change on website</p> <p>e) I have contacted the membership regarding Varroa treatments, offering them the opportunity to purchase just the amount they need. The treatment chosen for this year by the committee is MAQs. So far I have had 11 members respond (about 5 who have hives in the association apiaries who obviously do not read the emails correctly!!) Just the 11 alone, treatments for 42 hives are required. I have given a cut off date of Saturday 20/6/2020 to allow for obtaining the best price possible. As stated, I envisage this to be approx £5.50, but this price is not set in stone.</p> <p>f) The microscope associated equipment has been returned by David Miveld and is now in storage at Prae Wood</p>
7	<p><b>Education and training report</b></p> <p>a) Unfortunately, due to the current situation no beginner training has taken place this year. Following the postponement of the theory course in March we have not been able to offer any apiary visits to anyone on the course. We hope to be able to re-start the theory course later in the year, possibly September or October. We plan to rerun the course from the beginning, as not only will it be a while since the course was started, but also there were fewer attendees at the second session perhaps due to the virus already being on the horizon. If it is not possible to continue the course this year, capacity at Christ Church hall would be sufficient to enable next year's course to accommodate the numbers from this year as well.</p> <p>b) All 2020 Beginners Course attendees will be offered the chance to attend the 2021 course even if we do manage to complete the course this year. <b>Action:</b> AC to see if current attendees would like to do this</p> <p>c) I have had around a dozen new enquiries from people interested in beekeeping. I will keep them informed about the theory course situation as it becomes clearer.</p> <p>d) Practical mentoring for last year's Beginners Course attendees at the two apiaries has continued in various forms. Distancing requirements has meant that small groups of beekeepers are now permitted to attend with visits now spaced out during the week. From comments received, it appears to be working fairly well at the moment.  Discussion about the mentors and newbees feeling vulnerable. Andy C invited to Prae Wood from 11am on Saturday</p>
8	<p><b>Public events report</b></p> <p>a) No public events have occurred or currently in the pipeline</p>
9	<p><b>HBKA report</b></p> <p>a) No meeting since last SABKA committee meeting, next HBKA meeting is early August</p> <p>b) Rumour that Mike Goodhew has stepped down from the training role <b>Action:</b> JPG to investigate and send a thank you card to Mike if appropriate <b>Action:</b> JPG to end out Honey Price Survey to members that had been emailed from John P</p>

<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>Prae Wood and Oaklands Business</b></p> <p>Oaklands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) No access problems, as the East Gate has always been open and unlocked, so the contingency measures (collecting the key from Stuart White and having arrival windows to ensure that the gate was open) haven't been needed</li> <li>b) Mentoring continues with Anne, Jane and Adrian each taking one or more new beekeepers under their wing and people attending the apiary at different times and days</li> <li>c) There have been some colonies which have been quite aggressive but Anne has been helping to deal with these</li> <li>d) Orders for MAQS are currently being collated</li> </ul> <p>Prae Wood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) Mowing has been completed</li> <li>f) Several members at Prae Wood are keen to start Queen Rearing (see AOB 12c)</li> </ul>
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>Update on website and social media sites</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) GR is up and running with the social media</li> </ul>
<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>A.O.B.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) SABKA Constitution: Many thanks to LR for his considerable work on the constitution Quorum for the meetings would be 4 people. For the AGM the minimum would be 8% of the membership</li> <li>b) Fondant and ambrosia syrup sales from Crispin. JPG had sent out email to try and help gauge demand, very few responses but the summary has been sent on to Crispin. <b>Action:</b> JPG to liaise with Crispin re dates and comms for the food sales</li> <li>c) Queen rearing discussion There is a need for it within the Association as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- drone laying queens seem to be more prevalent than before</li> <li>- to help encourage members to consider their stock and not settle for nasty bees</li> </ul> Members should be charged a nominal cost (eg £10) JPG identified a potential speaker for the association meeting (winter or maybe spring), Sean Stevenson who had run the BBKA Queen Rearing Course at Stoneleigh last September <b>Action:</b> JPG to approach Sean Stevenson re queen rearing talk</li> <li>d) Out apiaries - RG: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Available sites: I could still have 4 sites available if anyone wants one. Would the committee like me to find any more?</li> <li>ii. Verulam Point, St Albans: We now have 2 colonies at Verulam Point, a small bee room for equipment etc. I have agreed to run this apiary for two years. The managements company Lambert Smith Hampton have paid for everything and also given a donation of £1000 to Anne Wingate to be used as she sees fit</li> <li>iii. Stuart F: has given up beekeeping and donated some equipment. I have spoken to the farmer where Stuart kept his bees, he is happy to have bees on his farm</li> <li>iv. Dawn H: has a woodland site in Chiswell Gren. I have not been to see the site and will go as soon as it is possible. Dawn has been clearing, hoping we can place some ees in due course in her wood</li> <li>v. De Havilland Museum, Shenley: To date I have not heard from our contact Stephanie Marshall and will make contact again in due course. The museum is setting up a new exhibit with an insect theme reflecting past aircraft</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vi. David H: is moving from CSHBKA to SABKA and although he has bees on a Harpenden allotment he feels his days there are numbered owing to the poor reception he gets when inspecting. Tom Catton of Catton Farms has agreed a really nice spot on his farm, overlooking farmland near Redbourn Golf Club. David hopes to move his 3 colonies asap</li> <li>vii. Bev McNicholas: Anne has asked me to give Bev a hand to get started in beekeeping. She has somewhat been thrown in at the deep end as I am not a Saturday afternoon beekeeper. Bev now has her own hive and a small swarm to look after as well as helping at Verulam and my own apiaries</li> </ul>
<b>13</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b> Thursday 10 September - venue to be confirmed</p>

Meeting closed 20:58