



North Somerset Beekeepers

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

Minutes of Meeting 12 February 2024 at 19:30 at The George, Backwell

Present:

Rob Francis (RF)
Tony Slater (TS)
Jodi Moger (JM)
Annabel Lewis (AL)
Tom Francis (TF)

Heather Pitch (HP)
Eric Sortwell (ES)
Michael Batchelor (MB)
Jen Stallwood (JS)

1. Apologies

Adam Evans and Paddy Brading

2. Minutes 4 December 2023

Approved

3. Matters arising (not covered below)

No response has been received from Roz Kiley. Eric agreed to follow up to ask her if she is happy to leave the committee officially, as she does not have time to attend (she has now confirmed she is happy to cease to serve for the time being).

Cost of Nucs – Jodi asked how was the price of £200 come to. This was what Annabel was agreed with Tom. Jodi said £180 plus frames, would be more in order. TS supported members charging what they thought appropriate.

4. NSBK Social Media Communications Channels - HP

There was a long discussion about communications. The outcomes were:

- There will be a WhatsApp group for the 2024 trainees open to all of them and the trainers.
- The 2022 and 2023 WhatsApp group will be closed when Eric and Jodi think they should be.
- NSBK News WhatsApp group to be used for giving members information. Only Admins will be able to post.
- Bee Noise WhatsApp group to be used by all members for general discussions.

5. Branch Strategy for Asian Hornet - JS

No official advice had been received from the NBU. BBKA does not give official advice. Jen said we should educate our beekeepers to identify Asian hornets but not recommend trapping as there would be a great deal of harmful bycatch. This might change if and when there are sightings in neighbouring counties. Currently, it might be useful to install bait stations using Trappit, and then report sightings.

6. Treasurer's Report

Cash in the bank £18,654. Last year £14,636.

7. Membership Secretary's Report

There are currently 213 members on roll, 169 of which are Registered (with bees). This compared with 211 (155) last year. Four renewal reminders were sent out before the 31 January 2024 deadline yet 47 lapsed their membership (44 last year). One hundred and seventy members were eligible for Gift Aid (158 last year) but this excluded 22 of the 2024 Introductory Course delegates who will be upgrading to Registered before attending their first apiary session. Almost all members used bank transfer to pay their subscription with just 10 paying by cheque.

8. Secretary's Report

Tony Slater has taken over from David Capon.

9. Education Coordinator's Report

See PB's report dated 12 February 2024 which had previously been circulated.

10. Apiary Manager's Report

It was agreed there should be Barbecue this year, with refreshments. Jamie Ellis, an entomologist based in Florida, with a specialisation in honey bees, might be willing to come to talk to us if we paid his expenses.

There are currently 10 Branch hives at the apiary as most of the other ones have been taken away by the 2023 Introductory Course cohort.

11. Programme Manager/Webmaster's Report

The post of Programme Manager is still vacant.

MB has made a booking for Clevedon Flower Show.

The Avon Spring Gathering – “The Beekeepers Kit Bag” – is to be held on 6 April at Shipham Village Hall 09:15 - 16.30 hrs.

Talk on swarming will go ahead on 13 April, led by Adrian Wells and David Capon at Churchill Memorial Hall, 14:00 hrs.

12. Avon Representative

Nothing to report.

13. Members Without Portfolio

JS said that the BBKA insurance policy had been changed to reflect the situation with Asian hornet and that we are insured to deal with them.

AL said that the date of our Honey Show was the same as the Somerset Lecture Day and suggested it should be moved to the third weekend in February instead.

14. Chair's Report

Branch Policies – As there were no other volunteers, Heather and Adam agreed to review the current policies that David circulated on 8 December 2023. Adam would work on a new Safeguarding and Social Media Policy and Heather would review the others.

Branch Honey Show, Tickenham – Heather had received an apology from Isobel Williams, Vice-Chair, TVHMC saying that the reason we could not enter Village Hall was because of mis-communication on their part. We should have been given the passcode for the key safe.

Top Bar Hive – it was agreed not to pursue this type of hive for the Branch apiary.

15. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

16. Date of next meeting

8 April 2024, 19:30 hrs, The George, Backwell

The meeting ended at 21:20 hrs.