

EPSOM DIVISION SURREY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF MAIN COMMITTEE MEETING

**Held at Upper Mill Apiary
Monday 12th March 2012 at 8.00pm**

Present	Apologies
Liz Knee (EK)	Neil Manley (NM)
Alasdair Maclean (AM)	Andrew Knott (AK)
Marysia Owsianka (MO)	
Peter Smith (PeS)	
Steven Secker (SS)	
Hilary Livesey (HL)	
Mike Petryszyn (MP)	
Colin Sutton (CS)	
David Dowson (DD)	
Tina Corr (TC)	
David Jones (DJ)	
Sue Brookes (SB)	
Phil Shepherd (PhS)	

1. Minutes of meeting held on 9th January 2012

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. EK confirmed that she will circulate future minutes to the Committee for their approval.

2. Reports from sub-committees and officers

Education, Training and Events Sub-Committee

AM reported that the Tuesday night programme is being developed. He also reported that the sub-committee is trying to take a more formal approach to training. EK reported that there are about 13 volunteers to assist at the Saturday practical sessions for beginners, with every Saturday until the end of September covered with at least 4-5 people.

AM stated that the sub-committee wants to understand why the autumn show was not popular last year, and to get members more involved. EK reported that Jill Forbes does not want to be Show Secretary and so there is a need to find someone else to take on the role. MO and Molly Bonard are leading some Tuesday sessions to encourage people to participate. SS suggested that EBKA could enter the new class in the national show for 6 jars of apiary honey.

EK informed the Committee that there has been 1 application for the Taster Day on Sunday 20th May, which has 15 places. She will speak to the local Guardian to ask if they will advertise it, and suggested notices could be put up in locals shops. SS suggested that other divisions could be asked to circulate a notice about it.

There have been 7 applicants for the basic exam this year. Audrey is still the examiner.

Administration Sub-Committee

SB reported the following main items of discussion at the last meeting of the sub-committee:

- In future years, participants on the beginner's course will be asked for one up-front payment, as the current two-stage payment has been problematic and we are still owed £40 for fees this year.
- SB had a very useful meeting with Sandra Rickwood of SBKA.
- Peter Austin has died recently, and it was agreed to let his membership continue for the remainder of the membership year.
- SS is going to investigate options for obtaining replacement supplies for shop receipts.
- HL has received an email request from Caddon Hives for EBKA to put a link to their online shop on the EBKA website.
- The Sub-Committee noted that there has been little development of the website. EK reported that AK is extremely busy at work and unable to give it the commitment it requires at this time.
- A budget of £500 has been drawn up for the Admin Sub-Committee.
- SS and Dave Chartres had a meeting about the club manuals and in due course will provide updated documents to the Main Committee for comment.
- The register of club assets has been received from Andrew Barnett and needs verifying.
- The scope of the Sub-Committee has been agreed.
- EBKA is now set up for electronic banking and details have been put on the membership form.

SS felt that Caddon Hives provides a good service. AM noted that if we provide a link to their site, it will move us up the Google search list. MP suggested we could have a page of links and put lots to other websites on it. EK advised that the Communications Sub-Committee should discuss the issue and make a recommendation.

EK reported that AK is very busy with work, and that PeS and TC are going to press ahead with the website development.

Members of the Committee felt that charging members for attending talks is not in the right spirit of the club, and it was therefore agreed that talks would be advertised to members as being free.

DJ queried whether we have separation for authorisation and execution of payments. SB confirmed that this is required, and we have two signatories on the cheque book to facilitate it.

Apiary Sub-Committee

SS reported that there has been no meeting of the Apiary Sub-Committee since the last Main Committee meeting. However, a session was held at the clubhouse the previous Saturday to discuss the beginners' Saturday practical sessions. These will be run using a revised version of last year's Practical Handbook for Beginners. MO observed that the club

will need a lot of sugar if all hives are going to be put onto clean comb. SS replied that this was in hand.

DJ noted that a two-year budget had been discussed last year for the Queen Rearing Project, and advised that the £750 budget still looks about right. Eight nucs have been sold, which has almost recouped the expenditure on the QRP. EK asked whether any nucs are left, and DJ confirmed that there are not.

Building and Grounds Sub-Committee

SS reported that there has been positive feedback on the new heating system. An instruction sheet will be prepared and put on the wall next to the programmer.

DD informed the Committee that he had been asked last year to investigate replacement floor covering. He has received a quote from Contract Flooring. Vinyl flooring will be noisy, so carpet tiles are an alternative option. The cost will be c. £450. It was suggested that we could try to clean some of the existing carpet tiles so that not all would need replacing, and if that was unsatisfactory we could replace more later in the season. DD offered to obtain samples.

SS reported that the Sub-Committee has decided to put keypad combination locks on the gate and on the main door. All keys will be kept in the hut inside a key box. SB confirmed that the insurance policy requires a 5-lever deadlock but that she is checking with the insurance company to see if a keypad is an acceptable alternative. AM felt that having an external key cabinet with a keypad would not work as it would not be practicable to rely on people to return the key.

EK reported that the first apiary clean-up day will work on clearing the mound. Des Haire has advised that the mound should be treated with glyphosate and then seeded with an annual mix. It will then be possible to think of planting perennials next year once the weeds are under control. MO felt that there are some plants growing there currently that are worth keeping. SS felt that the RHS Perfect for Pollinators plant list is a useful source of information for things that could be planted. DD suggested an audit of the grounds to establish what is already there. DD agreed to make a list and give it to TC.

Communications and Publicity Sub-Committee

PeS stated that he needs to speak to TC about a duplicate version of the website so that she can become familiar with using it.

TC reported that she is still feeling her way to an extent with the newsletter. Her aim is to find a good story to share every month. She asked whether the Committee is happy to wait until the issue of each newsletter to publicise any intervening items, and this was generally accepted.

Treasurer

SB reported that as of 29.2.12 club funds stood at £6735.08. Of that, a capitation payment of £2832.97 is yet to clear from the bank account, so the actual cashbook balance is £3902.11. EBKA owes £306.85 for BDI, and budgets have been set for the Apiary Sub-

Committee at £750 and the Admin Sub-Committee at £500. An invoice from the shop of £2500 needs to be paid, but the shop will be opening soon and bringing in income. In response to a question, SS confirmed that the shop brings in more income to EBKA than membership fees.

SB confirmed that EBKA is required to keep a reserve in a separate account of £3191, which would be enough to run the apiary for two years if the division were to receive no income.

MO asked whether EBKA has received an electricity bill since the new heating system was installed, and SB advised that we have not.

Membership Secretary

HL reported that the division currently has 91 registered members, 9 partner members and 4 country members. She also reported that she has received a request from BBKA to confirm their list of EBKA members prior to them issuing an invoice for the capitation payment.

PeS stated that he has received an email from Alan Byham advising that divisions could add a question to the membership form asking whether members would be happy for their contact details to be shared. A discussion ensued about whether members' contact details should be distributed to all EBKA members. Some Committee members felt that this was acceptable while others did not, and some felt that details should be made available but not distributed. It was suggested that an item about it could be put in the newsletter and then next year's membership form could include a request for each member's approval.

EK noted that the Welsh BKA shares its membership data with FERA as a matter of course and wondered whether English divisions would be prepared to do the same so that members are automatically entered onto BeeBase. DJ felt that individuals should have the opportunity to opt out. EK suggested the information could be requested on the membership form next year. It was proposed that there should be an open meeting for members on the subject, and EK agreed to schedule a Tuesday evening for this.

HL agreed to circulate an up-to-date membership list to the Committee.

Trustee

DJ reported the following items from the Trustees' meeting:

- There had been a big debate about donations to bee research. HL noted that she has already added an optional donation to bee research to the membership form.
- The issue of junior membership has been causing niggles.
- The divisional rulebook is being updated.
- Various Surrey logos had been circulated.
- SBKA is seeking a County Treasurer.
- There has been a long-running debate about BBKA News and whether it is right to include the cost of two publications in members' subscriptions. DJ suggested that EBKA might want to form a view on this and EK agreed to add it to the agenda for a future Committee meeting.

Shop

SS reported that he has spent £2500 on stock, a substantial amount of which is for wax. He also confirmed that the new marker pens (yellow) are in stock.

3. Future direction of club

EK referred members of the Committee to the questionnaire that AM has drafted asking members for their views on the future direction of the club. AM advised that it would be beneficial to offer a prize to encourage returns. TC stated that she has access to Survey Monkey and suggested that she could put a link in the newsletter and post a hard copy to the 10 members who receive a hard copy of the newsletter each month.

EK asked the Committee whether any other questions should be included, and the following were suggested for additional topics:

- why members come to the apiary
- shows
- learning styles

DJ felt that questions 5 and 6 would be more useful if made more personal. AM asked for any other suggestions to be emailed to him by the end of March. He will compile the results of the survey and present them to the Main Committee.

A number of other suggestions were made for ways to canvas opinion from members:

- invite members that we don't know to come to meet the Committee;
- ask people when we meet them whether they are happy with what the club is providing;
- offer a voucher for the shop as an incentive to contribute views;
- have a 'comments box' in the club house;
- each Committee member to ring round some members.

AM and TC agreed to liaise over the questionnaire.

4. Junior membership/safeguarding

EK referred members of the Committee to documents from BBKA that she circulated on 24th February regarding junior membership and safeguarding. She noted that information has been incorporated into the Constitution and DJ has covered it in his Trustee's report. DJ confirmed that if a young or vulnerable person comes on-site then someone has to be responsible for them. If they enter with an adult, then that adult is the responsible person. If not, we should send them away. DJ reported that the Apiary Sub-Committee has started to discuss the need for a warning sign on the fence.

SS queried who the responsible person would be in respect of the Saturday practicals for beginners. EK suggested that it would be useful to have someone at the practicals who is not in a bee suit.

SB proposed that the Admin Sub-Committee would discuss the issue of junior members.

5. FERA funding for training

EK reported that she and SS have each received £400 from FERA to attend a training course at NEScot in April.

6. AOB

CS requested that Mollie and Jill are informed if there are any fairs coming up. EK confirmed that they are going to keep her informed about upcoming fairs. HL noted that EBKA has had a presence in previous years at the Ashted Village Day in June, and agreed to forward information about it to Jill and Mollie.

7. Date and time of next meeting

Monday 21st May at 8.00pm. To be held in the clubhouse. Apologies were given from MO, TC and SS.