

EPSOM DIVISION SURREY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF MAIN COMMITTEE MEETING

Held at Upper Mill Apiary
Monday 21st May 2012 at 8.00pm

Present

Liz Knee (EK)
Peter Smith (PeS)
Neil Manley (NM)
Alasdair Maclean (AM)
Mollie Bonard (MB)
Hilary Livesey (HL)
Colin Sutton (CS)
David Dowson (DD)
David Jones (DJ)
Sue Brookes (SB)
Phil Shepherd (PhS)

Apologies

Steven Secker (SS)
Andrew Knott (AK)
Tina Corr (TC)
Marysia Owsianka (MO)

1. Minutes of meeting held on 12th March 2012

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Matters Arising

SB confirmed that EBKA is not down £40 on the beginners' course fees as previously stated, but £40 up, since one person paid a £40 deposit but never attended.

EK reported that there were 11 participants at the Taster Day. She expressed thanks to PeS for his assistance and to Madeleine and Sue for their help with the catering. No participant joined EBKA following the Taster Day, but some participants asked if they could come to the Tuesday talks and Saturday practicals. It was agreed that they should be invited to come along without formally joining EBKA, and then to join EBKA in October. PeS asked where we stand on insurance if people come along who are not members, and SB confirmed that the insurance position is fine.

MB queried what to do if people make enquiries about EBKA at stalls at events. EK advised that she has given Jill Forbes a leaflet which provides information about where we are and what we do.

2. Reports from sub-committees and officers

Education, Training and Events Sub-Committee

AM informed the Committee that the EBKA Show will be held on 22nd September, and the Open Day on the 14th July. EK confirmed that MB has agreed to be the Show judge. The Open Day focuses on education and training, so that people can find out about beekeeping,

see the apiary and find out about courses. MB will be running a stall selling items and providing teas and coffees.

Administration Sub-Committee

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

- The new shop receipts have been delivered and paid for.
- There is a revised expenses claim form on the website. EK will sign off claims and SB will pay them, thereby ensuring two people authorise claims. If the claim is from EK, someone else will authorise it instead of her. If the claim is from SB, she will receive it by cheque.
- It has been decided to replace the existing padlock with another padlock and new keys.
- EBKA will follow BBKA rules on junior membership.
- From next membership year, if people join part-way through the year, the membership fee will be discounted according to the time they join.
- EBKA's BDI premiums have been paid, and the Upper Mil apiary hives are covered.
- As requested, DJ asked the most recent meeting of SBKA how we pass on members' donations to BBKA for bee research, and has clarified the method of doing so.

Apiary Sub-Committee

EK reported that Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus has killed one of the apiary colonies, and a second is on its last legs. A further two have been affected but seem to be rallying. It is suspected that the virus has spread to a fifth hive. There is no brood coming through to replace the dying bees, as the colonies are probably queenless. EK observed that the Basic exam is booked for 22nd June, which may be problematic if there are no good colonies in the apiary. PhS emphasised the need to contain robbing, and highlighted the need to keep the apiary clear of rubbish.

EK stated that in response to Alan Byham's advice, SS will reposition the apiary colonies so that they are not in straight lines. DD observed that the apiary will be going into winter with weak colonies. PhS reported that the Queen Rearing Project is not producing queens currently because of the weather, and it will be July before any nucs are generated.

Building and Grounds Sub-Committee

NM reported that there has been a problem with the drain. Thames Water came to unblock it but a week later it was blocked again. NM will ask them to do a survey to find out what the problem is.

NM queried what was to happen with the floor covering, and DD responded that the Committee had previously agreed to try cleaning the carpet rather than replacing it.

EK suggested that EBKA should look into getting a cleaner to clean the hut on a regular basis. DD proposed to have an annual deep clean at the end of the bottling season, and then ongoing superficial cleaning. Other suggestions were:

- A £30 charge if the kitchen is left in a mess after extraction;

- Pea shingle around hives;
- Replacing the hoover (NM said he might have a redundant Dyson available);
- Getting a dishwasher;
- Reminding members to keep the hut tidy, and putting chairs away after meetings.

EK agreed that the Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee would make investigations about a cleaner and cost it up.

NM asked whether anyone had spoken to Des about the mound. EK reported that Des had said to get rid of the weeds, and she asked DD to go ahead and treat the weeds that remain.

SB reported that SS had found out that a lock with a keypad was not cost-effective, and so it was decided to purchase a padlock with new keys. She confirmed that there are no endorsements on the insurance policy regarding window locks. NM suggested that we should get a euro-profile lock for the store room and a 5-lever deadlock on the main door. EK asked NM to get as many keys as he thinks is cost-effective, and SB suggested charging keyholders a £5 deposit. If a key is lost, the keyholder would have to get another one cut. It was considered that fewer than 8 people need a key. NM suggested that the number on the gate is changed, and EK agreed.

EK informed the Committee that there is now an online diary on the website so that bookings can be made and members can see what activities are being held. She asked Committee members to tell her or PeS if they want an event to be entered, and they will put it on.

Communications and Publicity Sub-Committee

PeS stated that there is nothing to report.

Treasurer

SB reported that:

- The bank balance as at 30.4.12 was £7581.13
- Taking account of uncleared payments, the cashbook balance is £4400.71
- The insurance broker is still waiting for the paperwork to come through, but the premium is likely to be around £500. Insurance cover is for £7000.
- Xander Casey paid his membership subscription twice for this membership year, but he has asked EBKA to keep the second payment to cover next year's membership.

PeS queried whether the insurance renewal will require an alarm to be fitted, but EK advised that we should deal with this if and when the question arises.

Trustee

DJ reported that Bob Maurer is keen that divisions enter the new class at the honey show, for entries from association apiaries.

DJ gave a piece of paper to SB with instructions for paying the donations to BBKA for bee research.

DJ informed the Committee that there are two new Course-in-a-Case courses available. Sandra Rickwood at SBKA is willing to lend them to associations to have a look. EK will ask to borrow them to see if EBKA would want to buy one.

Tim Lovett, the Surrey President, is asking for help at the Hampton Court Flower Show. AM said that he has done it in the past and is willing to do it again. He will send Tim Lovett an email. DJ asked the Committee if someone could speak to Kimberley Gimenes about helping as well.

Shop

NM asked whether the shop has any lids in stock, and EK confirmed that there are.

3. Results of survey

AM noted that the most striking feature is that members felt that the club should be about collaborative learning and teaching. He also noted that the Tuesday evening sessions have been well-received. EK asked each member of the Committee to come up with one idea to assist her in finding subjects to fill the Tuesday evening sessions. She asked Committee members to email her with ideas. Suggestions at the meeting included cider and wine-making, plants, and a working party to make frames for the Queen Rearing Project.

NM expressed surprise at how little the website is used. Most people use it only once a month. It was suggested that a link to the website could be included in any emails sent to members, rather than attaching documents to emails. EK suggested that the website could be used to promote mentoring, as there are a lot of people who have asked for mentoring help. PeS agreed to investigate how easy it would be to set up and run a mentoring forum on the website.

PeS reported that he has investigated the possibility of setting up a facility for members to renew membership online, including online payment of subscriptions. The software would cost upwards of £70, with support for the second year at another £25 or more. It would also be possible to do course registration online. He will investigate further and report back to the next Committee meeting. DJ queried whether it would be necessary to have data protection registration, and PeS advised that EBKA is exempt.

AM noted that only one respondent to the survey thinks that EBKA should have a show. EK suggested that we should canvas opinion on the subject again, after the two Tuesday evening sessions on preparing for a show.

DJ noted the comments on how welcoming people feel EBKA is. AM responded that there will always be a spectrum of views on such a subject.

DD felt that it may be interesting to ask SBKA whether the survey results correspond to views in other associations. EK said that she would raise the issue at the next divisional meeting. She also thanked TC and AM for doing the survey.

4. External shows and events

EK thanked MB for attending the meeting. She also thanked MB and Jill Forbes for their hard work in running external stalls.

Members of the Committee felt that the aim of external stalls should be both educational and for the marketing of products. EK noted that only products under the liability cover should be sold under the Epsom Division banner, i.e. hive products, or honey, wax and propolis. For any other goods such as cakes, sweets and creams, members need their own separate liability cover. It was noted that only plain coloured candles can be sold, and EK agreed to check whether candles made with foundation is or is not a product from members' hives.

MB commented that there is a need for leaflets to hand out to people visiting the stall, particularly about who we are and what we do, and on wildflowers for bees. It was queried whether BBKA has any material that can be handed out. PeS observed that the cost of printing depends more on quantity than size. It was queried whether the cost would come out of the Education Sub-Committee budget, but SB noted that the sub-committee has not produced one. DD suggested exploring a general leaflet from SBKA/BBKA and personalizing it for EBKA. MB observed that BBKA did produce a general leaflet with divisional contacts, but there are none left. EK agreed that the Education Sub-Committee would consider what advertising/leaflets need to be produced and costs.

MB stated that she needs help with taking the gazebo and tables to events, and reimbursement of Jill Forbes's petrol costs. EK has asked for volunteers in the newsletter without success, although other members have helped Mollie and Jill at stalls in the past. EK suggested that we may need to find another way of publicising ourselves, and noted that the taster day applicants all found out about it through the website, bar one which was by word of mouth. PeS wondered if members do not know that the club is doing stalls at events, and suggested that there should be reports back in the newsletter, and at the same time asking for future volunteers. MB will write a promotional article to inform members what is going on with external events and to try to drum up more support with helping set up and staffing the stalls.

EK asked how much we pay in fees for having stalls, and MB replied that it varies, from nothing up to £20 per day. The fee is paid out of the commission on sales. There is a need to ensure that the outgoing costs of running stalls and advertising is balanced by money coming in.

DJ suggested that there is a need for a sheet to hand to people supplying items for the stall, explaining the terms under which we will put items on for sale, including commission, liability and insurance.

EK and AM agreed to discuss the issues raised at the next meeting of the Education, Training and Events Sub-Committee.

5. Swarms

EK informed the Committee that she has asked PhS and SS to decide the best course of action regarding swarms. She suggested that to practise responsible beekeeping, swarms should be quarantined and assessed for health and viability. PhS noted that, given the present state of the apiary hives, the club would benefit from keeping any swarms that are collected. This year, the Queen Rearing Project has received none, although last year they received 2 or 3. EK asked whether the Committee was happy with this approach. PhS suggested that if there is a surplus of swarms, then we can decide what to do with them. He felt that if the club wants to continue with a swarm list, then people on the list should go and collect the swarms themselves.

PeS noted that the BBKA wants to encourage any member to go on a swarm liaison list if supported by their club, and EBKA was asked to say whether we are happy with who is on the list. It is important that competent swarm collectors are deployed as the reputation of the Epsom Division is important to maintain. PhS informed the Committee about an article in a local newspaper where a member had collected a swarm and EBKA was mentioned in the article even though the club knew nothing about it. PeS offered to email the member asking them to let the club know if the same happens again, so that we are aware of the situation if the press should contact the club. He will put something in the newsletter to the same effect.

6. AOB

EK noted that members have to be full registered members to get the 10% discount in the shop. It was suspected that this is not widely known, nor is it written down anywhere, and there was felt to be a need for clarification.

7. Date and time of next meeting

Monday 23rd July at 8.00pm. To be held in the clubhouse.

The new membership rates will be available from SBKA for this meeting.

8. Action list

- All Email EK with one idea for a subject for the Tuesday evening club nights.
- EK Borrow the two new Course-in-a-Case courses from Sandra Rickwood and consider whether EBKA should purchase either of them.
- EK Inform SBKA of the results of our members survey at the next divisional meeting.
- EK Check whether candles made with foundation is or is not a product from members' hives for liability insurance purposes.
- NM Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee to make investigations about a cleaner and cost it up.
- NM Purchase a new padlock with a cost-effective number of keys.
- NM Change the security number on the gate.
- PeS Investigate how to set up and run a mentoring forum on the website.
- PeS Investigate online membership renewal further and report back to the next Committee meeting.
- PeS Write an item for the newsletter regarding swarm collection by members and press

coverage, and email the individual member appearing in the recent newspaper article.

DD Treat remaining weeds with weedkiller.

TC Include a link to the website in any emails sent to members, rather than attaching documents to emails.

AM Education Sub-Committee to consider issues raised on external shows and events, including production of advertising/leaflets and cost.

MB Write a promotional article for the newsletter to inform members what is going on with external events and to try to drum up more support with helping set up and staffing the stalls.