

## Medway Beekeepers' Association

### Minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 17 July 2018

at 7 South Avenue 2pm

**Present:** J Chapman, Mrs S Stunell, Mrs J Ferry, M Ballard, Paul Lawrence, Bob Smith, Elaine Laight

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2018:** Were signed as a true record of the meeting
2. **Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2018:** There were no matters arising which were not covered by the agenda
3. **Finance and Membership:** Sheila Stunell presented the final account of the Introduction to Beekeeping Course which showed a profit of £641.00.  
In relation to setting up a current account with Santander the paperwork was in the process of being completed. It was proposed by **Paul Lawrence** that the three signatories to the account would be John Chapman (Chairman) John Hendrie (Treasurer) and Sheila Stunell (Secretary) and that Robert Smith and Richard Blaxland agreed to be removed as a signatories.  
The proposal was seconded by **Mark Ballard** and carried. **In favour: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0**
4. **Correspondence:** Sheila Stunell had received a request from the Vines Cherry Picnic. It was too late for this year but they asked us to consider a presence next year on 13 July. John Chapman said this was quite a small affair and might be of interest to one or two beekeepers.
5. Sheila had also received the details of the Ploughing Match which will be held on 22 September 2018 at Tudor Farm. John Chapman agreed to send off the paperwork to meet the deadline of 30 July 2018. Paul Lawrence had also been approached by Abbey Court Special School who are starting rural studies and might in the future be interested in bees on site.
6. **Website:** Paul Lawrence reported that three policies had now been written and put on the website, currently under latest news but will eventually have a dedicated tab. All three policies had been distributed to committee members for comment.  
The website is up to date apart from details about the visit to the packhouse and update to the published minutes.  
The hygiene protocol for the apiary has been sent out and there will be a permanent post under the Latest News tab under Apiary.  
The newsletter will be published on 27 July. John Chapman was asked for a short report on Kent Show and Bob Smith agreed to send a list of the successful Basic Assessment Candidates.
7. **Education:** Bob Smith reported that a successful Introduction course had been completed and had resulted so far in seven beekeepers. Jen reported that Mark Horner who had attended the course had moved his apiary to a garden in Shorne and would need a mentor. John Chapman agreed to take this on.  
The 2019 course will begin on 11 March for six weeks ending on 15 April. The cost will be £75 and will include Associate Membership for a year and the course text book which has yet to be confirmed.  
Jen Ferry expressed concern that the practical sessions had been erratic and suggested that they need to be built in.

Bob asked for a 14x12 virtual hive and Jen confirmed that pictures for this were being undertaken.

Eight students had entered the Basic Assessment which resulted in eight passes with six credits a very pleasing outcome. Bob asked that the minutes reflect the association's appreciation to Tony Edwards for the use of his apiary.

The Winter Studies this year will be Module 2. There will be a charge of £20. It will begin on 22 October and run for alternate weeks for 10 weeks with breaks for Christmas and New Year. This will be advertised in the newsletter.

8. **Apiary site:** Mark Ballard reported that of the six hives one was lost to a drone layer.

- Hive 1: Deep National + two supers has slow start but picking up
- Hive 2: Deep National 14x12 + four supers two ready to come off
- Hive 3: Gone
- Hive 4 : National + 1 super
- Hive 5: WBC 14x12 + 1 super
- Hive 6: Nuc into 14x12 WBC now hive 3

9. Boot wash will be provided. The pond is low and two water butts have been used to fill it and are now empty. A new line has been purchased for the strimmer and a bill will be presented for petrol for the mower. The equipment shed needs ventilation at the gable ends – wax is melting.

There needs to be regulation about equipment which comes and goes. Deck chairs have appeared and once other equipment goes out it is passed around and often lost sight of.

- John Chapman agreed to take charge of the equipment in the small shed.
- Extracting equipment might become a package of extractor, refractometer, and uncapping tray.
- Several members suggested that the purchase of an uncapping tray would be useful
- The hire charge for this equipment would be between £5 and £10
- Apiary reports should be sent to Mark and Elaine.
- A date for tidy up was set for 1 September 12-2pm.

Elaine reported that the admin on the rota was done to 25 August. The plan was to keep weekly inspections through September and then go to monthly until March depending on weather. She would look into a way of standardising the reports.

**Potential New Sites:**

- Bob Smith had contacted Andy Mackness about the Blue Lagoon site. This had not proved to be a useful site for us at this time.
- Higham Cricket Club: Bob had managed to track John Myatt down for use of the cricket club site. The proposal needs to be run past the land owner and to date Bob has not heard. The clubhouse has full facilities, and there is good parking, access and a teaching area. It is occasionally subject to vandalism.
- Buckmore Park: There is a huge car park and the Woodland Manager is very keen for bees on the site. The Scouts have 149 acres of woodland the freehold of which was deeded to them by the Bridgewardens Trust. There are two sites to the

left of the car park both very wooded – mostly chestnut. There is not water yet but there is electricity and there is drainage but only from a derelict building. Scouts have facilities which we can use, there are toilets and a teaching room.

The site can be fenced off and trees can be felled the Scouts will be happy to do this. Bob suggested that there might be land further down nearer to the facilities. Mark agreed to investigate this. A site survey was needed and liaison with Dan about planning. Would we need a contract? If we take it on we would hope that it was a very long-term lease.

- Jen brought up the subject of Out Apiary Site Offers. In the past we have had people offer gardens or fields but we have not really followed this up. Jen had a page from Surrey Beekeepers. Jen suggested that we should follow this up in earnest and keep a record of offers perhaps for our new beekeepers who would be looking for apiaries. Concerns were expressed about access – gardens etc would need to be accessible 24/7 and owners would need to be comfortable with that. Expressions of interest could be collected and terms and conditions published. We could advertise on the net and on Facebook. Paul and Sonia to do this. Paul to arrange a leaflet. Expressions of interest would come in to [admin@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:admin@medwaybeekeepers.co.uk) and referred to Jen

10. **Swarm Collection:** The swarm phone has been transferred to a SIM only system which will cost us £13.60 per month currently being paid by Sheila Stunell. There is still some confusion about who would like to take swarms. Andy Garnham had collected a swarm and had no idea of how to pass it on. This part of the system needs reviewing.

11. **Future events:**

12. **Annual Dinner** – Jen and Sheila had met with Gill James (Jen's daughter) to try to plan this year's supper. It was decided that the event would be an Annual Supper and prizegiving and as such could be less formal than in previous years and might encourage more members to attend. The draft plan would include a quiz to start the evening and be an ice breaker. Dinner would follow grace and would be a family style dinner to reduce the need for many staff. Our prizegiving would be the awarding of cups as usual with Bob presenting the education awards for this year. The results of the quiz would immediately precede the results of the raffle.

Discussion took place about the things we would leave out and it was decided that the formal toasts could be dispensed with. The menu would be Italian themed and there would be a vegetarian option but the menu would be fixed. It had been suggested that wine could be bought by the bottle on entry but members felt it might be simpler if it was a bring your own bottle system. Tickets would be £25.00 One of our problems is cooking and keeping warm food prior to serving. Several people have hostess trolleys which could be pressed into service and Bob offered his double oven Aga if it would help. Entry would be by ticket available to purchase before the date. Details need to be sharpened up but the basic idea was acceptable.

**Autumn Programme:**

- **September 8/9:** Honey Show
- **September 22:** Ploughing Match – 2 Gazeboes, candle rolling and as many people as possible.

- **October 13:** Annual supper and prizegiving
- **October 20:** Autumn Fair
- **November 17** Lauren Kennedy
- **December 15** Quiz
- **January 19** TBA
- **February 13** AGM
- **March 16** TBA

**Any Other Business:** There was no other business

13. **Date of next meeting: Tuesday 21 August at 2pm to 4pm** at 7 South Avenue

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_