

Swansea & District Beekeepers' Society
Main Committee Meeting on (Tues) 20th March 2018
at the New Lodge Social Club, Gorseinon

Present

Gertie Axtmann (GA), Julian Caruana (JC), Martin Davies (MD), Stephen Davies (SD), John Gale (JG), Sue Lawrence (SL), Gill Lyons (GL), Paul Lyons (PL), David O'Carroll (DOC), Nicola Oulton (NO), Jean Salkilld (JS), Karen Squires (KS).

1) Apologies

Received from Ian Algie, Mike Grinter.

2) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were accepted as a true record subject to the following amendment:

Under Any Other Business - Purchase of Equipment with Society Funds it should read "It was suggested (and not DS suggested) that members could also be reminded about the library resource (probably about £2000 worth of books) at their disposal.

3) Matters arising from Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Asian Hornet working group of MD, SL and DOC were looking at ways to make members aware of the Asian Hornet. A policy is to be devised using the existing policies of Devon BK and BBKA. DOC suggested that it would be better to add to policies already written rather than create new ones. DOC has drafted a policy similar to the existing policies, for discussion.

It was discussed that identification is very important and once a confirmed sighting has been made then the National Bee Unit (NBU) will be notified as soon as possible. SD suggested that if the hornet is captured and not released then locating the nest using flight path triangulation would not be possible, so marking it with a feather could be the answer. JC suggested that taking a picture and then releasing it might be an option.

DOC was going to check with NBU as to whether the policy is to kill or not kill any Asian Hornets captured.

Meeting to be arranged by beginning of April. JC will write to West Glam Beekeepers to offer them the chance to work with us on the development of the policy. DOC would like to be able to give them a finished policy.

4) Treasurer's Report

Our Account balances are: No:1 Account - £10,390.12
 No:2 Account - £Nil

JG reported that since the last meeting all the cheques have now cleared as has the MSWCC cheque for £25 for the annual subscription.

The Society will pay in the region of £729 at the end of March for the spring return for BDI and this will include the third and last agreed payment for the research into varroa.

In addition, there will also be a payment of £198 to Northern Bee Books in respect of subscription for Beekeeper Quarterly and Natural Beekeepers. This should then conclude the early season's expenses.

5) Sub-Committee Reports

Apiary

Mike Grinter (MG) was unable to attend the meeting but JC read out his report.

There are 8 colonies at Llys Nini, all were checked for sufficient feed/stores before the start of the Beast from the East and weighted down with bricks or a paving slab. After the high winds MG checked them again and all were as they had been left. One colony is still with Martin.

MG checked them again last Wednesday (14th March) and all colonies were flying, Seven of the colonies seemed quite strong, and of those seven, one had decided on a new entrance via some flexing on a super above the brood box, This will be sorted by replacing the super when the weather is suitable. The other colony was flying but visibly less bees. With the onset of more cold weather/snow forecast MG checked and topped up feed as necessary (the weaker colony had feed and the cluster was right under it, so nothing more to do than wait).

The weather is forecast to improve over the weekend so MG will be checking on them then.

MG would like to paint the shed, and would welcome a donation of leftover suitable paint in a restrained shade, but failing that requests permission to purchase a suitable quality product as cheaply as he can.

The email sent on MG's behalf by JC re the preferred opening day/time of the Apiary has elicited very few responses, most of which are fairly ambivalent. With that in mind and the fact that the facility is more directed/ used by beginners, the subject was raised with the Beginners' Class for them to give it some thought. MG will update the Committee as soon as there is anything further to report and after discussion with Ian (IA) and Martin (MD).

NO said that she had some paint and was willing to donate this. NO to contact Mike.

Bee Tent:

MD went through the dates of the confirmed events received. JC to add a link to the Go Wild event in Tredegar on the Event's calendar on the Society's website.

Education

NO confirmed that the Beginners' Class is going well and everyone is still attending.

There have been a couple of enquires as to when the apiary will be open. NO asked if any of last year's beginners have re-joined this year – JC stated that half have.

Gower Show

At a Directors meeting of the Gower Agricultural Society, attended by GL it was decided that fee for competition entries would be increased from 50p to £1 per entry, effective from 2018. As the schedule was being printed before our next Committee meeting and there was short notice of the increase GL sent an email to seek the views of Committee members on subsidising this year's increase. The consensus of this was that we should pass on the whole increase and not temporarily subsidise it. It was however suggested that the Honey Show classes could be sponsored therefore allowing the possibility of improving the way products are exhibited.

The Gower Show provides either lunch vouchers or packed lunches to those volunteers that work all day – numbers for those requiring a packed lunch would need to be submitted by GL beforehand.

JS mentioned that a complaint had been received from the Gower Agricultural Show that a Society member had been rude to the helpers who brought the tables. This is unacceptable and the Society will be watched at this year's show.

GL asked about the possibility of purchasing vouchers for the children's quiz with 2 prizes per class. It was agreed to fund £30 (6 vouchers @ £5).

6) Events

GA had been approached by New Lodge asking if it could advertise our Society's Tuesday meetings on the New Lodge Facebook page. This was discussed and was agreed that this would be acceptable.

Following March's talk by Arnia, which was well received, it was agreed that future speakers need to be asked about any costs/contributions at time of booking. Arnia emailed GA three days before their talk asking for a contribution, which was very short notice. PL suggested that we should possibly have a policy on booking speakers which could be drafted by the Events Secretary and would included asking potential speakers if there would be any charges and/or costs. This could help to avoid situations where charges or expenses are claimed without any prior warning, as has happened previously.

It was agreed that the Event's Secretary would be able to agree payments to speakers up to a maximum of £50, if requested, to cover any materials or out of pocket expenses incurred by them for providing their talk. The Apiary Manager currently has the same budget limit.

JS reminded Committee that the talk in June will be given by Bernard Diaper and that he and his wife will be travelling to Swansea for this. JS (and David)

will be providing their accommodation whilst in Swansea but asked if the Committee would agree to the Society paying for Bernard and his wife to be taken out for one meal. This was unanimously agreed

GA reported that the events diary for 2018 has been completed although there may be some changes to the dates of speakers. JC advised that he has been contacted by a PhD student (Kate Davidson) who is doing research on bee foraging on the saltmarshes and suggested inviting her to give a talk on the bee-related research she has done and will be doing. GA confirmed that this talk would have to be in July and JC will confirm this with Kate and send her request for information to members. The events diary for 2019 is currently been planned with January 2019 speaker already booked.

GA has booked the 2018 Christmas Dinner at the Rake and Riddle, Penclawdd again, on 1st December.

7) Website

JC has received no further update from Jonathan Bowen. JC stated that he could update some pages but not add any.

PL has received an email enquiring about the Native Bee Project from a link on the website and DOC enquired as to whether there is anything happening with this Project. JC said that the Project was set up some time ago and a small group of members had volunteered to take this forward. DOC asked if a subgroup was ever created but JC pointed out that this was not a project being driven or controlled by the Society or the Committee but was something that every member was free to take forward if they wished. It was decided that PL should forward the email to Rob Jones as he is (effectively) the lead in this Project.

8) Correspondence

WBKA 75th Anniversary – An email and order form for polo shirts for this event has been received and JC asked how this would be managed and by whom for our Society. PL confirmed that he is co-ordinating the polo shirts for the WBKA and was happy to manage the orders for the Society. JC will email Society members asking them to send their orders to PL if they wish to purchase any.

Arnia – JC has received an email regarding the Honey Bee Observatory. The discount on offer was unclear - either 15% or 20% if purchased before 6th April. The cost of £850 is for 1 Gateway, 1 Weatherstation, 2 Sets of Hive Monitoring Sensors and 12 months User Interface Subscription. MG (in an email to JC) felt that the purchase would be beneficial to the Society not only as an educational tool for members but would also provide an opportunity to link to schools and raise our profile. The Society would be participating in data received throughout the country and would also benefit from any updates and upgrades on offer. NO offered to analyse the data received.

SD expressed concern with regards to the siting of the Gateway if under a tree and the range (maximum distance) of the hives from the Gateway. JC agreed to email Arnia for advice.

Committee then agreed to go ahead once the queries have been answered satisfactorily.

9) Any Other Business

Newsletter - David Salkilld (DS) requested that any newsletter items are to be sent to him by 20th April for inclusion in the next newsletter.

DS asked if it would be possible to have members details in order to send out the newsletter himself to relieve the pressure on the Secretary. JC stated that sending out the newsletter is not an onerous task and that hopefully the newsletter would be able to be uploaded onto the website, eliminating the need to email.

JC advised that the law is changing regarding the storing and use of personal details held and whilst a few Committee members (Treasurer and Librarian) may use member information to carry out their roles, the Secretary is currently the only person to have a complete list. JC reminded Committee that some members do not wish their details to be shared (a question asked on the current Membership Form). The issue of member information in relation to the new data protection regulations coming into force in May 2018 will be addressed in the next meeting.

10) Date of next meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for 7.00pm on 17th April, 2018 (in the New Lodge Social Club, Gorseinon).

Officers (as at the AGM 2018):-

Chairman	David O'Carroll (dsocarroll@yahoo.co.uk)
Vice Chairman	Paul Lyons (sd_bks@btinternet.com)
Treasurer	John Gale (johnhgale@hotmail.com)
Secretary	Vacant *

* Julian Caruana (sdbks.secretary@gmail.com) is covering the role in an Acting capacity only.

Other Committee Members:

Ian Algie
Gerti Axtmann
Julian Caruana
Martin Davies
Stephen Davies
Mike Grinter
Sue Lawrence
Gill Lyons
Nicola Oulton
Jean Salkildd
Karen Squires

Committee Roles:

Apiary Manager	Mike Grinter (michaelgrinter@sky.com)
Bee Tent Lead	Martin Davies (minarimartin@outlook.com)
Education Officer	Nicola Oulton (nikoulton@yahoo.co.uk)
Events Secretary	Gerti Axtmann (gerti.axtmann@gmail.com) & Karen Squires (kes.llanelli@virgin.net)
Gower Show Secretary	Gill Lyons (gillml@btinternet.com)
Librarian	Paul Lyons (sd_bks@btinternet.com)
Membership Secretary	John Gale (johnhgale@hotmail.com) & Sue Lawrence (kslawrence@virginmedia.com)
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