

BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.

Minutes of the Torbay Branch Executive Committee Meeting held at the Paignton Club, 2, The Esplanade, Paignton on Tuesday, 26th January 2016 at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Liz Westcott.	Branch Chair & Education Officer
Gerry Stuart	Branch Vice Chair & Branch Librarian
Lindsay Ticehurst	Treasurer
Doug Westaway	'BUZZ' editor
Mike Ticehurst.	Branch Web Master
Wendy Ashley	
Brian Turner.	
Maureen Brown.	
Glyn Davies.	
Jim Mogridge.	

Liz commenced the Meeting by welcoming Glyn Davies to the Committee meeting.
(See minutes of 2014/2015 AGM par. 12)

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
Doug reported that Di was unable to attend the Meeting. He agreed to act as secretary to the Meeting.
- 2. Minutes of previous Committee Meeting: approval & signing**
Item No. 11. Gerry requested that par. 11 be amended to make it clear that the 'black bee' colonies had not swarmed. He had been called to the Zoo on two occasions to deal with a bumblebee nest and an established 'wild' honey bee colony. Liz suitably amended the minutes. There being no other proposed amendments, Liz signed her copy of the minutes to indicate that they form an accurate record of the above Meeting.
- 3. Matters arising**

A/P 756.	Liz reported that only two Branch members, Gerry and herself, had expressed an interest in studying a BBKA module. Therefore no action had been taken. Cancelled.
A/P 757	Completed.
A/P 758	Completed.
A/P 759	Completed.
A/P 760	Completed.
A/P 761	Completed.
A/P 762	Completed.
- 4. Co-option of additional member to General Committee**
Mike proposed and Lindsay seconded that Mr. Glyn Davies be co-opted onto the Committee as a general member. The proposal was unanimously approved.
- 5. Chairman's Report**
The Christmas Social, held in December was thoroughly enjoyed and well supported both by members and new recruits from the current introduction to beekeeping course, who brought refreshments and raffle prizes. A quiz was devised by Liz and everyone enjoyed

a very sociable evening.

We had a very positive start to 2016 with the Torbay Honey Show held on 12th January. We had 59 entries, down from 84 last year but still made for a good competition.

Jack Mummery came from North Devon to judge and did an excellent job.

Speakers were Glyn Davies: Master Beekeeper, Adam Vevers: commercial beekeeper and Martin Hann: seasonal bee inspector who conducted a very interesting discussion and were well received.

Cups were awarded for Honey: Glyn Davies, Wax: Liz Westcott, Cookery: Gillian White (Totnes and Kingsbridge BKA) and Novice: Lindsay Ticehurst.

As we had more than 50 exhibits we were entitled to award Best in Show which went to Gillian White for five one ounce blocks of beeswax.

This year sponsorship was obtained from Lloyd Maunder Butchers, Kents Cavern, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Princess Theatre, Artizan Art Gallery, Spex Opticians, Kaboodles Hairdressers, Tecmarine Ltd, Nick Westcott and Catherine Karia.

Sponsorship totalled £150 plus raffle prizes donated: Theatre tickets from Princess Theatre; Two tickets to Kents Cavern; Belgium Truffles from Douglas Westaway; Dairy Milk Chocolates Douglas Westaway; Wine Gerry Stuart; Honey Soap Liz Westcott; Honey Soap gift pack Liz Westcott. The raffle raised £59 and entries £29.50. £92.00 was paid out in prize money and a total profit made of £146.50 before accounting for money for speakers/judge and hire of the hall.

The Annual Dinner was held at The Paignton Club on Friday, 22nd January and was attended by 25 members and friends. The food was excellent; I thought the best meal so far. Jim was our reluctant guest of honour. Certificates were presented to Douglas and Jim to commemorate their Honorary Membership.

We still have no Apiary Manager of our apiary at Cockington. The bees have not been treated with oxalic acid this year, in which case other measures will need to be taken in the spring. They have also not been fed fondant.

Liz Westcott

6. Treasurer's Report

Money received

	£
Apple Day Sales	313.00
Course Fees	1050.00
Christmas Raffle	34.00
Subscriptions	1271.00
Honey Show Sponsors	150.00 (Liz and Gerry)
Honey Show Raffle	59.00
Honey Show Entry Fees	29.50

Money Out

Hut insurance	99.64
Officers' Expenses	91.14
Honey Show –Judge	35.00
2 Panel Members	50.00
Prize Money	92.00

This makes a profit of £61.50

Forty seven members have renewed their subscriptions.

The Current Account balance is £5985.97

Lindsay Ticehurst

Seventeen of last year's members have failed to renew their membership. The Treasurer read out a listing of these members to the Committee. 'BUZZ' editor agreed to place a final 'reminder' in the February issue of 'BUZZ'. (A/P 763)

Jim reported that he was holding approximately £200 in cash from Apiary honey sales.

Lindsay emphasised that the Branch was no longer getting a reliable income from the Branch apiary. Currently, the Branch was only just covering its expenses.

7. Education and Training Report

We have had a good take up on our introduction of beekeeping course with nineteen participants. Several of them are very enthusiastic and intend to go on to keep bees. The greatest asset of the club, with regard to education, must be Glyn who, as a Master Beekeeper with many years of experience, is in an excellent position to give us the benefit of his knowledge and experience. To that end, I think it is important to encourage our improver beekeepers to take their Basic Test and then go on to take Modules. This is, undoubtedly, the route to becoming a competent beekeeper. I am very happy to run a four week course to prepare beekeepers for their Basic Test. Glyn is qualified to be an examiner for the Basic. Beekeepers are unable to study for the Module exams until they have passed their Basic and as we have very few who have done so, it is difficult to encourage courses for Modules as we have very few people who are entitled to attend them.

Liz Westcott

Jim Mogridge reminded Liz that he held copies of the Branch's 'Introductory' course handbook. He would supply copies to the students at the completion of the current course. (A/P 765) He commented that Branch members were very busy during the summer months and advised that any enquirers re: beekeeping training be invited to attend the summer Apiary meetings and then attend next winter's 'Introductory' course. Jim also suggested that a future 'Introductory' course be planned with several tutors, each presenting specific sections of the course. Liz agreed to consider the suggestion. (A/P 766)

Gerry reported that he would be attending a meeting at Paignton Zoo on 18th. February. The Zoo had expressed its interest in putting-on a one-day beekeeping course with, possibly, some hands-on bee experience at its Education Centre. It was envisaged that the Branch would present the course with Paignton Zoo undertaking the advertising and booking. The Branch would be paid for its services. It was possible that the Zoo would wish to present two or three courses in the year. The courses could attract participants who may then wish to attend a future Branch 'Introductory' course.

Liz welcomed the Zoo's initiative but advised that the Branch should receive a fee per participant to make involvement worthwhile. Gerry also reported that the Education Centre at Occombe Farm was available for beekeeping tuition. Ideally, a talk would need to emphasise the important role of the honey bee in pollination and be focused to attract a young audience. The facilities were very good and a lunch could be included.

Liz commented that talks could be expanded to cover any bee-related subject including the uses of products from the hive: beeswax candle making, etc. Fees could be charged for one-day or half-day courses. Glyn expressed concern that the current use of chemical treatments by beekeepers may not fit in with Occombe Farm's organic principles. Gerry did not consider this presented a difficulty.

8. Executive Council meeting report by Branch delegate

November 28th 2015

A distillation of the main points taken by our Branch Delegate, Lindsay Ticehurst is as follows:

- Glyn Davies and DARG were congratulated on their achievement in obtaining the Vita Bee Health Award
- A proposed increase of £2.00 to subscription rates for 2017 was not supported by members who suggested an increase of £1.00 only
- The Committee was requested to underwrite a budget of £3,000.00 for the Devon County Show which, in 2015, showed a loss largely owing to cancellation of final day
- There was a recognition that a tenure of three years for Branch Officers is impractical because of a lack of candidates
- The Celebrity Lecture is likely to take place on Monday, April 13th 2016 with a second lecture in the north of the county in the autumn
- Donated microscopes are available to any interested Association
- The following proposals were **supported**: Financial Scrutiny of External Entities; a two-part revision to the General Husbandry Exam; a record of EC minutes to BBKA; an agreement to host Young Beekeepers International in 2017 with a one off levy of £1 on members; Bees for

Development initiative; the encouragement of members to complete surveys on BBKA website

- The following proposals were **not supported**: Exam Board Funding; Electronic Vote Accounting

January 23rd 2016

- Advertising rates of Beekeeping magazine have remained static for at least five years and a working party will be set up to look into this. Double issues currently December/January
- Barry Neal was awarded a DBKA certificate of merit for his work on the new Constitution
- The agenda for President's Day/AGM is still to be finalized
- No speaker has yet been organized for the Spring Lecture
- The Yearbook will be digital with the Constitution included for the first year only. Branches to be responsible for advising of members without access to a computer
- Secretaries are requested to return the Swarm Liaison Sheet to Colin Sherwood with any amendments noted
- Torbay and Plymouth branches have both presented a Green Ribbon at their recent Honey Shows
- Members who have been late with payment of subscriptions will not receive the February copy of Beekeeping

Glyn commented that distribution of 'Beekeeping' had originally been the responsibility of the Branches. It would, therefore, seem fair and reasonable that the Branches again pay the distribution costs. Glyn continued by saying that there was a need to explain the role of the BBKA to Branch members. It provided a first class beekeeping educational, the Spring Convention, the excellent BBKA News, etc. However providing such services was very expensive.

9. Devon County Show 2016: arrangements for Torbay entry for the Stevenson Trophy

The Chair emphasised that the committee needed to develop a Branch theme which members could 'buy into' and which volunteers would be willing to support.

Following a general discussion linking this year's Queen's 90th birthday to that of the honey bee queen's role within a honey bee colony it was proposed by Gerry that the Branch promote its Cockington Apiary and the educational work undertaken therein and to build upon the theme: 'We are the Torbay Branch!'. Jim Mogridge suggested that the display be titled 'A BRANCH APIARY' and feature photographs of the Apiary. Following further discussion it was agreed that:

- i) The Branch Display be entitled 'The Torbay Cockington Apiary';
- ii) The Treasurer allocate £100 for initial expenses;
- iii) The display should feature a range of bee hives;
- iv) The display should be a reflection of everything a beekeeper uses in pursuing the hobby;
- v) It should display a history of the Apiary including the discovery of the Varroa mite in 1992

Liz Westcott agreed to explore availability of high-quality professional photographs. (A/P 767). Brian Turner agreed to purchase suitable woodlands scenes 'background' wall paper. (A/P 768). The Chair agreed that members of the Committee convene at approximately 9-30 p.m., following the Branch winter talk on the 9th February. (A/P 769)

10. Cockington Apiary Update

Jim stated that there is currently no formal Apiary manager. The colonies had not been treated with oxalic acid. Gerry reported that he had ordered a supply of fondant. This will be fed to the colonies upon receipt. (A/P 770) Gerry questioned whether the Branch should now order new equipment for the Apiary. Liz stated that a decision would be made later. (A/P 771) In response to a question from Mike, Liz confirmed that Branch members could place a hive in the Apiary.

Glyn drew the Committee's attention to a Government-funded scheme administered by the BBKA: to introduce open-source electronic temperature and humidity monitoring equipment into various Association apiaries. The hives would 'report' their readings via a

mobile phone link to a central computer which, in turn, linked into a web site. Each Association /Branch would have its own unique 'section' in which the data would be stored and graphically displayed. The 'brains' of the system is an Arduino' microprocessor. Glyn remarked that he had written to the BBKA to obtain further details of the project but had, as yet, received no reply! Mike confirmed that he, too, had received no reply to enquiries. He expressed his concern at the expense of the SIM card connection falling upon Branch funds. Glyn confirmed that there is Government money available in the 'kitty' for hive monitoring equipment but it could only be accessed via the DBKA. He had been informed by Jane Moseley at the ADM that 'Nigel' was the BBKA contact point. Unfortunately, 'Nigel' has yet to be identified!

The following further comments were made:

- i) Glyn emphasised that running a Branch apiary was not easy. It was necessary that the apiary be visited, and the hives inspected, weekly throughout the beekeeping season. A core group of experienced beekeepers had to take on this responsibility
- ii) Liz expressed her interest in undertaking queen-rearing at the Apiary. However, she would be absent during May and June.
- iii) Gerry commented that, despite the excellent work done by Brian to cone off a parking area adjacent to the Apiary, parking remained a problem. He would approach Melissa at Cockington Court to investigate the possibility of parking passes being issued to Branch members for the underused car park adjacent to the Apiary (A/P 772)
- iv) Key summer programme Apiary meeting dates: Commencement chosen to avoid a clash with the Devon County Show. (21st May)
1st Meeting: 2nd April: Apiary clean-up day; 2nd Meeting: 16th. April, etc. at fortnightly intervals to final meeting on 1st October.
Nosema Day: 30th. April, Summer barbecue: 9th July, 'End-of-Season' barbecue, 17th September.

Doug confirmed that a listing of the summer Apiary meetings dates would be sent to members with the March issue of 'BUZZ'. (A/P 773)

11. **Torbay Honey Show See item 5 above**

12. **Review of roles of local association officers**

During discussion, the role of 'Apiary Co-ordinator' was agreed rather than 'Apiary Manager' which implies a high level of individual responsibility; Glyn kindly agreed to take on the role of Apiary Co-ordinator with Liz, Jim and Gerry as Apiary assistants The following roles were assigned:

Branch Officers of Torbay Beekeepers Association, 2016

Title	Incumbent
President	Kingsley Law
Vice President	Douglas Westaway
Chairman	Liz Westcott
Vice Chairman	Gerry Stuart
Treasurer	Lindsay Ticehurst
Branch Secretary	Di Hatherley
Social Secretary	Jim Mogridge
Education Officer	Liz Westcott
Web Master	Mike Ticehurst
Editor - Buzz	Douglas Westaway
Buzz Distributor	Mike Ticehurst
Honey Show Secretary	Liz Westcott
Librarian	Gerry Stuart
Apiary Co-ordinator	Glyn Davies
Apiary Assistants	Jim Mogridge Gerry Stuart Liz Westcott
Apiary Groundsmen	Mike Ticehurst Brian Thomas

Microscopist	Liz Westcott
Membership Secretary	Mike Ticehurst
Branch Representative to EC	Lindsay Ticehurst
Swarm Liaison Officer	Douglas Westaway
Branch Spray Liaison Officer	Douglas Westaway
Refreshments	Douglas Westaway Ron Baker Claire Baker
Parking Co-ordinator	Brian Thomas

13. Social calendar for 2016

Jim, Branch Social Secretary, agreed to plan an interesting summer walk.
(A/P 774)

14. Update on B4 at Paignton Zoo and Occombe Farm

i) The B4 project overview.

Gerry Stuart reported that he had attended a B4 meeting. B4 was attempting to get the Rame peninsula designated for British black bees. The Mount Edgecombe estate was fully supporting the proposal. It would entail flooding the peninsula with black bee drones to enhance the likelihood of virgin black bee queens mating with black bee drones.

Plymouth University now has two black bee hives. DNA samples of black bees are being sent to Switzerland for analysis. Some black bees are currently analysing at 95% genetic purity. The DNA is held at Plymouth University in cryogenic storage.

ii) Occombe Farm.

Gerry reported that, currently, there were two hives at Occombe Farm; one hive was a hybrid, the second contained British black bees. Information signs explaining the B4 project, identical to those at Paignton Zoo, were to be erected. A pollinator-friendly garden forming an oasis of flowers was to be constructed. Members of the public would be able to walk around the garden and become familiar with pollinating insects. Gerry was currently preparing a set of monthly laminated 'fact sheets' explaining what is happening within the hives throughout the year.

ii) Paignton Zoo.

Paignton Zoo staff have been visiting an African nature reserve for the past five years. It was hoped to expand the project to include work with a local beekeeper.

15. Any Other Business.

i) Sponsorship request.

Liz reported that she had received a letter from a student asking the Branch for financial sponsorship for bee-related research project.

Glyn advised the Meeting that the DBKA was considering sponsoring a promising research project at Plymouth University.

The Committee decided not to support the student's request.

16. Venue & date of the next committee meeting

It was decided that the next Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, 23rd.

February commencing at 7-30 p.m., the provisional venue to be Sainsbury's restaurant. Gerry Stuart agreed to confirm availability of this venue and inform the Secretary. (A/P 775)

17. Action Points Arising from the Meeting

		Responsibility
A/P 763	Subscription reminder in February 'BUZZ'	Doug
A/P 764	Arrange 'Basic' refresher course.	Liz
A/P 765	Provide Introductory course handbook	Jim
A/P 766	Future 'Introductory' course. Additional tutors.	Liz
A/P 767	Availability of professional bee photographs.	Liz
A/P 768	Purchase of Stevenson Trophy wallpaper.	Brian
A/P 769	Stevenson Trophy planning meeting.	Liz
A/P 770	Feeding Branch Apiary colonies.	Gerry

A/P 771	Proposed purchase of Apiary equipment	Liz
A/P 772	Discuss Cockington parking permits(Melissa)	Gerry
A/P 773	Publish Apiary dates with March 'BUZZ'	Editor
A/P 774	Plan and publicise Branch summer walk	Jim
A/P 775	Confirm Sainsbury's committee meeting venue	Gerry

Di Hatherley (Hon. Secretary)
Sunday, February 8th, 2016

[e-mail:dianne.hatherley@btinternet.com](mailto:dianne.hatherley@btinternet.com)

Tel: 01803 844804