



Buzzworks Association Hitchin AGM 2nd February 2019

10.30 am – 1 pm St Mark's Church, Lancaster Avenue, Hitchin

Present: Giorgio Martinelli, Mari Stevenson, Chris Parker, Paul Calvert, Robin Dartington (Trustees); Anne Taylor, Rachel Scanlan, Alison Moss-Davies, Howard Prutton, Andy Cooper, Chris Baugh, Janet Southwood, Alex Inzani, Mike d'Souza, Georgina Robinson.

Apologies: Sarah Irons, Sandra O'Mahoney, Fran Kelly.

1. Welcome Mari (Chair of Meeting)

Previous Minutes

Re the **lease**, Trustees have discussed and decided to leave it in Robin's name for now as there could be significant costs attached to bringing it to the attention of NHDC for review. NHDC have indicated a possible charge of £600 pa for a commercial lease, conditional on site being cleared when lease expires. Rather than the usual one allotment given over to charitable use, Buzzworks at present hold the equivalent of 8-10 allotments – a very good deal so best let sleeping dogs lie!

Re **Complaints Procedure**, Trustees have found a template which can be amended to suit BAH. **Action Trustees: finalise Complaints Procedure**

Re **Forward Plan**, see item 5.

All other actions completed.

2. Trustee Report (Robin) as circulated and available on website

Summary: Training, education and honey marketing have all continued successfully through 2018. Communications and admin have improved greatly. Anne was thanked for her efforts in this. Robin's report suggests that the current structure could be reviewed to include a mechanism for those active in the different areas to meet to coordinate activities.

3. Finance Report (Paul) as circulated and available on website

Summary: BAH continued to cover operating costs during 2018 and generated a small profit. £8,726 carried forward plus significant stock of honey and jars. 2019 expected to follow a similar pattern. Training revenue will come from 'experiences' rather than formal training.

Noted that Honeyworks honey had to be supplemented with bought-in honey. Revenue from training has changed with increased income from Taster Days.

Need to re-value building assets and build funds for maintenance/replacement – grant income is a possible avenue. **Action Trustees: re-value building assets and explore grant opportunities**

BAH is covered for break-ins but Trustees are looking at more secure storage for tools and for honey. **Action Trustees: organise more secure storage for tools and honey**

Paul is looking into solar panels for Honeyworks – **Action Paul**

4. Area Updates for 2018 & Proposals for 2019, as circulated and available on website:

Membership (Anne)

Membership at end 2018 was 30, with 7 new members. The hope is to increase this to 40 by end 2019. Contacts list expanded to 70, including non-members, partners and other interested people.

Education (Mari)

No visits to Buzzworks during the year due to a lack of people to run sessions, and lack of enquiries. However, it has been a chance to review possibilities for the site and plan how to promote to schools.

Outreach: 6 successful visits to schools plus a pre-school. Lesson plans and resources being developed.

Dates to note – 20th May Bee Day with school presentation; 24th/25th May Herts County Show, BAH will have a stall to promote educational activities. There will be 6 free tickets for those helping. Ideas are welcomed for developing education at Buzzworks and all members encouraged to get involved in running visits from and to schools. More people means less commitment needed from individuals.

Training (Paul)

Two Taster Days were run for 6 and 12 people and will run again in 2019. Ashley ran a Beginners training course which joined up with Daryl's BBKA training sessions Focus to change from formal training to 'experiences', which are not offered by other bee-keeping organisations.

Beekeeping & Hive Management (Chris)

Chris described activities on the three sites at Buzzworks (queen-rearing only), Honeyworks (training and honey production) and Offley (inactive in 2018). There is a need for hive maintenance eg roof repair, new legs, repainting. Use of Offley site could be reviewed, also Buzzworks for possible honey production. Hope is to establish a small group to take all this forward.

Site Management (Robin)

Working parties will be needed for roof re-felting at Honeyworks and re-painting at Buzzworks. Facebook page suggested as a means of finding help.

Gardening (Janet)

Early flowers followed by a cold spell. New fruit garden created has established well. Bug hotel in progress. Very hot spell meant lots of watering time needed, and pond top-ups. There is a leak from the pond which isn't too serious for now but does need looking at. Edging has been replaced and compost heap sorted. An arch has blown

over but no plans to replace. End December tidy-up of fallen branches. Pheasant and muntjacs causing some damage – hedge could be thickened to discourage, eg cut lower to encourage bottom growth. Working party will be needed in March eg clearing the raised beds. Mari suggested a plan for the area next to the apiary, as a showcase for visitors. Janet looking into Sketch-Up software for garden planning. Small dustbin incinerator to be bought. **Action Janet/Mari: plan for apiary area.**
Action Janet: buy dustbin incinerator
Mike reported briefly on the clearance and planting done at Honeyworks. More hardy plants being considered, as muntjacs have dug up previous plants.

5. Forward Plan Update & Beekeeping Support Strategy

Forward Plan: Trustees suggested that rather than have a formal Forward Plan document, a less formal approach might be more appropriate for BAH as a small charity. Each area could develop its own plan more informally, with communication between the areas.

Beekeeping Support Strategy: It was generally agreed that BAH strategy for 2019 should move away from formal training (lack of people to deliver, and being provided elsewhere). It would promote and support beekeeping in other ways eg through more experience-focussed opportunities, personal tuition, mentoring, loan hives for beginners, and sale/use of BAH stock and equipment.

6. Election of Trustees and 7. Offers to fill other positions

Robin stood down as a Trustee and did not stand for re-election.

Chris Parker stood down and was re-elected, proposed by Robin, seconded by Rachel, agreed by members present.

Giorgio, Mari and Paul remain as Trustees.

Anne, Rachel and Andy stood and were elected as Trustees by the members present.

Robin was elected to the new non-Trustee role of President, representing BAH, developing partnerships and advising on strategic direction.

It was agreed that thought needs to be given as to how the structure could evolve, including who might fill other positions. **Action all: discuss at March 21st Winter Meeting, open to all**

7. AOB

Janet: need to check Winter Meetings do not clash with other Beekeeping Association meetings. Unfortunately, hall availability is limited at present. More flexibility will be possible in the summer when meetings can be at Honeyworks or Buzzworks. Hall availability may change in winter 2019/20. **Action Anne – take into account when organising Winter Meetings.**

Andy has set up a WhatsApp group for the Stall.

Paul will update the website with Open Day and Taster Day dates – **Action Paul**

Mike offered to promote our events on the Hitchin sites.

It hasn't been possible to get into the Instagram account so a new one may be the only option. Rachel to find out first, if there's a way to either get into it or delete -
action Rachel

Meeting closed 12.10 pm