

## Buzzworks AH AGM

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January 10.30 – 12 non

St Mark's Church, Hitchin

### 1. Welcome (Paul – who chaired the meeting)

### 2. Previous AGM Actions

Complaints Procedure will be put on the website. It will also be attached to the Operational Plan when revised (Paul)

Trustees will continue to seek grants for building maintenance work

Secure storage for tools and honey completed. Thanks to Howard.

Solar panels will be revisited should usage of the meeting room at HW increase (Paul)

Mari/Paul/Andy have had an initial discussion about the apiary (on-going)

Structure of BAH was discussed at a Winter Meeting. Trustees have also discussed separating strategic and operational aspects. We are going to try the first operational meeting on Feb 20<sup>th</sup> and Trustees will meet separately to discuss strategic matters eg longer term plans and budgeting.

Website updated with Open Day & Taster Day dates

Instagram up and running.

### 3. Trustees Report (Paul)

Paul reported a 'solid' year and sense of moving forward, though we are still in the re-building stage. Robin continues to build partnerships. 'Winter' Meetings have been largely well-attended and now take place throughout the year. One is given over to a summer social. There has been a move towards management of the areas by small teams.

### 4. Finance Report 2019 (Paul)

Paul referred to the Finance Report previously circulated. Grants totalling around £1500 have been received for educational resources, from Herts County Council, North Herts District Council and the Wax Chandlers. We continue to seek grant funding for refurbishment and for improved technology to deliver education. For the first time, an annual budget has been set based on plans submitted by the areas. Areas have been allocated their own budgets to monitor. Spending outside these budgets needs further trustee approval. Spending is reviewed at every trustee meeting.

Our operating costs are around £3,500 pa. We have reserves of £10,000 which is a year in hand and larger costs. The roofing at HW was paid for from reserves.

### 5. Area Updates

Summaries of the information circulated with the Trustees Report were given by Mari (Education), Paul (Training), Gardening (Mike for Honeyworks and Janet for Buzzworks), Sites (Robin), Beekeeping (Chris), Stall (Anne). Additional points:

**Education:** More volunteers needed to join the Education Team (welcome to Fran and Joanna). Hope to reinstate visits from local schools and looking at how best to approach the schools. Robin suggested a database of those likely to visit, including those who had visited in the past. The County Show was an enjoyable experience, but it had been decided not to attend in 2020 as the cost could not be justified. Thanks to Chris for bringing the observation hive to World Bee Day, which the children really enjoyed. Robin suggested attending some school fetes. **Hitchin websites to be used for promotion (Anne).**

**Training (Robin):** Robin to offer 1-1's and suggested £95 for 2 ½ hours, to be promoted on the website and via the stall. Training for beginners being discussed again, possibly delivered by an experienced non-BAH beekeeper who could be paid. Our hands-on resource could be a good way to differentiate from training offered by other BKAs.

**Gardening at Honeyworks:** thanks to the core team, Colin, Janette and Mike, with Daryl and Alex advising. Good progress had been made despite some challenges eg shady spots, pesky bees. The shed has been revamped, a new bed established, and overgrown areas cleared. New plants have been sourced from British Schools Museum volunteers. Ideas for new uses: an advice centre for bee-friendly gardening; encourage visits eg with a cream tea; create a wildflower walk with information. Info about bee-friendly plants could be put on the website.

**Gardening at Buzzworks:** wind has been a problem; beds have been renovated particularly under the hedge – just one left to do. Removing the giant reed plant in the pond seems to be stabilised the water level. Pond will need cleaning out next September to avoid disturbing newts, and could be netted; an oxygenating plant could help aerate and would be preferable to installing equipment; each bed to be given a name; maintenance plan to be put together as longer term planning so others can implement; concern about unwanted visitors – suggestions were a chain through stacks of chairs, dummy CCTV or battery-operated; new legislation to ensure traceability of plants is a response to serious pests and diseases; there will be a Working Party on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**Sites:** no additional points

**Beekeeping:** beginning to pay more attention to a more plural approach; Paul produced a bee-keeping policy to allow for different methods within an overall approach; need to increase productivity – reducing number of hives could help with this, as could the 'let-alone' approach, though this does need supporting eg by ensuring hives are an optimal size; new team approach – first meeting has taken place.

**Stall:** no additional points. A good year. Thanks to all volunteers emphasized, as the stall depends on them and they do turn up in all weathers. It was suggested the session could be shortened but Hitchin Markets specify a time-slot and shortening this had an adverse effect on others who are there for the duration.

## 6. Election of Trustees

Chris Parker stood down and did not want to be re-elected. He was thanked for his hard work and long contribution.

Paul and Mari stood down and were re-elected.

Mike d'Souza was elected as a new Trustee.

#### **7. Offers to fill other volunteer positions**

It was felt this had been covered earlier in the meeting.

#### **8. AOB**

- Janet had almost finished a leaflet naming bee-friendly plants and trees by month of the year
- Janet has tried out some of the recipes from the old booklet and amended where necessary
- Alex spoke to the NHDC Environmental Committee about trees and this was very informative and well-received
- Thanks to Paul for preparing the pre-AGM documents and chairing the meeting.